



The Annapolis Times

Vol. 29 No. 50 October 15 - 21, 2021

A Baltimore Times/Times of Baltimore Publication

AOC and The Squad Can Teach the Congressional Black Caucus a Lesson or Two!

By Peter Bramble

There is a small group of Congresswomen: Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY, District 14), Ilhan Omar (D-MN, District 5), Ayanna Pressley (D-MA, District 7), Rashida Talib (D-MI, District 13) and Cori Bush (D-MO, District 1), known charmingly as “The Squad” who are perhaps the most powerful coalition of power in the current Congress of the United States of America.

Amazingly, most of them have been recently elected to Congress. At least two of them are refugees, recent immigrants to the USA. They are all women. They seem to know what they and their constituents want and they effectively work to make sure they get it. These ladies of The Squad have become so powerful. Although there are just five of them out of 435 Congress persons, they can fashion legislation, hold up legislation and even sink legislation that they believe is contrary or not beneficial to their interests. What great power, for good or evil, these five congresswomen, with little legislative experience in terms of years in service, wield!

Currently, the great and powerful Squad is holding up two major pieces of legislation in Congress. They are demanding that both pieces of legislation, which could cost us more than \$5 trillion be yoked together. If not, with their five votes in a Congress so closely divided, that as few as four votes can topple any legislation. They are the reigning queens.

Continued on page 12

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Two Women Give Personal Perspectives



Ricki Fairley is an Annapolitan who founded Touch, The Black Breast Cancer Alliance. The 10-year survivor of stage 3A triple-negative breast cancer was once given two years to live. Fairley now works as an advocate who wants to get rid of Black breast cancer. She raises awareness about the importance of Black women participating in clinical trial research, and the presence of higher mortality statistics. Fairley also promotes fighting breast cancer through early detection, in addition to providing resource information, and collaborating with pharmaceutical companies. (See article on page 8) Courtesy Photo

What you need to know about renewing your driver's license and Real ID

By Margaret Henn

Question: I received a notice that my driver's license was expiring, but when I went to the MVA to try to renew it, they turned me away because my name didn't match exactly on all my documents. What do I do?

Answer: Unfortunately, a lot of Marylanders are experiencing the same challenge as you when trying to renew their driver's license or state identification. Your problem is caused by new requirements imposed by the REAL ID Act.

You may have heard the term REAL ID, but what does it mean? The REAL ID Act requires two things. 1) The MVA must create licenses that are hard to tamper with; and 2) individuals must provide required documents to prove their identity. To receive the updated REAL ID compliant card, you must prove your age, identity, social security, and Maryland residency. Age and identity are most often proved by a birth certificate or a passport and social security by an original social security card or tax documents like a W-2 or 1099. Residency can be proved through a variety of documents, including vehicle registration, bank account statement, utility bill, lease, mortgage statement, etc.



Margaret Henn is the Director of Program Management at the Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service (MVLS). MVLS focuses on housing, consumer, family, estate, tax, and criminal record relief issues for Marylanders of limited means.
Photo Credit: John Waire, The WaireHouse

As you mentioned, if your name does not match exactly on all of your documents, the MVA will likely not be able to issue you a REAL ID. This can prove to be a particular problem for certain groups of people: some older adults are experiencing problems when they arrive at the MVA with their issued birth registration, rather than a birth

certificate, which is not an acceptable document. Women who have been married and/or divorced and changed their names must provide additional court documents. It is not uncommon for someone to have a birth certificate with a name listed that is a bit different than the name someone has listed on the driver's license and/or social security card. These individuals may have to seek a name change through the Courts to align their documents.

Readers may be wondering why they should worry about becoming REAL ID compliant. In order to use your driver's license at an airport or to enter a federal facility, you will need to have your REAL ID by May 3, 2023. If your

driver's license is set to expire by that deadline, you will need to provide the necessary documents for REAL ID before then (it is possible this deadline will be extended if the pandemic related state of emergency is still in effect). After May 3, 2023, your identification will be recalled. If your driver's license is set to expire after the deadline you can wait to become REAL ID compliant until your expiration date, but you won't be able to use your driver's license for use at an airport or federal facility. If you're not REAL ID compliant by either the deadline, or on your expiration date, your license or ID card will be recalled. If pulled over by the police your license will be taken and you risk fines for driving without a valid license.

For people like the reader who posted this question, they may need to go through a lengthy name change process with the Courts to get their REAL ID. Therefore, readers should start thinking about this issue now, gathering the necessary documents and making sure they all match. If you are not sure whether you are REAL ID compliant already, you can check here: <http://www.mva.maryland.gov/realid/realidlookup.html>.

Margaret Henn is the Director of Program Management at the Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service (MVLS). MVLS focuses on housing, consumer, family, estate, tax, and criminal record relief issues for Marylanders of limited means. MVLS does assist with name change cases, which are sometimes needed to get your Real ID, and can be reached at www.mvlslaw.org or 410-547-6537 Mondays-Thursdays between 9am and 12pm.

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The Annapolis Times

(USPS 5840) is published every Friday by *The Baltimore Times/Times of Baltimore*, 2530 N. Charles Street, Suite 201, Baltimore, MD 21218. Subscriptions by mail \$60 per year. Standard bulk postage paid at Baltimore, MD 21233. Postmaster send address changes to: **The Baltimore Times** 2530 N. Charles Street, Suite 201 Baltimore, MD 21218



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Guest Editorials/Commentary

Successful Black American-Owned Business Leaders Unfairly Targeted

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

There is an old African proverb that captures one of the challenges that too many financially successful Black-owned business leaders face today in America. That proverb is “Your earned riches may engender envy and jealous criticism but be not dismayed by the foolishness of the envious.”

Across the nation as business owners are attempting to recover from the COVID-19 global pandemic, African American business leaders who are defying the odds with their financial success are often targeted by “mainstream media” and others who summarily and unfairly castigate Black business leaders’ economic achievements. Is this syndrome racially motivated? The simple answer is “Yes.”

Former Congressman and past leader of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), The Honorable Parren J. Mitchell (D-MD), 1922-2007, once said in defense of Black business leaders, “There is a national systematic campaign to unfairly subjugate and to prevent the financial success of Black American businesses.”

It appears that business leaders from communities of color in the United States are being held to a different standard of business practice, ethics and regulation. Such is the case, I believe, with respect to Jack Brown III who was recently targeted for business practice criticisms by the *New York Times* because of what they state are personal financial profits that Brown has earned as result of his businesses providing shelters to New York City’s homeless.

The *Times* emphasized, “Since 2017, as homelessness has risen to record levels, the city has awarded more than \$352 million to a nonprofit run by Mr. Brown to operate shelters. The money is meant to help homeless people regain their footing in life, but it has benefited Mr. Brown, too.”

Is the *Times* implying that there is something wrong or unethical for earning a financial profit from ones work and business? Brown’s CORE Services companies— non-profits and for-profits— have worked effectively in New York for over a decade.

Both nonprofits and for-profits have to be run as successful businesses in order to be sustainable. Jack Brown has been a national leader in multiple Black-owned businesses not only in NYC, but also in other cities he has been effective in providing much need services to the homeless and to people “returning” back to society after prison incarceration.

Investigative journalism has its rightful and respected space in our democracy. But it should always be balanced and non-racially prejudicial. The *Times* piece on Jack Brown was full of unsubstantiated innuendo and one-sided reporting. Those of us in America’s Black press are fully aware of the double standards and the racial stereotyping that cast unfair dispersions on Black entrepreneurs who dare to strive to own legitimate multi-million-dollar businesses.

After the *Times* feature on Brown was published, Rudy Giuliani, who is well known for his unprincipled attacks on African American leaders, joined in the chorus against Jack Brown.

I conclude with the following tweet that I posted: “It is questionable to see Rudy Giuliani and the *NY Times* aligned. But today the *Times* published an innuendo-filled story targeting successful Black-owned business leader, Jack Brown, who Rudy Giuliani then calls Brown a ‘poverty pimp.’”

Sadly, Former President Trump, Giuliani, some in the *NY Times*, and many others take the position that there are limits and ceilings both politically and economically across the nation that are categorically prescribed by race. We do not agree. We will not submit. The unfair targeting of Black business leaders must be stopped in America.



Community Affairs

Laura Bush Foundation for America’s Libraries Opens Grant Application

School libraries across the country can now apply for a library grant

Dallas— The Laura Bush Foundation for America’s Libraries opened the application for grants to support school libraries in need, with the goal of encouraging all students to develop a love of reading and learning. Since its inception in 2002, the Laura Bush Foundation has awarded more than \$17 million to over 3,000 schools across the country.

To apply, public schools must have a Title I designation and private schools must have at least 50 percent of the student population qualify for financial aid. Applications will remain open until December 31, 2021.

To learn more and to apply, visit: www.bushcenter.org/lbf.



In the 2020-2021 grant cycle, The Laura Bush Foundation awarded more than \$1 million in grants to 205 school libraries across 43 states. Many librarians used the funds to update their library collections by adding more dual language titles and books that showcase a wide range of stories and perspectives

The Laura Bush Foundation is managed as a restricted fund at the George W. Bush Presidential Center in Dallas, Texas. More information can be found at www.bushcenter.org.

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Lydia Pope explains five pillars of NAREB and importance of Black homeownership

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

Lydia Pope counts among the fortunate, and she knows that.

Pope also doesn't pull any punches when advocating for African Americans— particularly as it pertains to generational wealth.

Her father worked throughout Cleveland, Ohio, to help turn around the lives of gang members. Pope's mother worked a lunch program that fed those individuals after her father tutored them about the importance of homeownership and generational wealth.

"My father passed away in 1991, and my mom told me that we were the second Black family to move onto our block when I was younger," Pope, the president of the National Association of Real Estate Brokers (NAREB), said during an interview inside the television studio of the National Newspaper

Publishers Association (NNPA) in Washington, D.C.

"My mother told me about the real estate card she possessed that prompted her to own a home," Pope reminisced during a conversation with NNPA President and CEO Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.

have not moved the needle, so it's important that as Black people, we have to fight for what we want," Pope exclaimed. "When you talk about democracy and housing, it's important that we understand that we have to continue to fight for what we want. If that means going to our legislatures—

Pope also holds a longtime membership with the NAACP.

Significantly, Pope declared that NAREB seeks ways to assist African Americans in wealth building and sustainability. Founded in Tampa, Florida, in 1947 as an equal opportunity and civil rights advocacy organization for African American real estate professionals, consumers, and communities in America. According to its website, the purpose of NAREB is to enhance the economic improvement of its members, the community at large, and the minority community which it serves.

To unite those engaged in the recognized branches of the real estate industry including brokerage, management, mortgage financing, appraising, land development, home building, and allied fields for the purpose of exerting influence on real estate interests.

Although composed principally of African Americans, the REALIST organization embraces all qualified real estate practitioners who are committed to achieving our vision, which is Democracy in Housing.

"Our mission is to provide solutions to the various challenges Black people face," Pope stated. "It's not just increasing awareness of the barriers to homeownership, but we want to provide solutions to all of the challenges, and educating our community is one of the biggest ways we at NAREB can have a positive impact."

"NAREB seeks ways to assist African Americans in wealth building and sustainability. Founded in Tampa, Florida, in 1947 as an equal opportunity and civil rights advocacy organization for African American real estate professionals, consumers, and communities in America."

The entire conversation will air this season on PBS-TV and PBS-World during a telecast of The Chavis Chronicles.

Today, Pope's brother owns the family's Cleveland home, which she said will eventually pass to his son.

"It's all about a succession plan," Pope said. "This is how you build generational wealth."

NAREB offers five pillars to building Black wealth, Pope added.

The five pillars include:

- Multi-generational wealth.
- Government relations and advocacy.
- Diversity and inclusion for small businesses.
- Women's initiatives.
- Faith-based and civic engagement.

"Even today, the rate of Black homeownership is still at 46 percent. We

that's what we do. Our goal is to talk and advocate for the community, for those in need, for those who can't speak for themselves. We can be the voice for them."

Pope counts as the third woman president in NAREB's 74-year history. She has worked in real estate since 1995 and serves as the owner and president of E&D Realty & Investment Company, Inc., and E&D Realty Property Management Division and E&D Construction Company.

According to Pope's biography, some of her past and current accomplishments including Past President of the Women's Council of NAREB, Mt. Pleasant Advisory Board, Ohio Housing Finance Agency Committee, Cleveland Realist Association Past President & Chair, and the Cleveland/Akron Legislative Committee.

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Emerging Leader in Baltimore:

Joel Miller locked up, homeless but fate saved him

He is among 2021 Cohort of Converge Social Justice Leadership Academy

Baltimore— Almost 10 years ago Joel Miller was fresh out of prison, living in his car, showering at the gym, jobless and needed money, when approached by a friend to participate in a robbery.

“(My friend I used to hang out with) said he had a robbery he wanted me to assist him with. It was kind of funny because I was in a bad situation,” Miller said. “I went through all my thought processes and after thinking about it I told him no. He did it, he got caught and he got 20 years for it.”

His friend got caught on a Friday and the following Tuesday, Miller received a call from the Virginia Department of Corrections for a job opportunity.

“I always think that could have been me. When I say I can relate, I can relate,” Miller said. “I became the first person who was ever in Virginia as an inmate and came back as a state employee. They’re definitely more open to hiring more felons since me.”

Miller went from living a reckless life to helping Baltimore youth make better decisions about their futures. He served six years in prison for armed robbery, conspiracy to commit robbery and use of a firearm to commit a felony. Today, Miller serves as the Youth Advocate Programs’ (YAP), Program Director of Baltimore’s Group Violence Reduction Strategy (GVRS). YAP was awarded a grant by the Mayor’s Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement (MONSE) to provide GVRS, which seeks to help reduce violence, decrease recidivism, and strengthen police and



Joel Miller went from living a reckless life to helping Baltimore youth make better decisions about their futures. Today, he serves as the Youth Advocate Programs’ Program Director of Baltimore’s Group Violence Reduction Strategy. Recently, he was one of 26 leaders selected to take part in the American Express 2021 Converge Social Justice Leadership Academy. Courtesy Photo/YAP, Inc.

community relations.

“I was dishing and dabbling in the streets, and I understand criminal logic and understand rationalizing,” Miller said about being relatable among young men and leading the GVRS program. “I understand the mindset of a person who is going to commit a crime definitely helps. But most importantly, what definitely helps is that I made that change.”

Miller first came to YAP in 2019 as

assistant director/program coordinator of the Credible Messenger Program in Washington, D.C. YAP is a national nonprofit that provides services to young people and families as alternatives to youth incarceration and out-of-home placements. YAP is in 31 states and in the District of Columbia.

Most recently, Miller was one of 26 leaders selected to take part in the American Express 2021 Converge Social Justice Leadership Academy,

which recognizes emerging leaders in the nonprofit sector. Participants will have access to training and support from the Center for Creative Leadership, a global provider of leadership development.

Craig Jernigan, YAP’s Regional Director for Maryland and the District of Columbia, nominated Miller.

“I nominated Joel to the Leadership Academy because he is a hard worker” Jernigan said. “I recognized something in him that I see in so many young men who excel and do great once provided with that push and opportunity to make a difference.”

In July Miller was promoted to his new position. However, the road to success wasn’t always easy for Miller who was born in Georgia and moved to the Virginia area when he was 13 years old. Miller served six years in the military before returning home and being sent to jail for another six years.

“I enjoy helping people with shared life experiences,” Miller said. “It’s awesome to be able to be a position where I am meeting people who are in the position that I was in and be able to give them things that I didn’t have when I was in their position.”

Miller said it’s important to have people who can talk the talk and walk the walk.

“People respond to people they can relate to,” Miller added. “That’s why I love YAP. I worked for a lot of nonprofits and organizations. YAP is one of the few places that has the services that they say they have. Everything they advertise that they have and the help that they say they can give, they actually have it and to me that’s rare.”

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October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Two Women Give Personal Perspectives



Ricki Fairley spends time with her grandchildren during her nonprofit's first anniversary party. Courtesy Photo



Ricki Fairley and her two daughters were photographed together when the breast cancer survivor was undergoing chemotherapy in 2012. Photo credit: Tabia Parker

By Andrea Blackstone

Bright pink ribbons and shirts signal the arrival of National Breast Cancer Awareness Month each October. Raising awareness about breast cancer includes women who are actively fighting against the disease and those who have already won.

Ricki Fairley—an Annapolitan who can be spotted paddleboarding on the Chesapeake Bay embraces peace, self-love, and advocacy work after surviving stage 3 A triple-negative breast cancer (TNBC). According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), cancer cells in this type are absent of common receptors such as estrogen, progesterone or a protein known as human epidermal growth factor (HER2) which are typically found in breast cancer.

Fairley's first oncologist did not have much experience treating women

who had been diagnosed with TNBC. Fairley underwent chemotherapy and radiation, but the breast cancer returned. The doctor gave Fairley two years to live. Her advice was to get her affairs in order, when she lived in Atlanta. "I said, you really don't understand. I can't really die right now. I have a daughter that's a sophomore at Dartmouth. I still have to pay for her to go to school so me, you, and God need to work this out," Fairley said.

A call to The Triple Negative Breast Cancer Foundation led to finding a specialist and experimental drugs for TNBC. Four months later, Fairley was cured. Although ten years have passed since Fairley was diagnosed with it, the relentless advocate founded a nonprofit called Touch, The Black Breast Cancer Alliance in 2020 to fight against breast cancer from other angles. She is passionate about breast health education, encouraging Black women to participate

in clinical trial research to enable data to improve treatment outcomes, and linking pharmaceutical companies with the goal of eradicating black breast cancer.

Fairley pointed out that "Black women with breast cancer have a 71 percent higher risk of death than white women," according to JAMA Oncology's January 2021 findings. Additionally, Black women who survive breast cancer have a 39 percent higher recurrence rate, per Phase 3 TAILORx Trial.

With these kinds of findings in mind, Fairley began presenting the data to pharmaceutical leaders from a marketing perspective, after compiling numbers. Her prior career in the marketing field helped her to paint a detailed picture.

"The other thing is that Black women get triple-negative breast cancer at three times the rate," Fairley said. "And when you look at the data, there's only three percent participation of Black women in

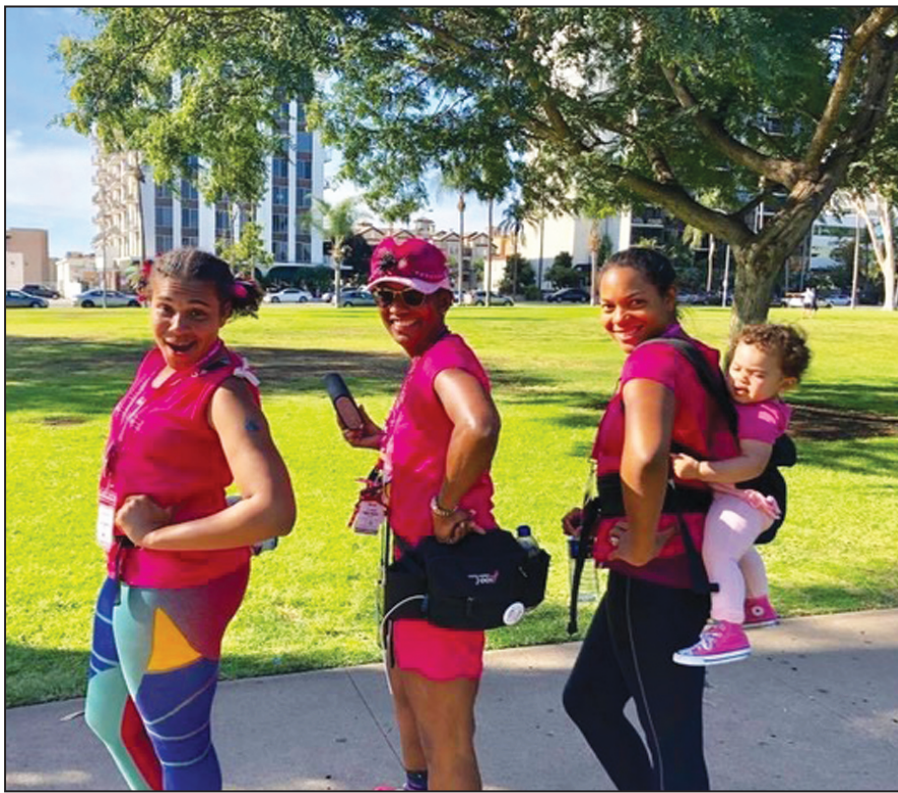
clinical trial research. That's zero. We're dying because the drugs don't work," Fairley said, while also mentioning additional issues such as access to medical care.

When it comes to breast cancer, clinical trials can help women.

"So part of our messaging is to help Black women say, 'Hold on, wait a minute doctor. Is there a clinical trial treatment option for me?'" Fairley said.

Fairley reminded that research also needs to be conducted on healthy breasts. A final point to note is that getting mammograms during COVID can mean detection of smaller tumors. They are easier to treat if a woman does turn out to have breast cancer.

Dr. Bonita Parker — a resident of Charles County in Maryland — agrees that getting mammograms on time is important. The CEO Success Coach & Publisher, Bonita Parker Enterprises LLC. Parker was completing her annual



Ricki Fairley and her family participated in Susan G. Komen's ® 60 mile, 3-day walk in San Diego, Ca. in 2018.

conference, so she missed an annual mammogram appointment in 2017, which was not her norm. Nevertheless, Parker had a feeling that she should check her breasts in the shower, after "God's voice" told her to do it.

"It was a nagging urge to do a self-exam. I finish my shower, dry off, and proceed with my exam. It was the absolute first place I touched. Right there on my left breast was a lump," Parker said.

After booking an emergency appointment to see her OB/GYN physician, who sent Parker for an emergency mammogram and biopsy, it was confirmed as a cancerous mass.

"I was then referred to my oncologist who conducted more scans and tests. And by December 22, 2017, I was diagnosed with triple-negative metastatic breast cancer (stage 4). The cancer was aggressive and had already spread to my lymph nodes by this time and attempted to penetrate my lungs," Parker said.

A breast self-exam made a difference in Parker's life. Her breast cancer has been

in remission for three years, after she underwent aggressive treatment and seven surgeries. When she hits the five-year mark, Parker will officially be considered medically out of the woods.

"And while I acted immediately when discovering my lump, imagine if I had kept my appointment three months sooner and the mass was detected at that time. It doesn't take long for it to grow or spread. However, if detected early, there are more treatment options and a

better chance for survival. I thank God for keeping me in the number," Parker said.

Stories like Fairley and Parker's underscore the importance of learning more about breast cancer treatment and prevention. Fairley

also spreads education through a web series with Dr. Monique Gary presented through the BlackDoctor.org. "The Doctor Is In" is available weekly through Facebook Live. You may also connect with Fairley via <https://www.touchbbca.org/>.



Dr. Bonita Parker's breast cancer is in remission. A breast self-exam led to discovery of a cancerous lump. The business owner embraced the cancer to take control of her journey. Meditation, journaling, prayer, and repeating affirmations became a part of her health regiment. Photo credit: Lindria Dockett Photography

Preserving The Legacy of The Sphinx Club

By Ursula V. Battle

To ride past 2107-2109 Pennsylvania Avenue today, passer-byers might look at the structure and consider it as just another boarded up city building. But for those who know the building's history, the structure is one of the jewels of Pennsylvania Avenue's heyday. A place where many successful Blacks gathered, and where the likes of Sam Cooke, Redd Foxx, Sarah Vaughn, and other famous entertainers came through its doors. It is the site of the Sphinx Club, opened in 1946 by Charles Tilghman, and one of the nation's first African American owned nightclubs.

On Saturday, October 16, 2021 at 12:30 p.m. an estimated 150 community residents will join Mayor Brandon Scott, elected officials, members of the Tilghman family and former Sphinx Club members to participate in a "Celebration of the Legacy of Charles P. Tilghman and the Sphinx Club" at the Cab Calloway Legends Park, 2223 Division Street. The free event will feature music and a presentation of Black Baltimore history. The festivities will kick-off at The Sphinx Club with a performance by the "Baltimore Go Getters Marching Band." The band will march to the Cab Calloway Park (Gold and Division Streets) for the ceremony.

The event is free, open to the public, and is being supported by Druid Heights Community Development Corporation, the Tilghman family and the Baltimore City Department of Planning and the Patterson Ashbury A.M.E. Zion Church.

"As we continue to celebrate the splendor of the historic Druid Heights community, we must recognize the positive impact Mr. Tilghman and the Sphinx Club continue to have on Pennsylvania Avenue," said Anthony Pressley, executive director of Druid Heights Development Corporation. "The community organization appreciates the support of many great partners including Patterson Ashbury A.M.E. Zion Church for assistance with activating the space designated as the Cab Calloway Legends



The rendering by architect Klaus Philipsen is among plans being considered for the site. (Right): The Sphinx Club now sits boarded-up along Pennsylvania Avenue. Photos Courtesy of Druid Heights Development Corporation

Park where many icons, including Charles Tilghman will be featured."

According to the Druid Heights Development Corporation, the celebration will include music from George Johnson and Friends—many who played at the Sphinx Club. Members of Tilghman's family will also share memories of the Renaissance period on Pennsylvania Avenue.

The mission of the Druid Heights CDC is to cause, encourage, and promote community self-empowerment through the development of economic, educational, employment and affordable housing opportunities. Druid Heights Community Development Corporation was awarded the redevelopment rights to the former Sphinx Club site in the Druid Heights community.

The Sphinx, a private club known for its after-show parties and famous New Year's Eve and Mardi Gras affairs where jazz greats congregated with local celebrities, closed in 1992.

"The Sphinx Club was really a great place to go," said Shirley Gordon, who patronized the Sphinx Club. "Anybody who was somebody went to the Sphinx Club. Victorine Adams had a dress shop on Pennsylvania Avenue, and women went there to purchase their fabulous clothes to wear to the Sphinx Club."

Rosa "Rambling Rose" Pryor-Trusty also shared memories of "The Sphinx" and the pioneering Tilghman who died in 1988.



Patrons during a Mardi Gras party at The Sphinx Club during the 1950s. Photo Courtesy of Rosa Pryor

"I was interested in booking one of my groups there," said Pryor-Trusty, who managed several groups. "I went in and introduced myself to Charlie Tilghman. He was very impressed with me. We chatted, he treated me to dinner, and the rest is history."

She added, "I was there all the time. After I got off work, I went home, showered, and changed for the evening because no one walked in the Sphinx Club looking any ole way. Folks were dressed to the nine."

Pryor who is a well-known entertainment columnist, is the author of "African-American Entertainment in Baltimore" and talks about the Sphinx Club in her book.

"People from all walks of life came in that club," recalled Pryor-Trusty. "I met many famous judges, lawyers, doctors, and politicians right there in The Sphinx."

She added, "Charlie was such a gentle man to so many people. He was a good man and a giving man. He was also very clever and very witty. He was quite the businessman and a true legend."

For more information about "Celebrating the Legacy of Charles P. Tilghman and the Sphinx Club," call (410) 523-1350 or register on Eventbrite at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/celebrating-the-legacy-of-charles-p-tilghman-and-the-sphinx-club-tickets-167893837989>

Ravens Lamar Jackson proves he's a dangerous passer

By Tyler Hamilton

There was a select group of Lamar Jackson detractors leading up to the 2017 NFL Draft. Some evaluators questioned whether or not he could play quarterback even though he had registered over 9,000 passing yards and won a Heisman Trophy.

Many of those doubters have continued to hold onto their wrong evaluations after Jackson turned the season around for the Baltimore Ravens as a rookie and was named NFL MVP the following year.

Jackson's performance on Monday Night Football in the Ravens 31-25 win over the Indianapolis Colts should put all the doubts about his ability to play quarterback to rest.

"It's one of the greatest performances I've ever seen. And it wasn't easy. It wasn't like we came out just up and down the field," Ravens coach John Harbaugh said. "We had to overcome and fight through some things. He was under pressure, and he created plays



Baltimore Ravens quarterback Lamar Jackson's performance on Monday Night Football in the game against the Indianapolis Colts should put all the doubts about his ability to play quarterback to rest. The resulting 86-completion percentage is the most ever by a quarterback that had 400 passing yards. Jackson's 140.5-passer rating was outstanding as well. Photo Credit: Geoff Burke/USA TODAY

with his feet. He threw the ball away when he had to throw it away. Once we started— when we were in that situation you're talking about, we went into our

fast mode, no huddle, two-minute-type mode and just came alive— all of our guys did. All the guys who made plays— and the offensive line but it starts with Lamar [Jackson]. He deserves the credit."

Jackson finished the game with 442 passing yards and four touchdowns. He completed 37 of his 43 pass attempts. The resulting 86-completion percentage is the most ever by a quarterback that had 400 passing yards. Jackson's 140.5-

passer rating was outstanding as well.

Monday night's performance left detractors with very little room to continue their goal post shifting. Jackson completed passes in the middle of the field, outside the numbers, all over the field. He did so from the pocket and on the move.

There was simply nothing the Colts secondary could do to stop Jackson. The last two drives showed what Jackson is capable of as a passer.

Jackson led the Ravens on an 11-play drive that covered 75 yards that resulted in a four-yard touchdown pass to Mark Andrews. He then completed another pass to Andrews for the two-point conversion to tie the game and send it to overtime.

The Ravens drove 65 yards on their first possession of overtime and Jackson delivered a pass to Marquis Brown for the game-winning touchdown.

"I was just locked in. I was just calm. Everything was just moving slow, and I was just taking it a play at a time. That's what it was," Jackson said.

The win was Jackson's 34th as a starter for the Ravens. It tied him with Dan Marino as the only quarterbacks to lead their team to that many wins before turning 25.

It's safe to say that Jackson is among the top players at his position in the league.

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The Blue Line

AOC and The Squad can Teach the Congressional Black Caucus a Lesson or Two!

Continued from page 1

This article is not mainly about the essence of the particular legislation being held up by these five ladies. Later in the column, I will point out some items which I believe are detrimental to the Black and poor communities of America. But that is for later. Now, I want to contrast these five ladies' use of power to how the Congressional Black Caucus fails to use its numbers which are over ten times greater than the Squad's numbers and where their accumulated years in Congress dwarf those of the Squad.

There are 55 black voting members of Congress and two non-voting Black delegates with rights to speak but not vote. Note the contrast— 55 plus two versus the five members of the Squad! Which group is more influential right now in terms of wielding power and bringing results targeted to their communities and the interests of their constituents?

The Congressional Black Caucus is an embarrassment to Black folks in America when you compare what they do for their communities with what the Squad can do with five members!

Why would I say that?

When Parren J. Mitchell was in Congress some decades ago, with fewer Blacks to support his efforts, laws like the 10 percent set-a-sides in government contracts were passed and enforced. Those men worked across political parties to bring home the bacon. [Note: Google Arthur Fletcher, father of affirmative action—Revised Philadelphia Plan]. Parren, then a member of St Katherine of Alexandria Episcopal Church where I served as the Rector and Pastor for 21 years, told me that Richard Nixon helped them to get significant bills through Congress and to his desk. Are the current Black members of Congress doing anything specifically to help the Black community?

They use talking points like “build back better;” they are big on “climate change” and electric vehicles; and they

certainly talk a lot about racism. But I know of little effort to do what other Congress people do so well as they work to improve their communities. Nancy Pelosi, for example, had a \$200 million set-a-side in the Build Back Better bill for a park in her home city. I believe she was shamed into removing that request. What specific benefit to the impoverished Black communities of America is the 57-member Black Caucus pushing? Are they funding reparations? In bills totaling \$6 trillion they could surely, like the Squad, tell Pelosi that nothing is going forward without such priorities. Even lesser projects like carve-outs for The Great Blacks in Wax Museum of Baltimore and other like significant projects across the country get no earmarks from these 55 members. They simply, like sheep, follow what the leadership tells them to support, and we do not hear a peep out of their mouths about pushing specific programs that can benefit the deteriorating communities they represent.

Is it not a shame that most of the crime comes from cities with Black members of Congress representing them? James Clyburn of South Carolina, certainly a black and powerful congressman who some say got President Joe Biden elected, should be able to push projects and programs in the Black communities the members represent, programs that can rapidly change the trajectory in those communities. Instead, they are supporting bills that will definitely hurt poor Blacks in their pockets.

Doubt me? Take the following initiatives included in the bills: a) a tax on natural gas! This will blow the heating bills of the poorest people in America who live in homes that are not well insulated; b) a trial on taxing the milage we drive; c) pushing electric cars which are very expensive when poor folks mostly buy secondhand vehicles; and d) setting the IRS on all of us to track any dollar we spend in excess of \$600.00. That one in particular pains, because it is certainly not directed to the “rich” as they pretend. That one is directed to “Jane and Joe Q Public.” See, there is already a

statute that forces banks to report all expenditures of \$10,000.00 or more. That one could be about the rich guys, but this \$600.00 reporting mandate is certainly intended to capture poor people and the Congressional Black Caucus is happily supporting this in the bill.

So, as the Squad schools and tutors the Congressional Black Caucus in wielding political power, we will be watching to see if they learn their lesson. With 55 voting members, not one damn thing could happen in Congress if Blacks used their power. Stop talking down to Black people with descriptions such as “descendants of slaves” through Critical Race Theory and remind them that we had a Black president, now a Black vice president and enough power in Congress to change the world by voting with Republicans or Democrats who need your vote, so long as they include your priorities.

The Blue Line will be watching! Things must change concretely after all these years and the Squad has certainly shown us the way forward.

Comments? Please send emails to btimes@btimes.com (Re: Blueline)

Reginald Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History & Culture

The museum is dedicated to serving the community by providing multifaceted support through meaningful interactions with history and material culture of Maryland African Americans.

Volunteers are needed to assist at the Information Desk, as Docents, for Special Events, and more. There are ongoing opportunities on Saturdays and Sundays for assistance with greeting guests and patrons at the main entrance and to work with kid's activities during public hours.

The minimum age for volunteers is 14. Volunteering is open to adults, seniors, college, and high school students. Service learning credit hours can be earned by high school students.

We are accepting applications for the following volunteer positions: Special Event Volunteer, Administrative Assistant, Curatorial Assistant, and Visitor Services.

Contact Joy Hall at 443-263-1800 or hall@lewismuseum.org; web site: www.lewismuseum.org.

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The Great Annapolis Pumpkins have arrived in Annapolis!

Annapolis— If pumpkins weighing more than 1,000 pounds sound like the perfect backdrop for fall shots with your family, friends, and pets, head to Annapolis this month to experience the city's Great Annapolis Pumpkins!

Visitors strolling through downtown Annapolis and the Annapolis Arts District will find gigantic pumpkins at four locations: in front of Visit Annapolis & Anne Arundel County's 26 West Street Visitors Center; the Graduate Hotel at 126 West Street; on the front lawn of St. Anne's Church on Church Circle; and next to Market House at City Dock. En route to the Great Annapolis Pumpkins, individuals with a keen eye will spy some impressive 300-pound pumpkins nestled amidst straw bales, mums, baby pumpkins, and corn stalks adorning the downtown area.

Visit Annapolis & Anne Arundel County Executive Director Kristen Pironis says her organization is pleased to serve as lead sponsor for the Downtown Annapolis Partnership's Great Annapolis Pumpkins event. Additional sponsors include the City of Annapolis and the Annapolis Arts District. As Pironis sees it, "fall is a beautiful time of year in Annapolis. We wanted to do what we could to help spread the word that now is the perfect time to visit. Being outdoors with family and friends, taking in the sights and sounds, and exploring the beauty of nature are what the season is all about. Add the magic of four 1,000+-pound pumpkins and you have a combination that's hard to beat!"

Downtown Annapolis Partnership Executive Director Erik Evans says his organization is pleased to spearhead the Great Annapolis Pumpkin event for the second year in a row. "Our goal is to provide a fun, safe way for individuals of all ages to enjoy fall in Annapolis. While they may come for the pumpkins, we'll encourage them to stay for the dining, shopping, and events Annapolis has to offer this season."

Bumper Moyer, who heads up the Eastport "Neat Streets" initiative, trekked to a pumpkin weigh-off outside



of Altoona, Pennsylvania, negotiated the purchase of the giant pumpkins, and arranged for their transportation to Annapolis with the help of Garden Girls Landscaping earlier this month. City of Annapolis public works crews provided a forklift to unload and place the giant pumpkins around town.

To provide fun exposure for the many Great Annapolis Pumpkin selfies that will be generated, the Downtown Annapolis Partnership is hosting a photo contest through October 31, 2021. Individuals who take a picture or shoot a video of themselves with any of the giant pumpkins and post it on social media along with the hashtag, #GreatAnnapolisPumpkins, will be entered for a chance to win gift cards to favorite Annapolis-area restaurants, shops, attractions, and accommodations via random drawings throughout the month. Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts, Ballet Theatre of Maryland, and Hobo Bags are among the participating businesses thus far. To keep tabs on the growing list of gift items, visit the [Downtown Annapolis Partnership](https://www.downtownannapolispartnership.org/) website:

<https://www.downtownannapolispartnership.org/>.

Just before Halloween weekend, local artists will carve the giant Annapolis pumpkins, turning them into jack-o-lanterns for all to enjoy. After Halloween, the City of Annapolis will



Just before Halloween weekend, local artists will carve the giant Annapolis pumpkins, turning them into jack-o-lanterns for all to enjoy. After Halloween, the City of Annapolis will transport the massive jack-o-lanterns to Truxtun Park for composting through a City of Annapolis partnership with the local nonprofit, Annapolis Green. Courtesy Photo/Visit Annapolis & Anne Arundel County

transport the massive jack-o-lanterns to Truxtun Park for composting through a City of Annapolis partnership with the local nonprofit, Annapolis Green. Last year, residents brought 6000 pounds of pumpkins to Truxtun Park after Halloween as part of Annapolis Green's Great Pumpkin Drop-off. As it did in 2020, Annapolis Green will work with Veteran Compost in northern Maryland

to turn this year's pumpkins into Pumpkin Spice Compost, perfect for holiday gift giving.

For a listing of things to do and see and places to stay during your fall visit to Annapolis and Anne Arundel County, visit the [Visit Annapolis & Anne Arundel County](https://www.visitannapolis.org/) website: <https://www.visitannapolis.org/>.

Governor Hogan announces \$3.2 million investment to help businesses register new apprentices in Maryland

Annapolis— Governor Larry Hogan announced the investment of \$3.2 million into a new Employer Incentive Plan (EIP), which will encourage businesses to register new apprentices and increase participation in the state's Registered Apprenticeship program.

Registered apprenticeships provide job seekers with an opportunity to earn a salary and learn through a combination of on-the-job training and classroom instruction, while employers can develop a highly skilled workforce and grow their talent pipeline.

"By investing in this new Employer Incentive Plan, we are supporting the growth and future of Maryland's highly successful Registered Apprenticeship programs, sponsors, employers, and apprentices," said Governor Hogan. "Maryland continues to be a national leader in workforce development, job training, and apprenticeships, and it is critical that we continue to invest in our skilled workforce. Apprenticeships have proven to be a tremendously successful workforce development strategy, and I encourage businesses from all industries to utilize this program."

Through the EIP, a rolling reimbursement program, businesses with more than 50 employees are eligible for reimbursement of 50 percent of the wage rate of an apprentice, up to \$3,120 for a maximum of 30 hours per week. Small businesses with 49 or fewer employees are eligible for reimbursement of 75 percent of the apprentice's wage rate, up to \$4,680 for a maximum of 30 hours per week.



Apprentices can earn and learn while employers develop a highly skilled workforce and grow their talent pipeline. Photo Credit: ClipArt.com

Maryland has more than 11,000 registered apprentices currently working, earning, and learning in the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Program, the highest participation rate in state history. In April, the governor announced the approval of 27 new registered apprenticeship programs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Private, public, and nonprofit employers can apply for first come, first served EIP funds if they meet the eligibility criteria outlined in the policy. Employers should submit their initial application for the EIP immediately upon registration of a new apprentice. Once a newly registered apprentice has been verified by the Maryland Department of Labor, an initial award letter will be sent. Businesses that meet program requirements will be able to seek reimbursement when an apprentice has completed six months of the apprenticeship.

For more information about apprenticeship opportunities in Maryland, visit MDapprenticeship.com.

United Way of Central Maryland and Baltimore Ravens Partner for Volunteer Day of Service

In-person and virtual events will allow raven fans from around the country to join NFL players to give back to the Greater Baltimore community.

Baltimore— Caw, Caw, Caw to action. Furthering its mission to provide what's needed where it's needed in the communities it serves, United Way of Central Maryland and the Baltimore Ravens are teaming up on Monday, October 18, 2021 to host a volunteer service day for the Greater Baltimore area.

The "Caw to Action" day of service will feature in-person and virtual events, allowing fans from across the country to participate in volunteer activities. In-person events, which will take place outdoors on October 18, 2021, vary from community and garden clean-ups to assembling stress relief kits and decorating kindness rocks. A full list of in-person opportunities, including locations, can be found at https://www.volunteermid.org/need/index?s=1&need_init_id=4825. Projects can be completed as a corporate team, family, school, individual, or however else residents prefer to give back to the community.

Volunteers can also pick up items at the Ravens Stadium to assemble "Cause Kits" via a contactless, drive-thru pick up. United Way will include all the directions needed to complete the activity, which can be finished and delivered at the volunteer's convenience. Those interested in this opportunity can register at the following https://www.volunteermid.org/need/index?s=1&need_init_id=4826.

"We have been able to build a valued partnership with the Ravens over the years," said Franklyn Baker, president and CEO, United Way of Central Maryland. "The team's commitment to our community is admirable and does not go unnoticed by our community members in need. The Caw to Action on October 18 is a great opportunity to bring volunteers together to celebrate the Ravens, and the work they're doing in our community, by giving back."

Virtual volunteer projects can be completed throughout the month of October and will allow both Marylanders and Ravens fans from across the nation to participate. Virtual volunteer activities range from writing inspirational notes for those living in a shelter, to taking children on a virtual field trip or creating posters to discourage littering. A complete list of virtual projects can be found https://www.volunteermid.org/need/index?s=1&need_init_id=4824.

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