

## Free Summer Program Sets Kindergartners on the Path To Success



*Fredrick Adams Jr. receives his diploma at the Waterford Upstart Summer Learning Path graduation in Bolivar County, MS. Offered by Waterford.org, the free program helps to ensure children stay on track over the summer. The program seeks to support students and families who have been affected by COVID-19 either through personal economic hardship or due to the indefinite closure of many PreK and Head Start options. The program provides a free computer and Internet services to families who need them. Last year, 13,000 children across the nation participated in the program. (See article on page 6)*

Photo Courtesy of Kim Fischer

# Minority-Owned Market Slated for La Cité Location

Baltimore— La Cité Development has entered into a definitive agreement to establish Market Fresh Gourmet as a full-service fresh food grocery at its Center\West site.

Construction is anticipated to begin this spring on the northwest corner of the site at Fayette and Schroder Street.

Center\West is a large-scale redevelopment of 32.94 acres of land in the Poppleton neighborhood of Southwest Baltimore.

La Cité Development will ultimately build 3.2 million square feet creating approximately 1,800 units of mixed housing through four phases of construction.

Phase One of Center\West was completed in 2020 and consists of two five-story buildings for a combined 262 apartments.

The agreement will bring an 8,000 square foot grocery on-site to an area considered a food desert— an area with limited access to affordable and nutritious food.

“The quality of produce and nutritious options inside a local grocery store will tell you a lot about the surrounding community, and residents in the Poppleton neighborhood deserve better,” Mayor Brandon M. Scott said in a statement. “This City\West venture helps address the food desert predicament in Southwest Baltimore by expanding access to healthy food while also providing job opportunities to local residents. I look forward to welcoming Market Fresh Gourmet to the community.”

According to a news release, Market Fresh Gourmet, a minority-owned Maryland-based business, in partnership with Arctaris Impact Fund, a fund focused on building sustainable



*An 8,000 square foot grocery is planned on-site as part of the development in the Poppleton neighborhood, an area which considered a food desert— an area with limited access to affordable and nutritious food.* Courtesy Photo La Cité

communities in Baltimore City, will focus on local employment opportunities with recruitment and training efforts through its workforce development programs.

The grocer will provide fresh foods and prepared foods along with classes and special events for the neighborhood. As other phases of the Center\West project come online, the grocer will also expand its footprint.

“We have long appreciated that the Center\West development would be a catalyst for other growth and development in the Poppleton area,” said Acting Housing Commissioner Alice Kennedy. “When these opportunities manifest in a way that supports the expansion and development of other minority-owned businesses, we

achieve an even more equitable outcome.”

“Our entire business is about improving neighborhoods and uncompromising quality of life,” said Dan Bythewood, Jr., president and managing partner of La Cité Development. “We welcome the Market Fresh Gourmet brand as one of our newest partners and look forward to

welcoming additional partners as we continue to invest in the area.”

“We’re excited to work with La Cité Development in bringing our brand to Southwest Baltimore,” said Mario Minor, CEO. “On behalf of the Market Fresh team, we’re ready to serve the community by offering fresh, affordable selections and integrated technologies to support all shopping options. Along with recruiting and training associates locally, we also look forward to offering local products and helping others gain exposure and build their brands.”

City Council President Nick J. Mosby said “life gets better for our residents when government works in partnership with the private sector to create results like bringing Market Fresh Gourmet to a food desert.”

BDC is “excited to attract a quality, full service, Black-owned grocery store to the Poppleton neighborhood, and we welcome the first Market Fresh Gourmet to the city,” said Colin Tarbert, president and CEO of the Baltimore Development Corporation (BDC). “Not only is the grocery store a great amenity to the Center\West development, but it will also provide job opportunities to the surrounding community, and BDC is proud to have worked with Market Fresh Gourmet in finding this location and will continue to assist their expansion in Baltimore.”

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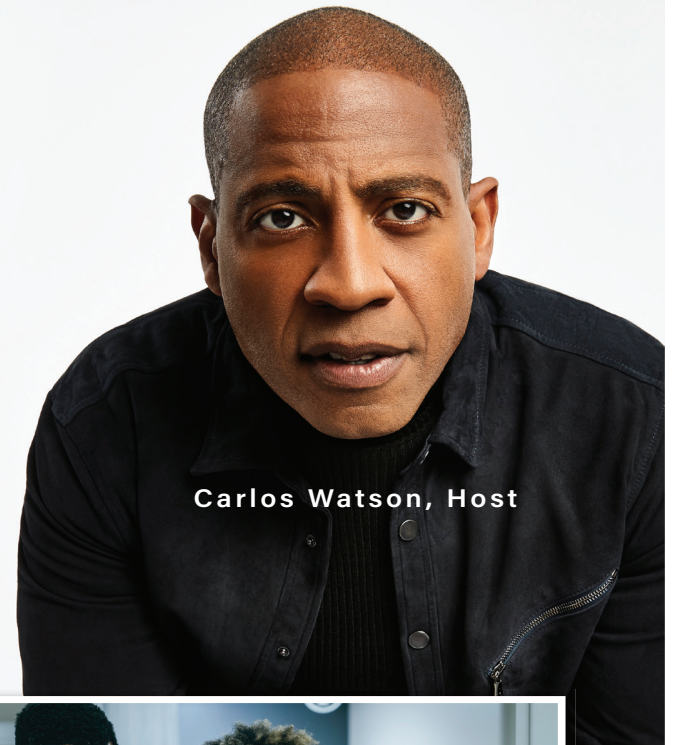
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# BLACK HEALTH IN AMERICA

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Real Talk Real Change is back with episode two where we discuss COVID, Pregnancy & Doctors in the Black community.



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# Guest Editorials/Letters

## Congress Members Urge Vaccination During Black Press Week

By Stacy M. Brown, NNPA Newswire Senior National Correspondent

@StacyBrownMedia

House Majority Whip James Clyburn (D-S.C.) and Congressman Dwight Evans (D-Penn.) praised President Joe Biden's \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan and urged African Americans to get vaccinated.

"Protect your children and your grandchildren, protect those who you come in contact with," Congressman Clyburn stated during the annual National Newspaper Publishers Association Fund's (NNPAF) Black Press Week.

"Take the shot. It's safe to do," the congressman declared during an interview with Real Times Media President and CEO Hiram Jackson.

He noted that some would experience side effects of some sort, but each of the three vaccines offers a 95 percent rate of effectiveness.

"If you have a 95 percent chance – I would play the lottery every day if I had a 95 percent chance of winning," exclaimed Clyburn, who received the NNPAF's Newsmaker of the Year Award.

Black Press Week began opened with an enthusiastic welcome from NNPAF Chair and Marshall Broadcasting Group CEO, Pluria Marshall Jr., who introduced the theme, "Black Business Challenges, Responsibilities and Opportunities Amidst COVID-19 Pandemic."

Like Clyburn, Evans also championed both the vaccination and the American Rescue Plan, which this month provided \$1,400 stimulus payments to most Americans.

"The Biden-Harris administration determined that we had to first crush the virus and get shots in the arms of the people," Evans stated. "Small businesses, particularly Black-owned, are the backbone of the economy. The American Rescue Plan recognizes that and makes grants and loans available to small businesses, including the Black Press, and that is a major step. President Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris have shown the kind of leadership and understanding the needs of getting this economy back – if not better."

The American Rescue Plan allows for the first \$10,200 of unemployment payments tax-free, and those who receive food stamps will see a 15 percent increase in those benefits through September.

Families whose children's schools have remained closed are also in line to receive EBT benefits through the summer.

The legislation sends \$350 billion to state and local governments, including \$20 billion to help low-income households cover back rent and utility bills and \$14 billion for vaccine research, development, and distribution. It also contains a provision that allows families with minor children to claim a more considerable tax credit this year.

Those who qualify would receive a child tax credit of \$3,600 for each child under six.

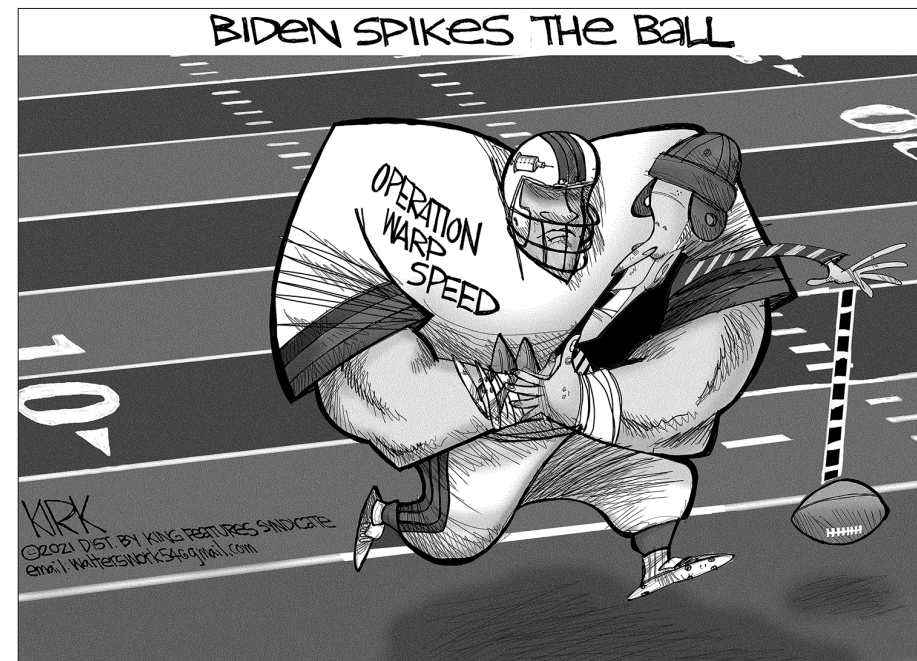
Families will also receive \$3,000 for each under age 18, up from the current credit of up to \$2,000 per child under age 17.

Food stamp recipients will receive a 15 percent increase through September, and \$15 billion will go to the Emergency Injury Disaster Loan Program, which provides long-term, low-interest loans from the Small Business Administration.

Severely impacted small businesses with fewer than ten workers will receive priority for some of the money. Additionally, more people will qualify for higher premium subsidies through the Affordable Care Act while \$8.5 billion is earmarked for rural hospitals and health care providers.

Evans said the Biden-Harris administration, which is touring the country to discuss the American Rescue Plan's importance, believes the Black Press is essential in getting the word out. "I understand the significance of the Black Press to building back better," Evans remarked.

"The Black Press is a major player in this rebuild. And when you talk about the Black Press in terms of the economy, there's no way in the world you can talk about building back better without the participation of the Black Press. The president and the vice president fully understand how the Black Press plays in this equation."



## Letters to the Editor

### Editor:

Re: U.S. Minorities Are Successful

In contrast to many countries, the United States, with its prevalence of schools and opportunities for all people, and due to its diversity and openness, boasts a broad spectrum of educated, intelligent and successful citizens in all disciplines who represent our entire population. This tends to promote harmony and equality.

Minorities in the United States succeeding due to their desire for an education and their qualities of perseverance and motivation. They include Asian Americans, Indian Americans (from India), Cuban Americans, Nigerian Americans and Mormon Americans. Jewish Americans are successful because they have availed themselves of the opportunities in the United States.

However, minorities in the United States, including: Jews, Blacks, Latinos,

Indians, and Asian Americans and others continue to be discriminated against. A recent rash of assaults have been committed against Asian Americans.

Asian Americans helped build this country over the past 170 years, including the transcontinental railroad; and many of them are highly educated and are doctors, scientists, engineers, educators and business executives.

Educational and employment opportunities for all, and rewards and recognition for successful people regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation makes the United States the envy of the world because of our perseverance and will to succeed. We are all integral parts of the greatest country in the world.

**Donald Moskowitz**  
Londonderry, NH

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## Prophetic Politics and Black America: “What Will You Do unto the Least of These?”

By Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr.,  
National Newspaper Publishers  
Association President and CEO

If it were not for the Black Church in America, our long struggle for freedom, justice, equality, equity and empowerment would not have made the progress that has been accomplished over the past 500 to 400 years. I speak in the tradition of my Presbyterian great-great grandfather, The Reverend John Chavis (1763-1838) in North Carolina and The Reverend Nat Turner (1800-1831) in Virginia.

Depending on when you define the beginning of the international Transatlantic Slave Trade will give you a deeper insight on why the religious, political, and historical perspectives of people of African descent still matter in the United States and across the African Diaspora in 2021.

The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr in his theological genius, courage, and

prophetic utterances, challenged all of us when he clearly stated, “An injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” Black church leaders uphold the tradition of speaking truth to power.

It is, therefore, a reaffirmation of my faith in the oneness of God and the oneness of humanity that I must join to publicly support my African American clergy leaders in Washington, DC and across the nation who dare to remind even some of our own local African American elected officials that we all should stand for helping those among us who are less fortunate, poor, homeless, malnourished, imprisoned, returning-from-prison, and destitute.

To that end, a group of distinguished African American clergy leaders and other community leaders on March 9, 2021 sent an urgent letter of concern to The Honorable Vincent C. Gray, DC Ward 7 City Councilmember and former Mayor of Washington, DC. I consider Vincent Gray a friend that I have admired over the past years.

The ministers expressed their strong objection to an effort that Councilmember Gray is leading to terminate the contract of the service provider currently running the short-term housing program at The Horizon in Ward 7.

As the letter points out, that program has been delivering an essential service to families in desperation and facing homelessness; and the social service provider that the city entrusted to provide this essential service, CORE DC, has been lauded by city officials as a dedicated and ideal partner.

It is therefore troubling that anyone would want to end this, particularly since the program is a bedrock of

stability for those most in need, as well as a transformative centerpiece of Washington, DC Mayor Muriel Bowser’s effective fight against poverty in the nation’s capital city. The ministers argue that Councilmember Gray’s effort has nothing to do with the exemplary services CORE DC continues to provide. Instead, the ministers say this is all driven by Councilmember Gray’s opposition to a completely unrelated project involving the federal government’s plan to contract CORE DC to provide critically needed reentry services for men returning home from periods of incarceration in federal prison.

We hope that is not, in fact, what’s unfolding, particularly at a time when a pandemic has exacerbated the desperation of individuals who are on the economic margins of society, but the ministers are nevertheless adamant in their plea.

“The effort to dismantle this program is troubling enough on its own,” the ministers write. “But it is even worse in light of the fact that you have openly—and at times inexplicably—taken a hostile stance against CORE DC regarding the organization’s plans to open another facility in Ward 7, a residential reentry center for returning citizens.”

I am hopeful and prayerful that Councilmember Gray will respond affirmatively and will heed the requests of church and community leaders to support CORE DC and The Horizon residential facilities in Ward 7 to continue to offer critical needed services to DC’s homeless and those returning citizens from prisons and jails.

There will always be political differences among elected officials. Yet,

differences of opinion about public policies among elected officials should never rise to the occasion to permit a turning of backs on the poor and the homeless. In other words, those who are privileged to make decisions that will impact the quality of life of others should always be concerned about the least of those among us.

All of the major metropolitan areas in the United States are facing the challenges of homelessness and poverty. While we live in the richest nation in the world, we cannot afford to lose sight of our mutual civic and moral responsibilities to be our “brothers’ and sisters’ keepers.”

The following biblical scripture reference should apply to all urban public policymakers: “What you do unto the least of these, you do also unto me.” That is why I use the term “prophetic politics” as the act of political decision-making as a reaffirmation and practice of one’s faith and commitment to serve all of humankind fairly and justly.

The Black Press of America grew out of the Black Church 194 years ago with the publication of Freedom’s Journal in New York City in 1827 by John Russwurm and The Reverend Samuel Cornish. We knew back then as we know today that we must continue “to plead our own cause,” to demand freedom and equality. This also means that we are obligated to plead with each other to treat one another fairly and equitably as well.

*Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr. is President and CEO of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) and Executive Producer and Host of The Chavis Chronicles (TCC) on PBS TV stations across the U.S. and can be reached at dr.bchavis@nnpa.org.*

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# Free Summer Program Sets Kindergartners on the Path To Success

*Waterford.org Targeting Families Impacted by COVID-19*

*By Ursula V. Battle*

If you are a parent caught in the puzzling equation of having to find a viable solution to keep your kindergartener learning through the summer months despite the challenges brought on by COVID-19, Waterford.org has the answer. The education nonprofit is offering the Waterford Upstart Summer Learning Path, a free program that helps to ensure Maryland children stay on track over the summer. The program seeks to support students and families who have been affected by COVID-19, either through personal economic hardship or due to the indefinite closure of many PreK and Head Start options.

“In the midst of a once-in-a-lifetime pandemic, an at-home solution like the Waterford Upstart Summer Learning Path has proven to be not only effective in educating our youngest learners, but also a necessity for many families,” said Claudia Miner, Waterford Upstart Executive Director and co-founder. “Thanks to our generous philanthropic partners, hundreds of Maryland families won’t have to worry about the learning loss associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. They can feel confident their children will walk into their first day of kindergarten prepared and ready to learn.”

This is the second year that Waterford.org has offered the Summer Learning Path program. Waterford.org seeks to blend the best aspects of learning science, mentoring relationships, and innovative technologies to form community, school, and home programs that deliver excellence and equity for all learners.



*Kylie Yellowman Williams from the Navajo Nation flashes a big grin as she opens her new computer for the first time.* Photo Courtesy of Kim Fischer

According to the organization, in the summer of 2020, more than 13,000 children across nine states registered for the Waterford Upstart Summer Learning Path. Waterford.org also noted using the software five days a week over the course of 13 weeks, children achieved an average grade equivalence of “Kindergarten Advanced” level—which is where most children score at the end of their kindergarten year.

Kim Fischer is National Spokesperson and Vice President of Communication for Waterford.org.

“We launched Waterford Upstart Summer Learning Path as a result of COVID-19,” said Fischer. “Our funders came to us and asked what they could do to help make sure kids kept learning over the summer months. We were able to get this program together in about two weeks. Every aspect of the Summer Learning Path was made possible thanks to our donors and funders.

“Once children fall behind, it’s hard to

catch-up. The program helps to fill the gap in learning. This program takes place in the home and gives families all the tools they need.”

With the Waterford Upstart Summer Learning Path, parents receive weekly calls from a personal coach. Additionally, notifications through Waterford’s app let them know what their child is learning and suggest ways to engage together offline.

Children use Waterford Upstart’s personalized online program 20 minutes a day, 5 days a week during the condensed summer program. According to Waterford.org, this allows students to achieve the number of program minutes necessary to be kindergarten-ready and still falls well within the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and World Health Organization’s recommendations of no more than one hour of screen time per day for four-year-old children. The program also provides laptops and Internet access to

families who need them.

“We are focusing on reaching families whose kids have been most impacted by COVID,” she said. We were able to help 13,000 kids, but one of the things most difficult in fall 2020 was not being on the ground meeting people, going door-to-door, and visiting Headstart and WIC locations where we might find families in need of our services.

“When we started the Summer Learning Path last summer, some of our biggest partners were school districts trying to find families they knew would be hurting and sign them up for this program. We were able to provide our school districts with the Summer Learning Path to keep learning going. We had to have our graduation online, but are looking forward to when we can have them in person.”

According to Fischer, the program is available to 700 families across Maryland and begins May 25, 2021, and concludes September 1, 2021.

“It’s the foundation of literacy that is the number one goal of this program,” said Fischer. “We want to make sure children have that foundation entering kindergarten. We want them to be confident because that means so much to these little ones. When kids enter kindergarten and see other students know their letters and numbers and they don’t, that really affects them. We want to put them on the path to literacy. Many of our kindergartners enter already reading on a first-grade level. We want children to know early on, they can learn and be good at education.”

For more information about the Waterford Upstart Summer Learning Path or to apply visit <https://www.waterford.org/upstart/summer-learning-path/>.

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# Bill Lester's Memoir 'Winning In Reverse'

## Charts His Triumphs, Challenges Breaking Barriers in NASCAR

By Nadine Matthews

Google "Civil Rights Movement" and you're likely to find photos of throngs of Black people sitting together at counters, meeting in churches, marching side by side in streets; strengthened by the knowledge that they are in the fight together. In certain spaces, when some people fight for justice, for all intents and purposes, they fight alone. Today, these spaces are the ballet companies, golf courses, palaces in England, and NASCAR race tracks. Those who take on these fights are usually pioneers and more significantly, barrier breakers. The fights they wage are usually quiet, brutal, and though highly visible, very lonely.

Like most sports that remain mainly white, capital is a huge barrier to entry in car racing. It costs money to be able to race cars. Persistent structural inequities work to keep many African-Americans out.

William Lester III's blistering memoir "Winning In Reverse," charts his battle to make inroads as a Black man in one of America's most segregated sports, NASCAR racing. Lester's book is part memoir, part motivational guide, sprinkled with wisdom gleaned from traveling the road less traveled.

Winning In Reverse is a delight for sports nerds, with its explicit attention to the intricacies of car racing, and Lester's extraordinary talent at capturing the emotions of being in a race car speeding around a track, under various conditions. Admittedly, you have to be a pretty eager enthusiast to really appreciate these sections of the book, but the passion with which Lester writes is captivating.

Lester was an outlier in another very important way as well. He entered the sport professionally in middle age, seeing no clear way into sustaining a racing career before that. A degree in engineering from UC Berkeley secured him an enviable job at tech company, Hewlett Packard, where he stayed for fifteen years, racing when he could during his free time.



*NASCAR Driver Bill Lester, author of "Winning In Reverse"*

Photo Credit: Bill Lester

At a time in his career when he could have nimbly stepped into upper management, Lester left his job. As he stated in the book, "Being on the fast track in the relatively early and heady days of Silicon Valley didn't hold much appeal for me. I was living for the weekends and the racing it would bring."

Within a year of leaving, Lester competed at coveted Daytona and established a factory relationship with Chevrolet in NASCAR. He went on to compete, as the only African-American, in the NASCAR Truck Series for roughly five years. On May 14, 2011, Lester made sports car history by becoming the first African-American driver to win in any Grand-Am division. In 2006 he qualified for the Nextel Cup becoming the first African-American to make a Cup race in twenty years.

The ride, however, wasn't a smooth one, though Lester had a number of

achievements. He hit plenty of bumps in the road, mostly due to the entrenched feeling that NASCAR was a sport only for certain types of people (that is, not Black people).

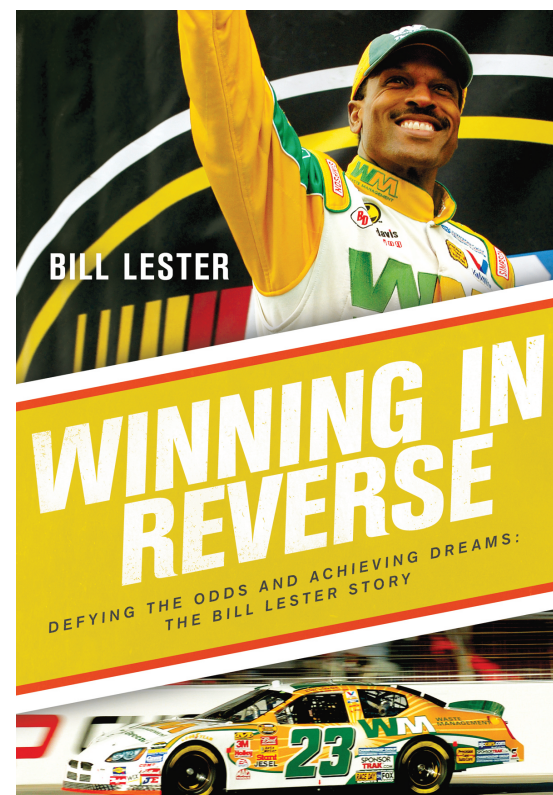
In *Winning In Reverse* he shares what he learned after working with a particular support crew, that there was ongoing sabotage. His cars and equipment weren't maintained in such a way as to ensure he had the best chances at winning. Because others maintained his car (and his safety) speaking out was a complicated proposition.

Raised upper middle class in Silicon Valley (he practiced as a teen in his mother's BMW), getting into racing wasn't an issue for Lester. Staying in racing however, requires regular inputs of large amounts of capital, usually in the form of corporate sponsorships. Though Lester did well in showings, sponsors weren't showing up.

The difficulties spurred Lester's efforts

to promote diversity over years of fitful starts and stops. Lukewarm commitment and conflicts of interest worked to dilute the impact of the diversity efforts Lester almost single handedly, championed.

His encounter with basketball legend Magic Johnson starkly illustrates the difficulties of diversifying the sport. Johnson was brought in with great fanfare by the NASCAR Executive Steering Committee to help move forward minority business opportunities and participation in the sport. The pair met and Johnson seemed to really understand the issues Lester was dealing with. In the end, nothing came of it. Lester wrote that Johnson, "Ended up leaving the Executive Steering Committee on Diversity rather inconspicuously." Ultimately, Lester continued his fight virtually alone.



*Cover of Bill Lester's memoir, Winning In Reverse. Photo Credit: Pegasus Books*

# Guard Kevin Zeitler fits Ravens' like a glove

By Tyler Hamilton

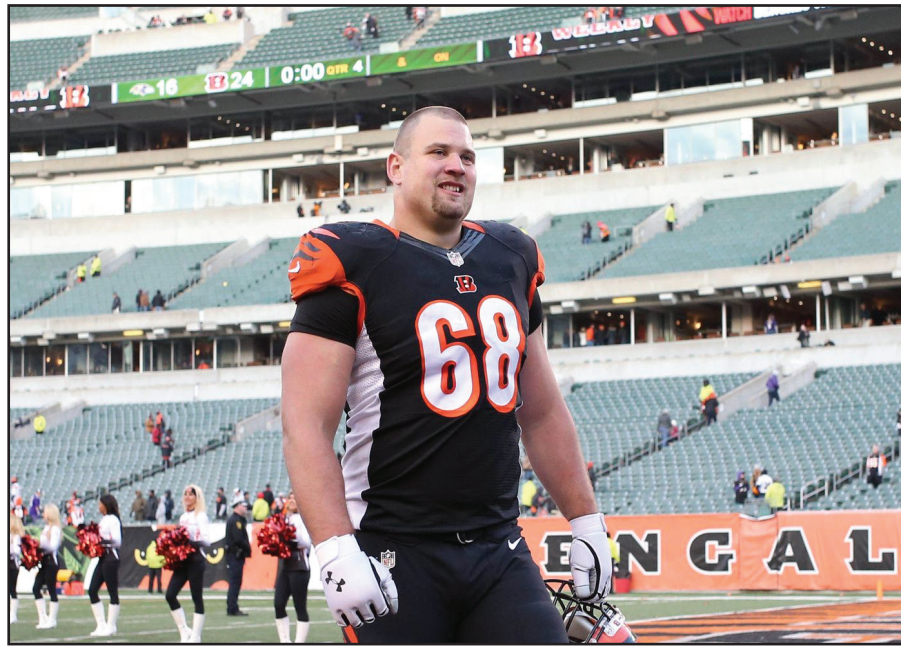
The Baltimore Ravens have been desperately in need of an interior offensive lineman since guard Marshall Yanda retired after the 2019 season. Ravens general manager Eric DeCosta believes they may have found the perfect guy for the job.

Baltimore signed guard Kevin Zeitler to a three-year, \$22.5 million contract soon after the veteran was released by the Cincinnati Bengals. Past experience in the AFC North with the Bengals and Cleveland Browns has made Zeitler very familiar with what the Ravens seek to do on the field.

The Ravens ranked first in the NFL in rushing yards per game each of the last two seasons. Their emphasis on running the ball fits a bulldozing blocker like Zeitler very well.

“Every O-lineman you ask, ‘Hey, what do you want to do?’ They all want to be run-blocking, because that usually means you have the lead, or you’re controlling the game, or dominating up front. The Ravens have established that that’s what they’re going to do, and I have a hard time believing they’re going to change that up now,” Zeitler said on his introductory press conference. “After talking to Coach [John Harbaugh] and everything, I thought it fit what I do well with my run blocking and everything. I just thought for me and my family right now, Baltimore was the place to be.”

The Ravens had to shuffle players around the offensive line last year due to injuries. Losing left tackle Ronnie Stanley was a tough pill to swallow.



*The Baltimore Ravens signed guard Kevin Zeitler to a three-year, \$22.5 million contract soon after the veteran was released by the Cincinnati Bengals.*

Photo Credit: Aaron Doster/USA TODAY Sports

They flipped Orlando Brown from right tackle to left tackle to fill his place. Then guard Ben Bredeson suffered a knee injury in January, which puts his presence on the field in jeopardy for training camp.

All of the injuries make the Zeitler signing a good one because of the 31-year-old’s durability over his career. The nine-year veteran has only missed five games over his career.

Yanda was a fairly durable player as well. He played in 13 or more games in all but two seasons of his 13-year NFL career. Zeirler is no stranger to the greatness that Yanda possessed. In fact,

he respects the overall history of the Ravens offensive line.

“The Ravens have a nice offensive line history,” Zeitler said. “You think of Yanda, some of the tackles and the current tackles. It’s not so much about being Marshal, it’s about being the best version of me I can be.”

Last season was a major test for the Ravens after Yanda’s abrupt retirement. The team struggled to find a replacement guard and had to use a collection of players to make up for his loss. Baltimore’s rushing attack still finished with similar results. They backed up the 2019 season average of 206 rushing yards per game with a 191.9 yards per game average in 2020.

That total was in large part thanks to dynamic quarterback Lamar Jackson who finished with over 1,000 rushing yards for his second consecutive season. Zeitler was tasked with the unenviable job of stopping Jackson last season with the Bengals. He got a first-hand look at how explosive Jackson could be in the four times the Ravens faced off against Cincinnati in the last couple of years.

Now that Zeitler is a member of the Ravens, he is glad to have Jackson as a teammate.

“After going against him many times and losing many times, I’m very excited for him to be on my side this time. The things he can do at any given time, I mean ... I really don’t know if there’s a player in the NFL that can do it like him. There definitely isn’t, and that’s exciting. It’s a really cool opportunity to work with that,” Zeitler said.

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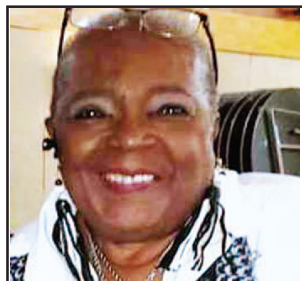
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# Rambling Rose

Local entrepreneur chosen  
as the first “Face of Tourism”



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Hello everyone, hoping my words find you and your family safe and healthy. I hope you all are still wearing your mask and staying socially distanced whether you have had your vaccine shots or not. I believe the light is at the end of the tunnel— just hang in there.

Now I want to talk about two friends of mine that I am so proud of. I want to mention them to you so that you can give them the standing ovation they deserve. They did well and Baltimore is even more special because of them.

First, I am going to talk about Michael E. Haynie, Sr. Let me tell you, he has taken Baltimore to its highest in the hospitality industry. Prior to launching Parkway, the Northeastern University graduate served as vice-president and managing director of Baltimore’s Tremont Hotels, spearheading the debut of the historic, award-winning Tremont Grand events venue. In addition to a highly successful career as an hotelier, Haynie has been a major force in a wide variety of industry, political and community organizations serving as an officer or president of over a dozen state and community based organizations chief among them, the establishment of Baltimore’s National Academy Foundation High School (NAF), as co-chairman. Mr. Haynie is the CEO of Global Training Center, LLC and the Maryland Center of Hospitality Training. I really could go on and on about this guy who recently this month, was chosen as the first “Face of Tourism” by the Maryland Tourism Coalition. Michael I am so proud to call you my friend. All of this you deserve, God knows you worked for it.

I also want to tell you about another good friend of mine. Her name is Edna Lawrence. She is a gifted and talented artist. She is a quilt maker among many other things. “Grandmother Edna,” as she

prefers to be called has a passion for the educational and social development of all children. She says she is a proud descendant of the Bamile’Ke’ people from the highlands in Cameroon. Recently, Grandmother Edna received nominations for her art of a quilt. Her double award is for a hand-sewn quilt she made honoring Griot mother Mary Carter Smith. Absolutely, beautiful! Congrats to you Grandmother Edna.

I am telling you, Baltimore is “jumping up and down, doing the James Brown.” We have some very gifted and talented people in Baltimore and we should always give them their praise. That also includes another one of our Baltimore well-known figures, Umar Marvin McDowell, the executive director, founder and president of Umar Boxing Program from 1996 to present. He was the head coach from 2006-2008 for the East Central Region 2 boxing team. He has been involved in boxing since 1972. McDowell started the program to provide hope and opportunity to Baltimore City’s at-risk youth. He is also a former professional boxer and member of Maryland’s Boxing Hall of Fame. It is a true pleasure to have such an activist in our town. Well done, Umar! Well done! Thanks for having such passion for our youth.

Well my dear friends, I have got to go, I had a very busy day. Shorty and I went to Dante’s farewell party at his restaurant in Randallstown. It was so great getting out and socializing a little bit. We had a couple of cocktails and dinner with our dear friend and journalist partner in the nightlife, Valerie Fraling. We will tell you all about it next time. We had a BALL!!! Remember if you need me, call me at 410-833-9474. NOT TEXT, but call or email me at [rosapryor@aol.com](mailto:rosapryor@aol.com). **UNTIL THE NEXT TIME, I’M MUSICALLY YOURS.**



Umar Marvin McDowell with Vincent T. Pettway at New Shiloh Baptist Church. Vincent Pettway is the former IBF Junior Middleweight champ. He did a presentation for the youth in the organization, mentoring young males in the hood in Baltimore, sponsored by Cameron Miles.



Edna Lawrence received nominations for her art. Her double award is for a hand, sewn quilt she made honoring Griot Mother Mary Carter Smith. Congrats to you Edna!



Michael E. Haynie, Sr. is very humbled to have been chosen as the first “Face of Tourism,” by the Maryland Tourism Coalition. Haynee is the CEO of Global Training Center LLC and the Maryland Center of Hospitality Training. Congratulations my dear friend. Well deserved.

# Study suggests drinking caffeinated coffee may reduce heart failure

By Stacy M. Brown

Dietary information from three large, well-known heart disease studies, suggest that drinking one or more cups of caffeinated coffee may reduce heart failure risk, according to research published on February 9, 2021.

in “Circulation: Heart Failure,” an American Heart Association journal.

Coronary artery disease, heart failure and stroke are among the top causes of death from heart disease in the U.S.

“While smoking, age and high blood pressure are among the most well-known heart disease risk factors, unidentified risk factors for heart disease remain,” David P. Kao, M.D., senior author of the study, assistant professor of cardiology and medical director at the Colorado Center for Personalized Medicine at the University of Colorado School of Medicine in Aurora, Colorado, remarked in a news release.

“The risks and benefits of drinking coffee have been topics of ongoing scientific interest due to the popularity and frequency of consumption worldwide,” added Linda Van Horn, Ph.D., R.D., professor and Chief of the Department of Preventive Medicine’s Nutrition Division at the Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago, and member of the American Heart Association’s Nutrition Committee.

“Studies reporting associations with outcomes remain relatively limited due to inconsistencies in diet assessment and analytical methodologies, as well as inherent problems with self-reported dietary intake,” Dr. Van Horn relayed in the release.

Dr. Kao and his colleagues used



machine learning through the American Heart Association’s Precision Medicine Platform to examine data from the original cohort of the Framingham Heart Study and referenced it against data from both the Atherosclerosis Risk in Communities Study and the Cardiovascular Health Study to help confirm their findings.

Each study included at least 10 years of follow-up, and, collectively, the studies provided information on more than 21,000 U.S. adult participants.

To analyze the outcomes of drinking caffeinated coffee, researchers categorized consumption as 0 cups per

day, 1 cup per day, 2 cups per day and at least 3 cups per day.

Across the three studies, coffee consumption was self-reported, and no standard unit of measure was available.

The analysis revealed:

In all three studies, people who reported drinking one or more cups of caffeinated coffee had an associated decreased long-term heart failure risk. In the Framingham Heart and the Cardiovascular Health studies, the risk of heart failure over the course of decades decreased by 5-to-12 percent per cup per day of coffee, compared with no coffee consumption.

In the Atherosclerosis Risk in Communities Study, the risk of heart failure did not change between 0 to 1 cup per day of coffee; however, it was about 30 percent lower in people who drank at least 2 cups a day.

Importantly, drinking decaffeinated coffee appeared to have an opposite effect on heart failure risk – significantly increasing the risk of heart failure in the Framingham Heart Study.

In the Cardiovascular Health Study; however, there was no increase or decrease in risk of heart failure associated with drinking decaffeinated coffee.

According to findings released, when the researchers examined this further, they found caffeine consumption from any source appeared to be associated with decreased heart failure risk, and caffeine was at least part of the reason for the apparent benefit from drinking more coffee.

“The association between caffeine and heart failure risk reduction was surprising. Coffee and caffeine are often considered by the general population to be ‘bad’ for the heart because people associate them with palpitations, high blood pressure, etc.,” Dr. Kao noted in the release. “The consistent relationship between increasing caffeine consumption and decreasing heart failure risk turns that assumption on its head. However, there is not yet enough clear evidence to recommend increasing coffee consumption to decrease risk of heart disease with the same strength and certainty as stopping smoking, losing weight or exercising.”

To view the full study, visit <https://www.ahajournals.org/journal/circ/heartfailure>.

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