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Baltimore brand consultant is changing the entrepreneurship game



Raven Paris, a Baltimore based brand consultant and multi-media strategist who has freelanced and served as a radio host for local and national platforms like 92Q and nationally for Def Jam, has come to change the entrepreneurship game with her debut book, "The Game Changer: Start-Up Kit to Become or Sustain Entrepreneurship." The 51-page guidebook addresses the concerns of new and aspiring entrepreneurs during this time when it may be necessary but difficult pivot because of COVID-19 related revenue changes for businesses. (See article on page 9). Courtesy Photo

Prospering during the pandemic but is Zoom here to stay?

By Stacy M. Brown

Remember when Bill Gates started Microsoft and Mark Zuckerberg opened Facebook?

While it's widely known that Microsoft and Facebook started respectively in the 1980s and 2000s, not a lot of significance was given to the start of these now multi-billion-dollar companies. It appears Zoom will follow in their footsteps.

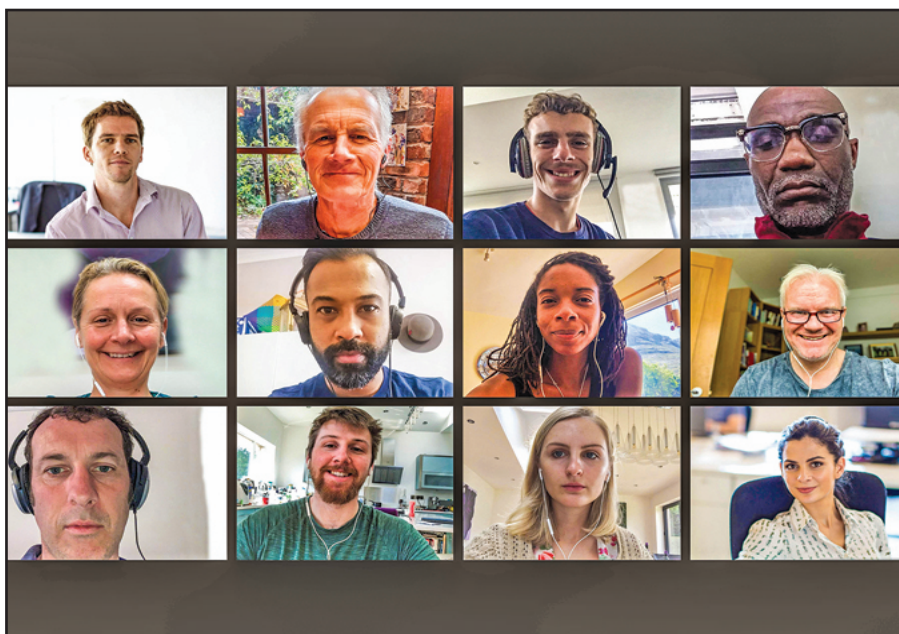
The nine-year-old virtual platform became popular when the coronavirus pandemic began as the platform for not only the home for business meetings but social and religious gatherings, education, and events like weddings and funerals.

MSN reported that Zoom has a market cap of \$129 billion and is now worth more than IBM and twice as valuable as VMware. In 2019, CEO Eric Yuan had a net worth of about \$3 billion. Today, Forbes places Yuan's value at approximately \$20 billion.

In its most recent earnings report, the company said revenue over the last quarter increased a whopping 355 percent from a year earlier, as many companies struggle to stay afloat with the deadly pandemic still raging. And, if there were any doubt that Zoom is here to stay, business owners and many users in and around Baltimore say they are committed for the long haul.

Alcoholics Anonymous leaders in the city say they've taken measures to ensure the security of their zoom meetings because they believe they'll be using the platform for some time.

The group hosts 800 meetings each week, and many say Zoom has opened Baltimore's gatherings to a much larger audience.



The nine-year-old virtual platform, Zoom became popular when the coronavirus pandemic began as the platform for not only the home for business meetings but social and religious gatherings, education, and events like weddings and funerals.

Photo Credit: Metro Grapics

"San Francisco, Cleveland, the United Kingdom. We've had visitors from everywhere," one member said.

Dennis Bell, the founder and CEO of Byblos noted that, "even after the pandemic, Zoom will be a part of everyone's daily life. It's a convenient way to reach out to people, especially those who are far from you."

"Regardless of the time zone differences, you can easily communicate effectively. It provides a lot of opportunities to interact virtually with your team. Zoom can also record videos that allow you to store and have access to it whenever needed. It is also a convenient way to replay a part of your meetings for recording purposes. Zoom was here even before the pandemic, and

it is likely here to stay and be a part of the business and people's lives," Bell said.

Erik Rivera, the CEO of the online telehealth platform, ThriveTalk says he currently attends as many as 20 Zoom meetings per week. Rivera said the video chat platform is facilitating his business.

"As we have moved our operations model entirely online, moving forward, I can only predict that this number will stay high," Rivera said.

Mark Hayes, the head of marketing at

the advice and tutoring company, Kintell, said he's also attending countless Zoom meetings and believes they're here to stay. "At this point, it went from a novelty to standard procedure," Hayes declared. "In my view, the coronavirus taught the world that a lot of roles could be carried out remotely, for better or for worse."

There are skeptics, however.

Although Martin Seeley called Zoom the best alternative to roundtable meetings during COVID-19 and has helped companies adjust to the new normal of communications, he doesn't believe it'll remain popular.

"After the pandemic, it will have a great decline in sales because people still prefer traditional face-to-face meetings instead of virtual meetings," said Seeley, the CEO of MattressNextDay.

"It just happens that companies needed alternative ways to conduct business meetings, and they have discovered Zoom as the best tool for virtual communication."

David Walter, a local electrician, agreed.

"While I do see Zoom as a major part of business and life in the short-term, I don't see that as lasting," Walter opined. "It will still be popular because I think a lot of folks didn't understand all of the benefits, but hopefully, as this virus continues to fade, and if we get an effective vaccine, I think you'll see somewhat of a return to in-person meetings."

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Guest Editorials/Commentary

Republican connected tech firm targeted black voters on facebook for 'deterrence'

By Lauren Victoria Burke
NNPA Newswire Contributor

A database built by Cambridge Analytica, the Republican-aligned firm that shut down over allegations of improper use of Facebook data, targeted Black voters for "Deterrence" in profiles prepared for Donald Trump's 2016 campaign according to reporting by Great Britain's Channel 4 News.

It had already been known that Black voters were focused on disenfranchisement by the Trump campaign and Russian interference. But the new report outlined that 3.5 million Black Americans were profiled specifically in a new digital form of social media-driven voter suppression for 'deterrence' by the Trump campaign. What this also reveals is that in 2016 Facebook allowed this to take place. In 2016 many Black voters said that they wanted to stay home on Election Day.

"The 'Deterrence' project can be revealed after Channel 4 News obtained the database used by Trump's digital campaign team— credited with helping deliver his shock victory to become president four years ago. Vast in scale, it contains details on almost 200 million Americans, among more than 5,000 files, which together amass almost five- terabytes of data— making it one of the biggest leaks in history. It reveals not only the huge amounts of data held on every individual voter, but how that data was used and manipulated by models and algorithms," the new investigative report from Channel4 revealed.

Over 3.5 million Black Americans were marked for 'deterrence.'

The digital arm of Trump's 2016 digital team, called 'Project Alamo' included a team from the now defunct British company Cambridge Analytica. Two senior directors of the former Cambridge Analytica team are now working on the Trump 2020 campaign for The White House.

Voter suppression has become mainstream policy for the Republican Party in America. Efforts to suppress the vote became mainstream after the election of the first Black President of the United States, Barack Obama, in 2008.

Voter suppression efforts that disproportionately target Black voters include requiring certain IDs at the polls, shutting down polling locations in predominantly Black areas and polling hours that make it difficult for working class Americans to participate.

Trump lost the popular vote to Hillary Clinton by 2.8 million votes. In certain states, such as Wisconsin, the margin was thin. Hillary Clinton won the most votes but lost the Electoral College and Trump won four years in the White House.

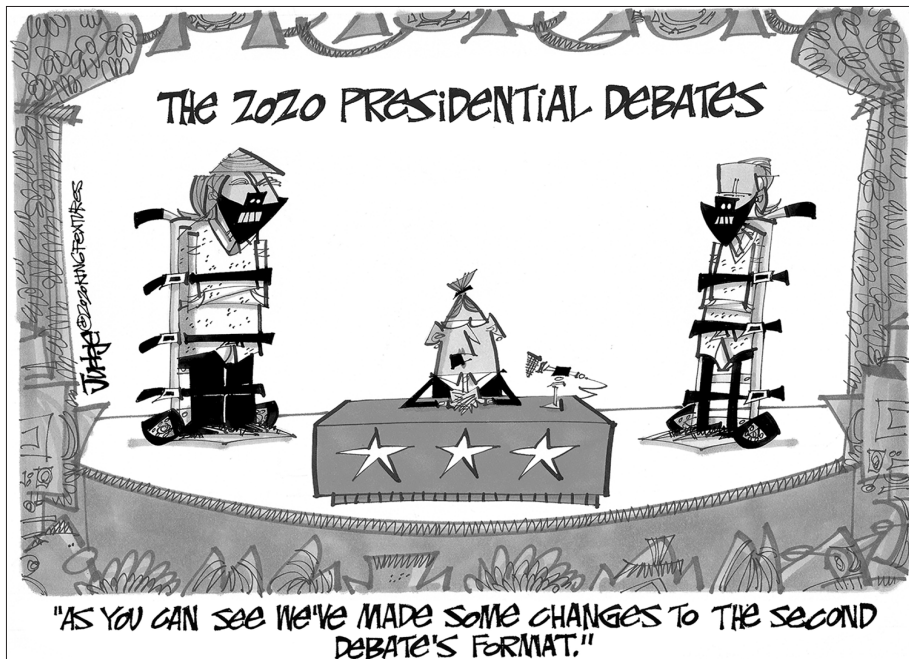
Lauren Victoria Burke is an independent journalist for NNPA and the host of the podcast BURKEFILE. She is also a political strategist as Principal of Win Digital Media LLC. She may be contacted at LBurke007@gmail.com and on twitter at @LVBurke

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Community Affairs

Maryland Department of Health announces new community-based partnership to enhance statewide vaccination efforts

Baltimore— The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) announced the Maryland Partnership for Prevention (MPP) as its community partner in an enhanced statewide initiative to promote and facilitate childhood and flu vaccination activities throughout the fall. The effort will also support COVID-19 vaccination activity, in preparation for when a vaccine becomes available.

"It has never been more important to take care of our health and our families by protecting ourselves against preventable disease," said MDH Secretary Robert R. Neall. "We're committed to investing in the outreach and logistics necessary to help ensure more Marylanders get vaccinated safely, swiftly and effectively."

The \$1.5 million project is a unique coordinated statewide effort to support all local health departments and Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) with technology, staffing and

logistical support through PrepMod, a new online resource that will be used to schedule clinics; track equipment needs; and report vaccination activity.

The effort also includes communications, outreach and vaccination clinics in areas showing the most significant vaccination rate declines, made possible through a Pfizer Foundation grant, announced in July.

MPP is the adult immunization coalition for Maryland and is the parent organization of the Maryland Childhood Immunization Partnership (MCIP) and regional immunization coalitions across the state. MDH has previously partnered with MPP to assist with school-based flu and back-to-school immunization clinics. MPP has also worked with a number of local health departments in years past.

Marylanders can visit MD.MyIR.net, a free and secure online portal where users can access official copies of their vaccination records and those of their family members. To schedule an appointment your local health department's vaccination clinic, Marylanders can also visit: marylandvax.org.

Economy, race relations seen as growing concerns ahead of election

Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior National Correspondent @StacyBrownMedia

As President Donald Trump flip-flops on whether he would back a new stimulus proposal to help stabilize America's increasingly fragile financial, consumer and business markets—and provide a lifeline to struggling Americans—the latest Gallup poll reveals that the economy remains a major concern among voters ahead of the November 3 election. Nine in ten respondents identified the economy as extremely or very important to their vote.

The poll, released on October 5, listed national security and terrorism as the next biggest concern (83 percent), followed by education (82 percent), healthcare (80 percent), crime (79 percent), the COVID-19 response (77 percent), and race relations (76 percent).

Gallup has surveyed Americans' "most important concerns" since 1939. The survey became monthly in 2001.

"It is not surprising that voters overall

rate the economy as the most important issue impacting their vote for president this year given the fragile state of the U.S. economy and their tendency historically to prioritize it and other issues such as national security and education," Gallup pollsters observed.

In an earlier June 4 Gallup survey, 19

percent of Americans named race relations as the nation's top problem in the aftermath of the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

mind race is as a major problem; presumably, the less likely politicians are going to feel pressure to take action." A separate poll conducted by the Washington, D.C.-based financial website, WalletHub, took a deep dive into which political party is best for the country.

has had the highest decrease (0.85 percent, on average) under a Democratic presidency and divided Congress.

It had the highest increase (0.26 percent, on average) under a Republican presidency and Democratic Congress.

According to the survey, the annual poverty rate change has had the highest decrease (0.66 percent, on average) under a Democratic presidency and Republican Congress and the highest increase (0.05 percent, on average) under a Republican presidency and Democratic Congress.

The survey also found that the change in annual national debt as a percentage of GDP (adjusted for inflation) has had the highest decrease (0.76 percent, on average) under a Democratic presidency and Republican Congress and the highest increase (2.82 percent) under a Democratic presidency and divided Congress.

"I think [Democratic Presidential nominee] Joe Biden will be better for the economy for two reasons. First, he is actually listening to real economists, as far as policymaking is concerned," said Shantanu Bagchi, a WalletHub expert and associate professor in the Department of Economics at Towson University in Maryland. "He understands the key issues why so many Americans have been cut out from their fair share of economic prosperity and the promise of hard work as a means to a better life.

"Second, he is predictable and has a comprehensive vision of how to move the economy forward for everyone. Trump, unfortunately, is more concerned with personal wealth accumulation using the Presidency as a tool. He lacks a basic understanding of economics, does not listen to experts, and has no vision of the economy apart from how he and others like him can personally benefit from it."

"At just below 20 percent, Gallop's June 4 demarcation of the nation's pulse on the state of race and race relations in America reflects the largest number of Americans sharing concerns over the racial divide since the height of the civil rights struggle in July 1968."

percent of Americans named race relations as the nation's top problem in the aftermath of the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

At just below 20 percent, Gallop's June 4 demarcation of the nation's pulse on the state of race and race relations in America reflects the largest number of Americans sharing concerns over the racial divide since the height of the civil rights struggle in July 1968. The July 1968 survey results reported was less than 90 days after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on April 4th of the same year.

"Everything else being equal; however, the historical record predicts that race will eventually fall back into its latent status, scoring relatively few mentions as a top-of-mind issue," Dr. Frank Newport, a Gallup senior scientist, wrote. "This exemplifies the substantial challenge facing leaders who are seeking significant and lasting change in the nation's race situation. The less top of

The poll revealed that overall the economy had performed best under a Democratic presidency and Republican Congress.

In the past 70 years, the real Gross Domestic Product has grown fastest under Democratic control of both the executive and legislative branches of government, at an average of 4.22 percent per year, and most slowly under a Democratic presidency and divided Congress, at an average of 2.04 percent per year, the WalletHub survey found.

Despite Trump's seeming obsession with the stock market, Wall Street has performed best under a Democratic presidency and Republican Congress. The S&P 500 produced an average annual return of 16.22 percent, and worst under a Republican presidency and Democratic Congress, with an average yearly return of 4.51 percent.

Further, as stimulus talks stall and Trump throws cold water on negotiations, the annual unemployment rate change

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Website

Cieara Adams

**Photographers
Dennis Roberts
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Mailing Address

**The Baltimore Times
2513 N. Charles Street
Baltimore, MD 21218**

Phone: 410-366-3900- Fax 410-243-1627

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Defund the Police Department

By Dr. Al Hathaway

I remember my late mother, a graduate of Shaw University, Mary Beasley Hathaway, saying to me, “you don’t see the forest for the trees.” The saying was meant to communicate that every now and then you have to step back and take a macro view of a situation. I’m sharing this saying as a way of presenting my perspective on the “defund the police” movement.

We have to examine rightly the priorities and allocations of a \$577,000.00 plus budget of the Baltimore City Police Department, a budget that takes a significant percentage of Baltimore City’s overall budget.

While I agree the budget needs to be reallocated. I see simply looking at the budget of the Baltimore City Police Department as the proverbial looking at the “trees instead of the forest.”

It’s become a social justice issue to focus upon the Police Department. The treatment of people of color by the hands of the police force merits Federal Court monitoring its operations and mandating change in its practices and policies. I can understand the emotional and substantial rational for defunding a police department that possibly causes more harm than good within the Black Community.

Let me give some context, Dr. Karl Alexander of Johns Hopkins University, a researcher, conducted a longitudinal study of 790 youth for 25 years who lived within Penrose-Fayette, west side of Monroe, and Franklin Square on the east. He studied those youth from age three until age 28. His findings are published in the book, “Long Shadows.”

This is a summary of the findings: “Almost half stayed at the same



Dr. Al Hathaway
Courtesy Photo

economic level as their parents; only 33 children moved from low-income to high income bracket; only four percent from low income families had a college degree; while 45 percent of the children from higher income families earned a degree; White men from low-income backgrounds found high-paying jobs; at age 28, 45 percent of the Whites were working in construction trades and industrial crafts, compared with 15 percent of Black men and virtually no women; White women from low-income backgrounds benefit financially from marriage and stable live-in partnerships; and at age 28, 41 percent of the White men and 49 percent of the Black men from low-income backgrounds had a criminal conviction, but the White employment rate was much higher.”

The reason I point you to the Long Shadow’s study is to highlight the fact that by simply focusing upon “defunding

the police department” you are only looking at the trees.

The forest is the total budgets of three key operations in Baltimore City— Baltimore City Government; Baltimore City Public School System; and Baltimore City Department of Social Services. These three entities have a consolidated budget of over \$6 Billion per year. Using simplistic math and not accounting for adjustments and fluctuations over a 25 year period, the total consolidated expenditures of those three entities would be over \$1 Trillion Five Hundred Million.

This is the forest we must see!

By doing business as usual the Long Study results are the outcomes we achieve. We need to do something radically different to change the outcomes of children and youth growing up in Baltimore’s low-income communities.

Simply demanding “defund the police department” without a comprehensive strategy for these three essential budget expenditures and projecting their investment over the life cycle of our city’s youth will doom future generations to the pot holes of rejection and low expectation.

It’s a tragedy that children of low-income families remain low income. Each generation should build upon the other and our public budgeting expenditures should provide our children and families a ladder to success.

If the results of the Democratic primary hold true we will have elected a generation of city-wide leaders: Mayor, President of the City Council and Comptroller who can guide our City for the next 20-24 years.

Our planning and budgeting process should reflect that possibility and be

more strategic. Everyone understands that investment in human productivity, education, workforce development better health outcomes and quality housing will provide the masses of people with a better quality of life.

Business management and organizational development professional would share with you that our Japanese counterparts plan in hundred year cycles. This thinking creates within those organizations the mindset to project over a longer period of time and out performs those organizations with a shorter planning cycle.

Instead of each department or agency coming before the City Council and the Mayor and presenting their annual budgets for review, let us engage the residents of Baltimore City in the budgeting process and state clearly that we are at this particular juncture and we are getting these particular outcomes.

Then ask what outcomes we wish to achieve over a 20-year period? And present budgets within a 20-24 year context where each year we are making the strategic investments in improving the quality of life of the persons living in Baltimore.

You may say that’s wishful thinking.

I would respond it’s “forest view thinking.” We can no longer afford “tree view thinking.” We need leaders who are willing to climb the mountaintop and think at the level of the timberline. That, as Dr. Howard Thurman would say is “the line where the tips of the trees in the forest touch the mind and hand of God.”

Dr. Al Hathaway serves as the Senior Pastor of Union Baptist Church located at 1219 Druid Hill Avenue in Baltimore City.

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U.S. Postal Service dedicates new Kwanzaa stamp

Washington, D.C.— The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) continues to celebrate Kwanzaa, which honors the values and beliefs around African American heritage, by dedicating a new Kwanzaa stamp on Tuesday, October 13, 2020.

“This new Kwanzaa stamp captures the essence of the African American cultural celebration. The stamp depicts the profile of a reflective woman with a kinara, or a candleholder, with seven lit candles in front of her,” said USPS Regional Processing Operations Eastern Vice President Dane Coleman, the dedicating official. “The stamp, which was hand-sketched and digitally colored, evokes a sense of inner peace with its cool tones and vibrant design elements to give a festive feel to the celebration of Kwanzaa.”

The stamp is available nationwide. A virtual dedication ceremony is posted on the Postal Service’s Facebook and Twitter pages. The event includes remarks from Coleman and Linda Hazel Humes, adjunct assistant professor,



The new Kwanzaa postage stamp is now available from the USPS nationwide. A pictorial postmark of the first-day-of-issue location, Nashville, TN, is available at usps.com/stamps.

Courtesy Photo/USPS

Africana Studies Department, John Jay College; and music by Sanga of the Valley.

Kwanzaa takes place over seven days annually from December 26 to January 1, bringing family, community and culture together for many.

Each year, millions of African Americans gather with friends and family throughout Kwanzaa week to honor the Pan-African holiday’s seven founding principles—unity (umoja); self-determination (kujichagulia); collective work and responsibility (ujima); cooperative economics (ujamaa); purpose (nia); creativity (kuumba); and faith (imani). Each day of Kwanzaa is dedicated to one of these seven principles, collectively known as the Nguzo Saba.

Kwanzaa was created in 1966, drawing on a variety of African traditions, deriving its name from the Swahili phrase “matunda ya kwanza,” meaning “first fruits.” Kwanzaa is a festive time for rejoicing in the prospect of health,

prosperity and good luck in the coming year. It is also a time for contemplation and recollection of past hardships, faced by individuals and communities, and the ways history can inform and impact future happiness.

Art director Antonio Alcala designed the stamp, and Andrea Pippins was the illustrator.

The Kwanzaa stamp is being issued as a Forever stamp in a pane of 20. Forever stamps will always be equal in value to the current First-Class Mail 1-ounce price.

A pictorial postmark of the first-day-of-issue location, Nashville, TN, is available at usps.com/stamps.

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Activist, Host of Netflix' *Bookmarks*, Marley Dias Shares The Secrets of Making An Impact

By Nadine Matthews

Teen activist, author and now host and executive producer of Netflix series "Bookmarks: Celebrating Black Voices," Marley Dias admits she was slightly disappointed in one thing she did with regards to her historic #1000BlackGirlBooks project. "I didn't tell a lot of my friends about #1000BlackBooks," she says, "because I was afraid they wouldn't understand or wouldn't care or would think it wasn't something a young person should do."

Those feelings were perhaps understandable as Dias was just eleven years-old when she single-handedly launched that campaign after she complained there weren't enough Black girls as main characters in books for children her age. The campaign's original goal was to collect 1,000 books that featured Black girl protagonists and distribute them to her peers. Overwhelmingly successful, it ended up receiving upwards of 9,000 books.

Things are different now that Dias is a seasoned fifteen year-old. "Now, I tell people when I'm doing cool stuff and I take pride in my work."

Since #1000 BlackGirlBooks, Dias has authored her own book, "Marley Dias Gets it Done And So Can You" with a foreword by filmmaker Ava Duvernay, who Dias says is one of the people she most looks up to. "She has done so much to help support the ideas of Black girls, our experiences, and to make sure we're not forgotten."

In addition to producing, Dias also hosts "Bookmarks," a twelve-episode series geared toward pre-schoolers where celebrities such as Lupita Nyong'o, Tiffany Haddish, Misty Copeland, Marsai Martin, Common, Jill Scott, Caleb McGlaughlin, and others reading books by Black authors. The subject matter of the books touch on issues such as , anti-racism, and American history. The series also streams on the Netflix Jr. Youtube channel.

Author Jacqueline Woodson, also one of the "Bookmarks" readers, is the author of Dias' favorite book, "Brown Girl Dreaming." "I love that book so much!" Dias exclaimed. "Anyone who's been following me recently is probably tired of me talking about it! It's so great though!" As for her favorite book that she has read this year she says is "Looking For Alaska" by John Green. "It's not a Black girl book, but



Marley Dias, Activist for Diversity in Books, Host of Netflix' Bookmarks: A Celebration of Black Voices

Photo Credit: Netflix

it is a diverse book. I love John Green books because he can connect with so many people. He is such a good writer."

Though Dias is pleased with advances made in diversity and representation in literature, there is one area where she believes work still needs to be done. "One place where you can have more representation is fantasy and science fiction. It's super weird we don't see Black people existing in the future." This is the reason, Dias admits, she did not read as many science fiction and fantasy stories when she was younger. "I rarely saw myself in those stories. It would mean a lot to me, to be someone who could be invested in those stories" she says, "to see they're making a conscious effort to show experiences that mean a lot to me."

Dias learned a great deal from the experience as an activist, and has this to say to other young people who might want to have an impact as well. "Learn how the issue exists on a systemic level. A lot of the times something frustrates us personally, but learning how it's part of a larger system is how you can better understand how to take it down from the root and how it affects your broader community and the people you care about."

One structural issue she encountered in deploying #1000BlackGirlBooks, was how unresponsive curriculum creators were to changes in society. "These curriculums don't get changed, don't get edited, don't focus on how cultures and communities change. Students have limited say in the types of material they learn and how they learn it."

Dias' peers fall into two groups in terms of their responses to her remarkable experiences and accomplishments. The aspiring journalist says, "Some kids are super aware and now are interested in activism. They understand that it's about changing the world and there's stuff that comes with that." The other group of peers tend to see only the rewards of her labor as opposed to the labor itself. "Some people only see it as she has a Netflix show or she did a commercial, she met Rihanna and that can be frustrating. "Dias doesn't let the resulting negativity impact her, however. "If people want to see the deeper meaning behind my work then they will and their feelings don't necessarily define my work."

Baltimore brand consultant is changing the entrepreneurship game

By Alanah Nichole

As businesses rethink their strategies and entrepreneurs continue to scramble to maintain successful businesses during a global pandemic Raven Paris, a Baltimore based brand consultant and multi-media strategist who has freelanced and served as a radio host for local and national platforms like 92Q and nationally for Def Jam, DTLR, TMZ & BET, has come to change the entrepreneurship game with her debut book, “The Game Changer: Start-Up Kit to Become or Sustain Entrepreneurship.”

The 51-page guidebook addresses the concerns of new and aspiring entrepreneurs during this time when it may be necessary but difficult pivot because of COVID-19 related revenue changes for businesses. Even though we are living in the digital age and connection might be at our fingertips, support is often not. “*The Game Changer*” is a guidebook that supports a demographic of specifically Black entrepreneurs and is tailor-made to hold their hands through goal setting, sales and even advertising.

“If we’re able to spend in our community, we’ll keep the dollars in our community,” Paris said when asked why newly established or seasoned black dream chasers should invest in buying “*The Game Changer*.”

Paris says she is no stranger to dropping off copies of her new guidebook in-person.

“I love for people to be able to relate to me, so whether I’m having a good or bad day I hop in my car with my mask for folks that support me, You can’t always touch or reach people that you meet on social media, I like to show love to the people who show love to me,” she said.

Paris naturally guides her peers and clients step-by-step through their initial jump into the entrepreneurship game based on her experiences. “I’m not a graduate of any formal communications program. I went to school for Social Work at Morgan State University so I’m driven to think about people first,” she said.

The plight of entrepreneurs is something the new author understands personally as she remembers vividly quitting her job at a local mobile-phone store in 2017 in order to pursue her dream of expanding her voice in entertainment full-time.

“Entertainment is a male-dominated world and doesn’t come without its challenges. And being an attractive woman, you have to work even harder for men in the industry to take you seriously because they feel like you’re going to sell your soul in order for doors to open for you,” Paris noted.

Throughout her new book, Raven urges early-stage entrepreneurs both men and women not to immediately quit their jobs but to first strategize and prepare spiritually, emotionally and financially for what she describes as a time when things don’t always go as



Raven Paris, author, “The Game Changer”
Photo Credit: Mia Greene

planned.

“It can be uncomfortable to follow your dreams and in that first year especially, it gets lonely as you’re spending an increased amount of time on your new-found passion,” Paris said.

Space for journaling and prompts to help are laced throughout the start-up kit to become or sustain entrepreneurship because while this is a guidebook rich in resources Paris wanted it to be personal.

“I want entrepreneurs to analyze themselves by asking themselves certain questions based on their own industry [to] find their niche and what makes them unique,” she said.

As a self proclaimed seasoned social media mogul Paris has amassed 35.7k followers on her Instagram alone; and is no stranger to the online game that we are all playing as entrepreneurs in 2020. However, it’s not

about the followers, according to Paris who reminds entrepreneurs: “Don’t be driven by the followers but be driven by the intention of what your goals are and gaining believers. Is your intention to inspire? Is it to motivate others? You definitely want to reach as many peoples you can but set bigger intentions than just having a lot of followers.”

Paris is well known in some circles for her local or national notoriety and successes with those aforementioned organizations and following on Instagram, but she hasn’t forgotten fellow entrepreneurs, mentors and friends who have supported her along the way so she has included a guide to Black Businesses in the DMV, New York, and even Atlanta throughout “*The Game Changer*.”

“I just see myself as someone who is trying to change the game and be an example to entrepreneurs that I didn’t have when I came to the game. No one gave me the resources or the tools to be able to thrive as an entrepreneur,” said Raven.

Paris believes her best tool is the ability of her spirit being able to lead her to make certain decisions or not make them. She credits her intimate relationship with God as being what allows her to keep herself away from the distractions and anything else that does not feed her spirit in a positive way. She fasts intermittently and abstains from any lifestyle habits that may take her focus off her new entrepreneurial journey.

“I feel like when you have that relationship with God, it just helps to make things clearer— hard work paired with faith are driving forces in my life,” Paris said. “I’m being used as a vessel by God to be able to allow my community to build their own tables and open their own doors to be able to thrive as entrepreneurs or to just pursue their passion.”



Book Cover
Photo Courtesy of Raven Paris

Baltimore Museum of Art hosts live-streaming conversation

The Necessity of Tomorrow(s): Tarana Burke and Nadya Tolokonnikova

Baltimore— On Thursday, October 22, The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) will host “The Necessity of Tomorrow(s): Tarana Burke and Nadya Tolokonnikova,” a free online conversation with activist and founder of the ‘me too.’ Movement Tarana Burke and conceptual artist and political activist Nadya Tolokonnikova on Facebook Live, YouTube Live, and on bmatomorrows.org.

The event takes place from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. beginning with a performance by the interdisciplinary artist and musician JOJO ABOT. This is followed by conversation with Burke and Tolokonnikova at 6:30 p.m. moderated by Jenna Wortham, a staff writer for *The New York Times Magazine* and co-host of the podcast *Still Processing*. A Q&A with the viewers follows the conversation, as well as a showing of short films from the BMA Screening Room that were selected by the speakers. Additional details are available at bmatomorrows.org.

Tarana Burke has dedicated her life to social justice work and giving strength to those who experienced sexual trauma or harassment. Nadya Tolokonnikova is an artist, political activist, and founding member of the feminist protest art collective Pussy Riot. They have been one of the world’s most prominent activist art groups in recent years, bringing attention to human rights violations in Russia and abroad, and named among the “100 Women of the World” by *Time* magazine in 2012. In addition to writing for *The New York Times Magazine* and podcast, Jenna Wortham is a healer and community care worker oriented towards justice and liberation.

“The Necessity of Tomorrow(s)” is presented this year in conjunction with “2020 Vision,” the BMA’s initiative to highlight the achievements of female-identifying artists and leaders through its exhibitions, programs, and acquisitions. Works by the following artists are currently on view at the museum:



Tarana Burke, activist and founder of the ‘me too.’ Movement
Courtesy Photo/BMA



Nadya Tolokonnikova, conceptual artist and political activist
Courtesy Photo/BMA

Candice Breitz, Zackary Drucker, Valerie Maynard, Elissa Blount Moorhead, Howardena Pindell, Jo Smail, Shinique Smith, and SHAN Wallace, and several other exhibitions will be opening throughout 2021.

Launched in 2017, “The Necessity of Tomorrow(s)” borrows its title from an essay by science fiction author Samuel Delany that argues for the role for creative speculation in making a more just future.

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John Harbaugh shows love for Ravens fans

By Tyler Hamilton

The Baltimore Ravens have become a part of many families in the city and surrounding areas. That is what happens when a team's mindset and style of play embodies the city where it is located. Winning a couple of Super Bowls and being a perennial contender doesn't hurt either.

Ravens head coach John Harbaugh is one of the two coaches who have brought a championship to Baltimore. He is the son of a coach and was raised with a tremendous work ethic and toughness. It's no wonder he is close to the Ravens fans.

Plans to have 7,500 fans at M&T Bank Stadium for Ravens games have not materialized as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to alter everyone's way of living. Harbaugh took time on Monday, October 12, 2020 to let the fans know he was thinking about them.

"I just want to say, we miss our fans. We have a great fan base; that stadium would've been rocking and rolling



Baltimore Ravens head coach John Harbaugh is one of two head coaches to bring a championship to Charm City. Photo Credit: Baltimore Ravens.com

yesterday and they would've been fired up for what they saw. I think they

would've been really into the game," Harbaugh said about last Sunday's game.

He went on to recreate the scene when he drives into the stadium and sees the fans tailgating. Harbaugh said he loves seeing the high-fives and smiling faces as well as the "not so smiling ones."

The drum line at Ravens home games

is one of his favorite parts of the game day experience.

"The thing that's really cool at the game is the drum corps. I don't know if the people on TV get a chance to hear that or not, but that drum corps is first-rate," Harbaugh said with excitement. "It kind of reminds you of Friday night lights out there. I hope it's a tradition. I'm going to put pressure on [Ravens president] Dick Cass right now. That needs to be a tradition that we carry forward here in the future, inside the stadium and outside the stadium, maybe even in the tailgating [lots] when that comes back. That drum corps is really ... it's football, to me, and it really makes a statement."

The Ravens fan experience isn't just at home games. When they take the show on the road, fans go with them. That doesn't go unnoticed by Harbaugh. He hopes to have the fans back at some point as the Ravens make their push towards a third Super Bowl trophy.

"We have great fans, even on the road. We miss you. We hear you. We know you're out there. We know you're cheering, and we really appreciate you. I just wanted to say that. So, thanks to all the people who are watching and care. We'll see you soon when this whole thing gets back to normal," Harbaugh added.

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BCRP holds groundbreaking ceremony for regional recreational facility

By *Demetrius Dillard*

A transformative South Baltimore-based project more than a decade in the making is finally beginning to come to fruition.

The Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks (BCRP) has officially marked the start of construction for the Middle Branch Fitness and Wellness Center at Cherry Hill at the groundbreaking ceremony on the afternoon of September 21, 2020 at Reedbird Park.

The fitness and wellness center will be complemented by an adjacent multi-purpose playing field, providing additional outdoor recreational opportunities for community members. The state-of-the-art complex will be Baltimore City's first-ever regional recreational facility, according to BCRP.

Local and state officials, BCRP executives, community leaders and city residents were at the ceremony to celebrate the groundbreaking of what will be known as the 'super rec center' and may become the new standard of recreation for the city.

"Today is a great day for us here in Baltimore. This has been a journey that has been over a decade in the making to get us to this groundbreaking today," said Mayor Bernard "Jack" Young when sharing remarks, thanking partners that made the project possible. "The city of Baltimore remains committed to the enhancement and reestablishment of recreational facilities and opportunities, of course for our young people, but for all residents of our great city. Partnerships between city and state agencies, local organizations and the community make projects like the Middle Branch Fitness and Wellness Center possible."

The South Baltimore Gateway Partnership, Cal Ripken Sr. Foundation and Cherry Hill Development Corporation partnered with BCRP over the course of the planning and development phases of the project.

"The reality is for much of my lifetime, we've been investing in the failure of young people and not their promise. This is an investment into the

future and promise of young people of Baltimore City," said Council President and Democratic mayoral candidate Brandon Scott. "It will be a shining example of how we can actually do great things in neighborhoods to create great people and help them grow up and be the best people they can be, to make Baltimore the best Baltimore it could be and Cherry Hill the best Cherry Hill it could be. That's what this means to me."

According to a BCRP press release, the 35,000-square-foot, \$23.1 million fitness and wellness center will contain an indoor aquatic center; a community room; fitness studios; a gymnasium with a basketball court; a maker space; and an indoor track.

Funding for the project was made possible by corporate and individual sponsors in addition to the City of Baltimore and the South Baltimore Gateway Partnership.

The outdoor amenities will consist of three additional grass fields, a playground, walking trails, a fishing pier, a dog park, basketball courts, new lighting, and a field house.

Estimated to serve as one of the city's premier regional indoor and outdoor recreational hubs, the complex will also have ties to existing trail networks, including the Gwynns Falls Trail and the Middle Branch Trail.

The facility which is scheduled to open in 2022, is a culmination of what has been in the works since 2008. The estimated time of completion for the adjacent field is spring 2021.

The Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation and its partners are responsible for constructing an 83,000-square-foot synthetic surface field next to the fitness center. The \$2.25 million multi-purpose field will provide a space for baseball, soccer, lacrosse, football, and flag football competition and will be called "BGE Field presented by KELLY."

BCRP will also operate a variety of after-school sports programs and the Ripken Foundation will run its Badges for Baseball program.

Following remarks by the designated individuals, local officials and community members assembled for the ceremonial dig for the groundbreaking.



The Middle Branch Fitness and Wellness Center, a regional recreational facility in Cherry Hill is scheduled to be completed in about 18 months.

Photo Courtesy of BCRP Marketing & Communications



Local officials and community members came together with Baltimore City Recreation and Parks to celebrate to groundbreaking for the Middle Branch Fitness and Wellness Center in Cherry Hill's Reedbird Park on Sept. 21.

Photo Credit: Demetrius Dillard

"It is an opportunity where you can focus on health and wellness, you can focus on community development, but also it's an economic driver for your community," said Reginald Moore, executive director of BCRP.

"What this means is that we'll have a state-of-the-art facility that connects here in Cherry Hill, but also offers opportunities for Westport who has limited to no recreation, and also will offer connections to Brooklyn and the Curtis Bay area.

"We want everyone to come, we want

everyone to be engaged, we want the community to be a part of this... To me it's a win-win for the entire community."

Raheem Brown, the founder and president of Cherry Hill Eagles Youth Development, is a lifelong Cherry Hill resident and was at the groundbreaking ceremony.

"For this to actually happen— this groundbreaking— it's monumental," Brown said. "We really, really needed this football field, we really needed lights. It's been a long time coming, so I'm very excited."

Bowie State students get social to survive the pandemic

Jocelyn Davis
Morgan SCOM Student

A Bowie State University student's social media platform has become a news outlet for students and has helped softened the transition for freshmen staying on campus during Covid-19.

Brian Hill, 25, senior and business major from Washington, D.C., created the social media platform GoFechTV for students to connect and receive news in a more stylish form. Hill's platform became an essential channel for students during quarantine and has eased the transition for freshmen living on campus this year.

"I have freshmen that are wanting to be on the GoFechTV platform. They want to talk to each other on there. They know that people will see them and want to hear about their experience," Hill said.

GoFechTV is a platform that offers seven segments including campus news, religious sermons, cooking shows and much more. Originally created two years ago, Hill's brainchild now has over 4,000 followers on Instagram and averages around 1,500 views per segment.

"Even the president of our school has come on our platform to share news. She enjoys our page a lot," Hill said.

There are nine other students who help create content for the social media site. The students record their segments in their homes and use Instagram Live to interact with their followers. During the



GoFechTV creator Brian Hill looks out on the campus of Bowie State University on October 5, 2019. Photo credit: Simeon Bickersteth

summer while students were quarantined, a cooking segment was created to help those who were on a

budget feed themselves. The platform also kept the Bowie State community engaged with the news of protests and

election coverage.

Twenty-three-year old Julian Cavanaugh, a junior broadcast journalism major and President of WBSU Radio said, "I love GoFech. They have done a lot of good work." Cavanaugh said that the platform has evolved since everything has become virtual. "I think they did a lot better than Bowie State did with communicating the virtual stuff."

According to Bestcolleges.com, social media is becoming the most efficient way for colleges to communicate with their students and share information online.

The College Media Association, the voice of collegiate media and its advisers nationwide, awards the annual Pinnacle award to deserving college media organizations run by students. There were 19 organization finalists throughout America for the 2019-2020 school year, but none was a Maryland institution. Hill hopes to change that soon.

Na'Shae Wagoner, 18, freshman and business major, said she has been following GoFechTV even before she was a student at Bowie.

"I planned to be on campus before Covid, so I would look on their page for updates. They were very active during Covid," Wagoner said. Wagoner said she plans to work for GoFechTV during her freshman year when they develop a new segment. "It's a positive outlet for our peers, especially with everything going on in the world."

While many other universities have their own newspapers and news channels run by students, they are usually chaperoned by a professor. Hill said the GoFechTV platform is completely student governed and covers a range of topics.

GoFechTV is mostly watched by Bowie State students, although Hill has started to reach out to students from other universities to be guests on their segments. Hill dreams of expanding his platform to other HBCUs. "I think every school should have something like this."



Dalila Wilson-Scott promoted to Executive Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer at Comcast

Philadelphia— Comcast Corporation announced that Dalila Wilson-Scott has been promoted to Executive Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer of Comcast Corporation, reporting to Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Brian L. Roberts.

Wilson-Scott will oversee all Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion activities for the corporation. She will also continue to lead the Comcast NBCUniversal Foundation and the company's community impact work.

"Dalila is a fantastic leader and passionate advocate and supporter of our corporate social responsibility efforts, which have been at the heart of our company for decades," said Roberts. "In her new role, she will build on our strong foundation, partnering with leadership teams across our organization to continue to make our company and culture more inclusive, and to help us drive substantive change."

Since joining Comcast, Wilson-Scott has led the Comcast NBCUniversal Foundation and community impact work and will continue to spearhead our charitable giving and philanthropic strategy, including Comcast NBCUniversal's \$100 million commitment to advance social justice and equality. Wilson-Scott also has been deeply involved in the company's digital equity efforts. She will continue to be



Dalila Wilson-Scott will oversee all Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion activities for Comcast Corporation. She will also continue to lead the Comcast NBCUniversal Foundation and the company's community impact work.

Courtesy Photo/Comcast

instrumental in helping identify and build partnerships with organizations to provide the skills training and resources needed for under-resourced communities to succeed in an increasingly digital world.

Prior to joining Comcast, Wilson-Scott spent over 16 years at JPMorgan Chase, where she served as Head of Global Philanthropy and President of the JPMorgan Chase Foundation. In this role, she led the firm's corporate social

responsibility strategy, philanthropic initiatives, and employee engagement and volunteerism, while helping to set the company's overall corporate responsibility strategy. Prior to joining the Office of Corporate Responsibility, she served in the firm's Corporate

Merger Office as an integral member of the team managing the integration of JPMorgan Chase and Bank One.

In addition to serving on the boards of Welcome America, Inc. and Box.org, Wilson-Scott is a member of the Executive Leadership Council. She previously served as a member of the Committee for Economic Development and the Advisory Council of My Brother's Keeper Alliance. She has been named one of the "Most Powerful Women in Cable" by *Cablefax Magazine*, one of the "Most Powerful Women in Business" by *Black Enterprise*, and an "Innovative Rising Star: Building Communities" by *Forbes*. She has been a featured speaker at several forums highlighting impact and innovation in philanthropy, including at the Aspen Ideas Festival, Social Innovation Summit, USC Center on Philanthropy and Public Policy, and the Women's Philanthropy Institute's Annual Symposium.

Wilson-Scott earned an MBA in Finance and Management from New York University's Leonard N. Stern School of Business and a B.A. in Economics from New York University's College of Arts and Science.

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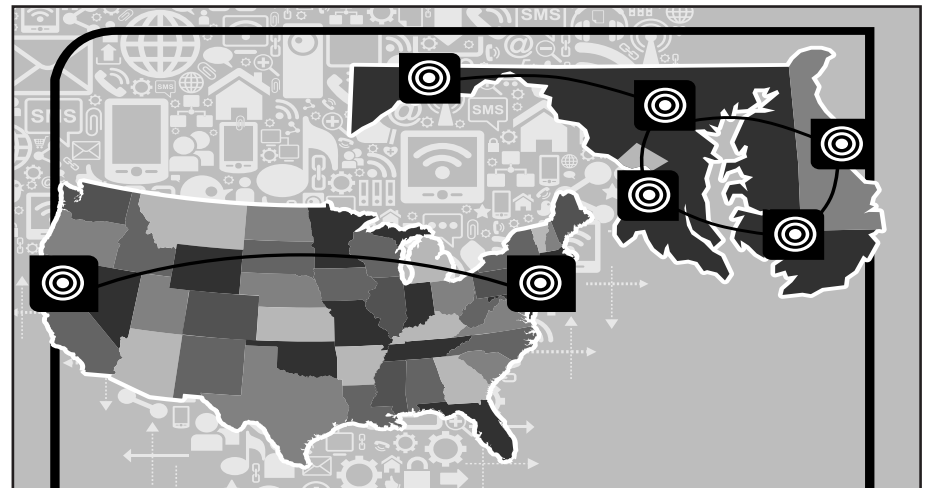
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