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A Great 'Fit'

Grandma Louise Pies Holds Grand Opening at Avenue Market



By Ursula V. Battle

Just a few years ago, Mosiah Fit was living out of a van, selling his homemade pies from a wagon he pulled along the streets of Baltimore.

"This journey dates back to 2019," said Fit. "I was just walking the streets everyday hustling my pies in the rain, ice, it didn't matter, and I still do it. Going through all of that and seeing the development of what it has become is amazing. It's emotional. It's powerful. It lets me know I should never give up on anything I set my mind to."

What Fit was determined to do was to have an indoor retail space to sell his pies. That goal recently came to fruition with the opening of Grandma Louise Pies, owned and operated by Fit. Grandma Louise's Pies is the first business from the Avenue Market Pop Up Shop Program, a partnership between Baltimore Public Markets Corporation (BPMC) and Pennsylvania Avenue Main Street.

On Friday, January 28, 2022, BPMC celebrated the opening of Grandma Louise Pies at Avenue Market with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

"Having an indoor space that is stable and safe from the elements is great," said Fit, noting his pies were inspired by the business' namesake—his grandmother Mary Louise Glanding, who taught him how to make pies.

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On Friday, January 28, 2022, Baltimore Public Markets Corporation (BPMC) celebrated the opening of Grandma Louise Pies at Avenue Market with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Grandma Louise's Pies is the first business from the Avenue Market Pop Up Shop Program, a partnership between BPMC and Pennsylvania Avenue Main Street. (Pictured) Mosiah Fit, owner, Grandma Louise Pies, Inc. and his wife, Yvette Williams. Photo Credit: Paris Brown



What if it all works out?

By **Nikki Abraham**
Nucleus Team Member
Positively Caviar, Inc.

As you step into a new year most people become anxiety filled when thinking about their goals and what's to come in their next phase of life. You have in your mind everything you desire as it relates to career, family, relationship, finances, etc. and of course you can't help but think as you ideate plans for your future, what if it doesn't work out? After having these same thoughts, what I realized is that I was asking myself the wrong question, because what if it does?

When you focus on the worst possible outcome those things are likely to come true. In an effort to make good things come your way, you must first believe that it will. Having faith that everything will work out the way that it's supposed to, is the first step in changing your mindset. This approach of positive psychology will help you cultivate what is best for you and ultimately be happy with the outcome.

Steve Harvey once said, "If you are going through hell, keep going. Why would you stop in hell?" The power of finding the courage to work through

undesirable moments will truly show your strength of character. It's important to understand that you are capable of anything you put your mind to. Obstacles are inevitable but don't get thrown off. Your focus is what sets you apart from the rest.

Many have the mindset that they'll be happy when something great happens for them but what they fail to remember is how important it is to be happy in the "right now." When you believe that all will work out the way it is supposed to, you are most likely to be happy in the process. You may hate your job but once you realize the salary from your job is what will help you start your own business, your mindset will shift. Couples therapy may be annoying but when you realize that your relationship will be able to withstand the test of time it may be easier to sit through. Learning to be content in the now can have a significant impact on the future.

Lately, I've been really into real estate and home improvement shows. What I've learned the most from watching these shows is that the building or selling process does not happen overnight. It's truly astounding to see the beginning product vs the end result like a house being built from the ground



Nikki Abraham
Nucleus Team Member
Positively Caviar, Inc.
Courtesy Photo/Positively Caviar, Inc.

up or going from empty to staged. At the beginning, you see the potential but when it "all works out" in the end you see the finished product. Another important note to take away is how much the value in a property will increase after the work is put in. Think of your life in this way, stay true to your vision and watch it manifest. The price

is only going up.

I'm a strong believer in, "everything happens for a reason." If you're anything like me, you have a planner calculating all of your next steps and goals. While it's important to have a blueprint, it is also important to recognize the power of the pivot. Just because things didn't work out as planned doesn't mean the outcome isn't favorable or acceptable. It's okay to have a concept of what it could be but make room to allow the plan to shift for the beautiful things destined for your life because it will work out the way that it is supposed to.

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

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Guest Editorials/Letters

Subvariant to Omicron detected by scientists in 40 countries, including the U.S.

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

Scientists are now closely monitoring a new mutation of the omicron variant, the World Health Organization (WHO) confirmed on Wednesday, January 26, 2022.

With the omicron swarming the world, officials have identified BA.2. as an offshoot of that highly transmissible variant.

It is “not a variant of concern,” officials at the World Health Organization maintained. However, BA.2 numbers reportedly are rising, with at least 40 countries showing cases to a global variant tracking database.

The subvariant has spread rapidly in Denmark and the United Kingdom, with almost half of recent cases in Denmark attributed to BA.2. Health officials reported that the subvariant has arrived in America, with two confirmed cases in Washington State.

Overall, more than 8,000 cases of BA.2 have been found, but its origin remains undetermined.

“It is the nature of viruses to evolve and mutate, so it’s to be expected that we will continue to see new variants emerge as the pandemic goes on,” Dr. Meera Chand, the COVID-19 incident director at the UK Health Security Agency, noted in a statement.

“So far, there is insufficient evidence to determine whether BA.2 causes more severe illness than Omicron BA.1, but data is limited.”

Officials have pointed out that most variants, like delta and omicron, have subvariants.

“Conventional COVID-19 tests can show a positive or a negative result, but they can’t determine specific variants. For that, scientists need to do additional genetic sequencing,” Dr. Nitya Rajeshumi, a pediatrics resident at the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, wrote for ABC News. “Conveniently, the omicron variant has a particular genetic signature that allows scientists to quickly and easily determine if the sample is omicron or not.”

The new BA.2 sub-variant does not have that feature, meaning scientists can no longer use this shortcut—“though they can still identify the subvariant using genetic sequencing technology,” the doctor continued.

Because of this, the BA.2 sub-variant has sometimes been referred to as the “stealth” variant. But for the general public, conventional COVID-19 tests will still work to detect the new subvariant.

“While it’s important to understand that in the family of omicron, there is a sub-lineage that is potentially more transmissible, it’s not necessarily a cause for panic,” Dr. John Brownstein, chief innovation officer at Harvard University’s Boston Children’s Hospital, told Dr. Rajeshumi.

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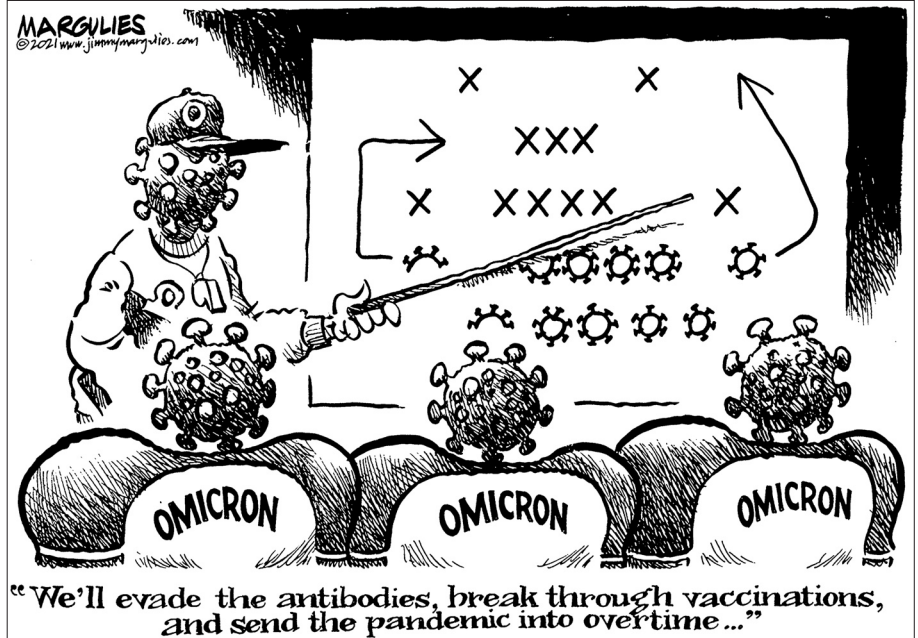
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Letters to the Editor:

Editor:

Though the “Wheelabrator” incinerator in Baltimore City may appear to be just another building in the Baltimore skyline, it is an active threat to the health of Marylanders across the state.

The Wheelabrator incinerator in Baltimore City burns nearly all of the area’s trash, as well as some waste from Anne Arundel and Howard counties.

In 2018, the Maryland Department of the Environment adopted changes that reduced the incinerator’s harmful emissions by roughly 200 tons a year. However, the Wheelabrator still greatly contributes to air pollution in the area, releasing excessive amounts of harmful chemicals each day.

According to Pope Francis in his encyclical, *Laudato Si*, harmful sites like this threaten our human rights, as “atmospheric pollutants produces a broad spectrum of health hazards, especially for the poor.” Pope Francis continues by addressing the importance of caring for all of God’s creation by saying, “...care for all that exists...” because “...we can see God reflected in all that exists...”

Aside from noting the significance of caring for our common home, Pope

Francis also details that this is entirely possible due to God and His loving plan for all of His people.

“The Creator does not abandon us; he never forsakes his loving plan or repents of having created us. Humanity still has the ability to work together in building our common home.”

This same disregard for God’s creation is seen in the poor air quality that threatens Maryland’s ecosystem. The Wheelabrator emits nitrogen oxides, which contribute to smog and soot that can be damaging to one’s respiratory system. These emissions also make their way into the Chesapeake Bay, which results in oxygen depletion, fish kills, and unwanted algae growth.

Though the Baltimore City Department of Public Works is developing better waste management practices through the “Less Waste, Better Baltimore” plan, I urge our federal representatives to take notes from Pope Francis to step up and protect our environment before it’s too late.

Brooke Mosca
White Marsh, MD

Black Republican leaders should also be celebrated this Black History Month

By Ronna McDaniel, Republican National Committee Chairwoman

As Chairwoman of the Republican National Committee (RNC), I take Black engagement very seriously—and not just during the month of February. That’s part of why one of my first major announcements after being re-elected to this position was our \$2 million investment to re-open our Black American Community Centers all over America. I knew we had to continue our engagement efforts to earn the vote, grow our party, and make meaningful relationships that last longer than 28 days.

This month is an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of Black Americans. As the head of the GOP, I think it’s important to honor the achievements of Black Republican leaders, many of whom, do not get the attention they deserve in the liberal mainstream media. Frankly, they are also often ignored by many Black-owned publications nationwide.

Your party affiliation and color of your skin should not determine whether you support the Black community. Black Republicans like Senator Tim Scott; Rep. Byron Donalds; Maryland Lt. Gov. Boyd Rutherford; and Bowie City Councilwoman Roxy Ndebumba should not have their commitment to the Black

are lying about election integrity, and as RNC Chairwoman, it is important to me that it is easier for all Americans to vote in a safe and secure manner— but harder for people to cheat. The RNC will also continue to sue cities and states trying to change laws to give non-U.S. citizens the right to vote in our elections.

the Democrats’ unconstitutional vaccine mandates that discriminate against millions of Black Americans. We can’t ignore the fact that Black men are most likely to die from a drug overdose, especially fentanyl, which is flooding across Biden’s open southern border.

We can’t ignore the health and wellness of the children who are not only trapped in failing public schools but stuck behind a monitor instead of in the classroom. Why? Because this administration stands against school choice and for school closures. COVID has gotten worse under Joe Biden and is negatively impacting the health and wellness of millions.

Public safety is the foundation of health and wellness, yet, crime is out of control in cities run by Democrats— and Democrats do not seem to care. Black Americans are disproportionately impacted by violence and murder while liberals support the dangerous policy of defunding law enforcement.

At the RNC we have chosen to promote positivity, not pandering, during Black History Month. We are not interested in empty platitudes or last-minute Black neighborhood campaigning weeks before the midterm elections.

While we are promoting and honoring often, overlooked Black Republicans during our Black History Month efforts, our nationwide commitment to strengthening our political engagement with the Black community is year-round. Black voices are important, and this is an expanding and inclusive Republican Party.

Ronna McDaniel is the Chairwoman of the Republican National Committee.

“Public safety is the foundation of health and wellness, yet, crime is out of control in cities run by Democrats— and Democrats do not seem to care. Black Americans are disproportionately impacted by violence and murder while liberals support the dangerous policy of defunding law enforcement.”

community questioned just because they happen to be Republican.

This month, watch all the ways President Biden and Democrats will pander. It will be shameless. Democrats have failed to get police reform done in a bipartisan fashion— unlike Republicans, who got criminal justice reform done— so President Biden is scheduled to sign executive actions instead.

Senator Cory Booker walked away from police reform negotiations with Republicans and Senator Tim Scott months ago, but this White House decided to wait until Black History Month to do something that could have been done nearly two years ago.

President Biden and Democrats will also pander and lie about election integrity. They’re trying to make Black Americans feel that if they do not support and pass radical Democrat voting bills, then Black people will not be able to vote in future elections. They

The legendary Black writer Langston Hughes talked about a dream deferred, for too many Black Americans it is.

As a working mother, I am concerned about how hard it is for other working mothers, especially Black single mothers in this economy. For many, school closures mean you can’t work, and children get further behind on several fronts.

#Bidenflation is more than a hashtag— it is real life for so many moms. When you go to the grocery store you see how much more you must spend just to provide for your family because of inflation. I get it.

The Association for the Study of African American Life and History declared the 2022 theme for Black History Month to be “Black Health and Wellness.” From a wholistic standpoint, the health and wellness of Black Americans under Joe Biden and Kamala Harris has taken a negative turn.

We can’t ignore the negative impact of

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African American Women's Golf Club builds monument to celebrate shared relationship with local golf course

Baltimore— Across the country celebrations for Black History Month will take place during the month of February. Perhaps, few will happen at a golf course like the one in Baltimore City on Tuesday, February 1, 2022— the dedication and unveiling of an exterior brick monument commemorating the significant history of African American golfers at Carroll Park Golf Course, at Carroll Park, located at 2100 Washington Boulevard in Baltimore.

The Carroll Park Golf Course and the Pitch and Putt Golf Club share a storied history that triumphs today. The project honors the persistent African American golfers who sought to play golf on segregated Baltimore City-owned golf courses in the late 1930s.

The Club independently raised funds to commission, design, erect and install a freestanding outdoor brick monument with a commemorative plaque. Working collaboratively with the Baltimore Municipal Golf Corporation members will also install an interior museum-like wall display that depicts the historical timeline of events.

“This commemorative project gives voice to the significant contributions made by African American golfers to desegregate Baltimore City’s golf courses, and the positive value a golf course can bring to the environment, neighborhoods, economy, and citizens of the city,” said Tom Pierce, Executive Director, Baltimore Municipal Golf Corporation.

Set in an industrial area of the City of Baltimore, the Carroll Park Golf Course, a 65-acre property, was purchased from Carroll family descendants for a city park in 1890. In 1923, Baltimore Parks and Recreation built a golf course on the property. Carroll Park had rolled sand



The Pitch and Putt Golf Club independently raised funds to commission, design, erect and install a freestanding outdoor brick monument with a plaque, commemorating the significant history of African American golfers at Carroll Park Golf Course in Baltimore City. (Pictured) Pitch and Putt Golf Club members standing proudly behind the newly unveiled monument at Carroll Park. (Left to right) Brenda Goburn Smith; Eunice Jenifer Robinson; Bonnie Logan; Mattie Gaines; Iris Smith; Stephanie Williams; Shirley Hinton; Shirley Marcus Buckner; Patricia Stokes; and Verdeen Cornish.

Photo Credit: Dena Fisher

for greens, requiring golfers to perfect their pitching, and putting skills.

The nine-hole golf course was the only place African Americans were permitted to play, although only on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, in the 1940s due to segregation policies at the time. Many African American men learned the game of golf by working as caddies on area courses and then became enthusiastic, skillful golfers.

After years of playing under restrictive, segregated policies, a group of avid

African American golfers challenged the city to access all golf courses through several legal actions. They finally gained full access after continual persistence in the 1950s. The golfers were the catalyst for opening dialogue with elected officials and local clergy, resulting in the City of Baltimore granting open accommodations to all public recreation facilities.

In 1938, the Pitch and Putt Golf Club of Baltimore, an African American women’s golf group of 33 members, was

established at Carroll Park.

“Playing golf with this dynamic group of women has been rewarding beyond any measure on many levels. Our passion for the game of golf continues while having fun at the same time. Many life-long supportive friendships have been forged on the links as we travel to area courses twice a month. The Club has a proud 84-year legacy,” said Stephanie Williams, Club President of Pitch and Putt Golf Club of Baltimore.

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Judge J. Michelle Childs heads list of potential Black women Supreme Court nominees

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

Black women stood on the frontlines to help push President Joe Biden over the top in the 2020 election.

As the nation awaits word on whom the President nominates to fill the newly vacant Supreme Court seat, there's little debate whether an African American woman will be that pick.

Among the few remaining questions is whether that individual will deliver progress on a high court that will maintain its 6-3 conservative advantage.

"As a longtime advocate for Diversity and Inclusion at the highest levels of leadership in our nation, I am looking forward to the President's appointment of a highly-qualified and experienced jurist to our nation's highest court," said Congressional Black Caucus Chair Joyce Beatty (D-Ohio). "We know that when America's boardrooms, legislatures, and even the Supreme Court start to resemble America, we all benefit.

"I will continue to push in my capacity



The White House confirmed the candidacy of South Carolina U.S. District Judge J. Michelle Childs.

Photo Credit: University of South Carolina Law

as a member of Congress and Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus to ensure that the President upholds his promise to the American people and that the Senate confirms a Black woman to the Supreme Court without any unnecessary delay."

One candidate has already emerged.

The White House confirmed the candidacy of South Carolina U.S. District Judge J. Michelle Childs.

A 1992 graduate of the University of South Carolina School of Law, Judge Childs was appointed in 2010 by President Barack Obama to serve as a United States District Court Judge for the District of South Carolina.

Upon graduation from law school, Judge Childs went to work as an associate attorney at Nexsen Pruet Jacobs and Pollard law firm, becoming the first Black female partner in a major law firm in South Carolina.

She earned two gubernatorial appointments to become the Deputy Director of the South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (2000-02) and a Commissioner on the South Carolina Worker's Compensation Commission (2002-06). Judge Childs then won election from the South Carolina General Assembly as an at-large Circuit Court Judge (2006-10).

"In law school, you learn early on that your reputation and credibility will follow you throughout your career," Judge Childs said in an interview with her alma mater. "Your classmates will be on

opposing sides in cases or matters and will be leaders in various firms, agencies, and organizations in the state, so you always want to be known for having good character as your reputation can affect your ability to resolve matters entrusted to you."

In a statement, the White House says "multiple individuals" are under consideration along with Judge Childs. District of Columbia Circuit Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson; California Supreme Court Justice Leondra Kruger; and civil rights attorney Sherrilyn Ifill count among those under consideration.

President Biden said he would make his selection by the end of February.

"Our process is going to be rigorous. I will select a nominee worthy of Justice Stephen Breyer's legacy of excellence and decency," the President said. "While I've been studying candidates' backgrounds and writings, I've made no decision except one: The person I will nominate will be someone with extraordinary qualifications, character, experience, and integrity. And that person will be the first Black woman ever nominated to the United States Supreme Court."

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Overview of the CIAA & upcoming educational events during tournament week

By *Demetrius Dillard*

The Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) is one of the nation's oldest athletic conferences and reigns among the most recognizable HBCU conferences in the U.S. Founded in Washington, D.C., in 1912, the CIAA was originally the "Colored" Intercollegiate Athletic Association before adopting its current name in 1950. The conference is composed of 12 Division II HBCUs from Pennsylvania to South Carolina.

Numerous sports icons have emerged from CIAA institutions, including ESPN commentator Stephen A. Smith (Winston-Salem State), NBA legends Earl "The Pearl" Monroe (WSSU), Rick Mahorn (Hampton), Al Attles (N.C. A&T), Sam Jones (North Carolina Central), Ben Wallace (Virginia Union) and Harlem Globetrotter Fred "Curly" Neal (Johnson C. Smith).

Furthermore, coaching legends John B. McLendon, Clarence "Big House" Gaines and Bill Hayes were highly influential during their time with CIAA sports programs. The conference has also produced a number of NFL greats.

Bowie State football coach Damon Wilson will soon join that list of iconic figures as he is coming off leading the program to its third consecutive conference title and was just named the 2021 American Football Coaches Association Division II Coach of the Year, one of the highest honors a Division II coach can receive.

The CIAA made history by naming Jacqie McWilliams its first female commissioner, who also is the first-ever appointed Black female Commissioner in the NCAA across Divisions I, II and III.

The football championship has always been a landmark occurrence for the CIAA, but the basketball tournament is the most highly anticipated event every year.

"Baltimore is the first new location for the event since 2005 and we are thrilled to welcome thousands of fans, alumni and players from our great HBCUs for a weekend of reunions, basketball, and celebrating our culture," said Al Hutchinson, President and CEO of Visit Baltimore.



"CIAA's arrival will not only reinvigorate Baltimore's industry and economy, but also its tradition of celebrating academic contributions, culture and the sports legacy of HBCUs. It will also allow our city's youth to learn more about HBCUs and set their sights on attending one of these storied institutions."

Besides returning to Baltimore this year for its annual basketball tournament, the local ties that the CIAA has is Morgan State University being part of the conference in the 1960s. Otherwise, there are several Baltimore-area residents who have graduated from CIAA institutions. Bowie State women's basketball coach Shadae Swan is a Baltimore native.

The CIAA is headquartered in Charlotte, N.C., which is also where the last 16 basketball tournaments were held. Its 12 member schools are: Bowie State; Lincoln; Virginia Union; Virginia State; Winston-Salem State; Shaw; Saint Augustine's; Elizabeth City State; Fayetteville State; Livingstone; Claflin; and Johnson C. Smith.

Academic success is considered a "staple of the conference," in addition to athletics. Naming its highest-achieving student-athletes to the Commissioner's All-Academic Team is a yearly highlight for the CIAA, along with recognizing the Male and Female Scholar-Athlete of the Year.

"A brand synonymous to none, the CIAA is a crown jewel within college sports. Its annual tournament drives the distinct familiarity of the conference, generating national exposure with media and major corporations who acknowledge the athletic association's exceptional value," says a CIAA webpage.

"Powered by vision and innovation, the CIAA continues to pursue brand prominence in all avenues that will strengthen the foundation of this historic conference."

Education Day, Career Expo among highlights of CIAA tournament activities

The long-awaited CIAA tournament week will kick off its festivities with its annual High School Education Day (HSED) and Career Expo.

Visit Baltimore will work in conjunction with the CIAA to offer meaningful off-the-court educational programming for the local community and student-athletes focusing on wellness, mental health and women in sports.

More than 1,500 students from throughout the country are expected to attend the virtual HSED, which offers high school students an opportunity to learn more about CIAA's 12 HBCU member institutions while helping them make well-advised decisions when selecting and applying to college. Baltimore City high school students are invited to attend.

Education Day will highlight the "importance of furthering their education and to explore and discover the exciting programs and experiences CIAA colleges and universities have to offer" for students who participate.

"I'm super excited to come to Charm City, not just for the food, not just for the camaraderie across CIAA schools, but also to provide these amazing resources to the community," said Raquel Robinson, CIAA director of Education Day and Career Expo.

"It's an opportunity to get students

connected in Baltimore and surrounding areas. We want them to know that CIAA is about family, CIAA is for life and it's a way forward. We know that collegiate sports or going to college isn't for every student, but we also know it helps change the life trajectory for your community, for your family and for yourself."

Students get to interact with college recruiters from Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Pennsylvania and Virginia, she added.

HSED, one of the staple events of tournament week, will provide onsite admissions and scholarship opportunities for all qualified students, says a CIAA statement. Presented by U.S. Army ROTC, the 2022 CIAA High School Education Day will be held virtually Feb. 22 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and is for high school sophomores, juniors, seniors and community college students.

Similarly, the Career Expo will be held virtually from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. and in person on Feb. 24 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Convention Center on 1 West Pratt Street. Registration is free for both events.

The program activities for Education Day, slated to last no more than 30 minutes, will go as follows: welcome address; sponsor remarks; CIAA Culture video; guest speaker; closing remarks; and instructions for navigating the virtual educational/vendor fair.

"If nothing else, I want Baltimore City, Baltimore County and all the surrounding area of the DMV to know we want you to come check out [to see] what the CIAA has in store for you, and for your students and the communities you serve," Robinson said.

Students are encouraged to navigate the various college and educational booths represented at the virtual fair along with other resources and activities at their disposal.

The Career Expo will cater to upcoming and recent graduates, career seekers and career switchers who are seeking educational and/or career opportunities. Event sponsors, partners, and vendors for this year have not yet been disclosed.

Men and Women's Tournament Bounces into Baltimore Feb. 22-26

1-on-1 with CIAA's First A.A. Commissioner Jacqie McWilliams

By Ursula V. Battle

Jacqie McWilliams is a woman of 'firsts.' The Colorado Springs native is the first female Commissioner of the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA). The nation's oldest historically Black athletic conference, the CIAA will be holding its 2022 Men's and Women's Basketball Championship Tournament at Royal Farms Arena February 22-26, 2022.

"We're excited to bring the Tournament to the Maryland area, which has not happened since 1952," said McWilliams. "Hopefully, a new segment of fans and alumni that come to North Carolina to our tournaments will come to be a part of the experience in Baltimore."

The CIAA Championship Basketball Tournament is one of the largest and most anticipated NCAA college basketball events in the country, drawing over 150,000 fans annually. The Tournament has had an annual economic impact of nearly \$50 million and over \$650 million during the 15-year run in Charlotte, NC. McWilliams said the goal in 2022 is to have a similar impact on the greater Baltimore community, state of Maryland, and surrounding region.

"The Tournament is where we get our best exposure, and the best opportunity to engage all of our student-athletes, our membership, and alumni," said McWilliams. "We are happy to bring the Tournament and its economic impact to Baltimore."

In addition to the 22 games featured in this year's Men's and Women's Basketball Championship Tournament, the CIAA will offer a week of celebratory affiliated events that appeal to a diverse demographic of alumni and fans. Tournament week will include annual staple events such as Fan Fest, High School Education Day, CIAA Career Expo, Super Saturday, The 6th Annual Samaritan's Feet "Shoes of Hope" initiative, and The John B. McClendon Jr. CIAA Hall of Fame Breakfast.

The CIAA is also partnering with the city's official sales and marketing arm Visit Baltimore, to create a series of town halls and symposiums to include a Tech Summit, Money Moves Financial Summit, CIAA Men's & Women's Student-



Hampton University graduate Jacqie McWilliams is the first female Commissioner of the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA). The CIAA will be holding its 2022 Men's and Women's Basketball Championship Tournament at the Royal Farms Arena February 22-26, 2022. Courtesy Photo

Athlete Symposium, Mental Health Panel Discussion, and more.

"People can expect culture, a lot of fun, a reunion, some great basketball and some great community events," said McWilliams.

In another 'first' with McWilliams serving at the Commissioner helm, the upcoming CIAA Basketball Championship Tournament marks the conference's first in-person basketball championship tournament since 2020. The CIAA will also see its first year of a multi-year partnership with ESPN to broadcast the men's and women's tournaments. This marks the first

to the championship game."

Highlighting the Title IX civil rights law, Williams added, "We are in the 50th years of Title IX. That is how I was able to get a deal with ESPN where we could celebrate our men and women. It's a multi-year opportunity where we can give our athletes exposure and continue to grow with ESPN."

The 52-year-old Hampton University graduate is a member of the 1988 NCAA Division II Women's Basketball Championship team and the 1987 and 1990 CIAA volleyball championship teams. As Commissioner of the CIAA, McWilliams leads all strategic planning for the conference, working closely with the 13 member institutions and the board of directors and staff to support the advancement of student athletes, and managing 14 CIAA championships.

McWilliams, who said she always aspired to be the CIAA's Commissioner, spent nine years at the NCAA, managing NCAA championships, to include serving as Director of the Division I Women's Basketball Tournament (2006-2009) and the Division I Men's Basketball tournament (2007-2012). She has experience in administration, facilities and operations, compliance and governance, human resources, and external operations. A motivational speaker, she is married and has one daughter.

CIAA Tournament week will also feature the CIAA Old School Jam & Skate Party, CIAA Step Shows, and CIAA Comedy Show. Featured performers include The Magnificent DJ Jazzy Jeff, The Legendary DJ Kool, Big Daddy Kane, YoYo, Monie Luv, Rakim and Michel'le.

"The CIAA Basketball Tournament is a very special event," said McWilliams.

"There's nothing like it. I hope people will see the value when we come to Baltimore and purchase tickets to support our institutions and scholarships for student-athletes. I hope people enjoy everything that comes with it such as the food and the parties, but the Tournament is where I want people to focus first, and then enjoy all the other things we are doing outside of that."

For more information about CIAA Tournament Week visit www.theciaa.com.

A Great 'Fit'

Grandma Louise Pies Holds Grand Opening at Avenue Market

continued from page 1

“My Grandmother Louise was the matriarch of the family,” said Fit. “Everybody in West Baltimore would come to her house for pies. My grandfather taught me how to make the crust. In Woodlawn, there’s a bakery that’s closed called Louise’s Bakery. When I was a little boy, my grandmother would take me there to get strawberry danishes.

“The name Louise is still on top of the bakery. When I ride by there, I always think about my grandmother and believe it’s sitting there waiting for somebody to come. That’s my next mission. But I always knew that one day I would have a place where people would come for these pies and to engage and socialize.”

Grandma Louise’s Bakery has over 20 varieties of pies including, Bean; Sweet Potato; Apple; Strawberry; Banana; Mango; Chocolate Crème; Seafood Alfredo; Chicken Alfredo; Chicken Noodle; Veggie; Butternut Squash; Crab; Lentil; and Tomato Stew, according to Fit.

While the Grand Opening recently took place, Fit said Grandma Louise Pies at Avenue Market has been open since January 3, 2022. He said his wife Yvette and other family members work at his stall.

“Business has been beautiful,” said Fit, who is a graduate of Coppin State University. “The same community who supported us from day one is still supporting us.”

The Pennsylvania Avenue Main Street Program is a community-based commercial revitalization project of Baltimore Main Streets, which provides customized support and public resources to designated neighborhood business districts. Fit talked about Nakeisha



(Left to right) Paul Ruppert, President & CEO, Baltimore Public Markets; Councilman Eric Costello, Baltimore City Council District 11; Nakeisha Turner, Manager, Pennsylvania Avenue Main Street; Mosiah Fit, Owner, Grandma Louise Pies, Inc. and his wife, Yvette Williams; and Sean A. Stinnett, Deputy Director, Mayor’s Office of Small, Minority and Women Business, City of Baltimore at the grand opening of Grandma Louise Pies at Avenue Market. Photo Credit: Paris Brown

Turner, Manager of Pennsylvania Avenue Main Street.

“Nakeisha Turner noticed me out of the streets selling pies,” recalled Fit, who also said he plans to start a youth apprentice program. “Ms. Turner told me they were looking for vendors for the stalls. I contacted her, and she did just what she said she could do.”

Turner also talked about the 31-year-old Fit.

“I’m excited about our partnership with Baltimore Public Markets to help develop Black businesses,” said Turner. “Mosiah Fit, owner of Grandma Louise Pies and the work he has done in the community to spark entrepreneurship, is

an excellent addition to Avenue Market.”

Unique among American cities, Baltimore’s communities have successfully sustained a network of six public markets that all serve their surrounding neighborhoods. Lexington Market, the city’s largest market and the longest continuously operating public market in the country, is the anchor of these institutions, and is joined by five other smaller neighborhood markets, which include The Avenue Market located at 1700 Pennsylvania Avenue.

“We are excited to welcome the first business to benefit from our partnership with Pennsylvania Avenue Main Street,” says Paul Ruppert, president/CEO

Baltimore Public Markets. “This initiative supports BPMC’s mission to support small businesses in Baltimore.”

The Avenue Market Pop-Up Shop program application opened in fall 2021, and will continue to offer retail vendors short-term lease opportunities.

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until the seven remaining vendor spaces are leased. Interested vendors can contact info@pa-mainstreet.com for more information.

Fit says Grandma Louise’s Pies is open Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. “Stay true to who you are,” Fit advises aspiring entrepreneurs. “Also stay loyal to your vision.”


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Rambling Rose

February is Black History Month



Rosa Pryor Trusty

Hello everyone, I know it's hard, but try to keep your head up. We must believe that better times are coming. Usually I would have a lot of things such as Black History events listed for you to go to this month, but because of the COVID-19 they are far and few in between. I believe with all my heart that this too shall pass, but right now it is safer to stay home and safe and if you do decide to go out and enjoy the festivities and celebrate your sweetheart for Valentine's Day, for God sake wear your mask!

Because I will not be talking to you again until the week after Valentine's Day, I want to take this time out first to wish all my couples a very happy Valentine's Day. Do something special for just the two of you. You never know what tomorrow will bring.

There will be an event on February 8th from 6-10 p.m., hosted by Ms. Maybelle and Line Dance King Randy Dennis with special guest, DJ Mike Jones on the turn table and live entertainment presented by Shay & Lady J. at City View Bar & Grill, 6700 Security Blvd. in Gwynn Oak, Maryland. Free admission and free buffet. For more information, call 443-226-8895.

For Valentine weekend, the show called "Classic Soul" will feature the Manhattans, Dennis Edwards Temptations Revue, the Delfonics, and the Enchantment will be performing at the Lyric, 140 W. Mt. Royal Avenue on Friday February 11; show time is 8 p.m. Also included are special guest DJ Mike Jones and hosted by our friend, musician and Oldies but Goodies radio personality from WEAA 8.9 FM Robert Shaheed. This show will be really nice. For more information, call the station.

Every Wednesday is "Line Dance Happy Hour" from 6-10 p.m. at Crafty

Crab Seafood, 8606 Liberty Road hosted by Randy Dennis, no cover, good food, good drinks and a lot of fun.

There is live entertainment for the Old School folks every Friday at City View located at 67 Security Blvd. is from 7-11 p.m. and it is free.

Our Public Markets in Baltimore such as Lexington Market, The Avenue Market, Northeast Market, and Broadway Market as well as Hollins Market is celebrating Black History for the whole month of February.

The events will take place at the Markets every Thursday in the month of February featuring the performing arts company WombWork, Sankofa Children's Museum of African Cultures, spoken word artist, Youth Poetry Group and African Dance and Drumming groups; Kippa Madden, Museum Exhibit; Sankofa African Marketplace; Live entertainment and much more. The schedule is as follows; February 5, 1-3 p.m. at Lexington Market; on Saturday, February 12 at the Avenue Market from 12 noon to 4 p.m.; the Northeast Market is February 19 from 12 noon until 4 p.m.; February 26 the Broadway Market and the Hollins Market events will be from 12 noon until 4 p.m.

There is a Valentine's Day Party on Monday, February 14 from 1-5 p.m. at one of my favorite places, The Forum Caterers, 4210 Primrose Avenue called, "Love is in the Air". For more information call 410-961-3266.

Before I leave you, I just want to mention if you have not heard that another one of my favorite musicians, Ray Gaskins, passed away on January 20, 2022 after a very long illness. My special story about this fantastic musician will be in my next column. His memorial service will be Saturday, February 5th at Sweet Hope Free Will Baptist Church,

Happy Valentine's Day!



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Randy and Tanya Dennis, hand dancer power couple



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Well my friends, I have to go, not feeling that well in the past few weeks, neither has my "Boo-Boo." But remember if you need me, call me at 410-833-9474 or email me at rosapryor@aol.com. UNTIL THE NEXT TIME, I'M MUSICALLY YOURS,

Ray Gaskins, passed away on January 20, 2022 after a very long illness. His memorial service will be Saturday, February 5th at Sweet Hope Free Will Baptist Church, 3925 Dolfield Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland 21215.



Ravens John Harbaugh gives insight on Lamar Jackson's injury and recovery

By Tyler Hamilton

The Baltimore Ravens had one of the more injury-plagued seasons in recent memory. The team was without many players for stretches of games including Lamar Jackson, Marcus Peters, Marlon Humphrey and Tyus Bowser among others.

Ravens head coach John Harbaugh refused to use injuries as an excuse for the team's disappointing season that end with them not making the playoffs. But he acknowledged their existence.

"You can say it's bad luck," Harbaugh said. "You can say it's a fluke. I get that, but I don't feel like we have the luxury to live there. That's not something that we can say that that's it. We have to turn over every stone. We have to look at every possible avenue to do the best we can to make sure this doesn't happen again."

A part of turning over every stone includes taking a look at their offseason program along with training camp. The Ravens will examine how they handle conditioning for players and look at things from a load management perspective during practice.

"I mean, man, we're going to look at everything, and we're going to change a lot. I've talked to a lot of our players about that, because in some ways, you



Baltimore Ravens quarterback Lamar Jackson's injury towards the end of the season was a backbreaker for the team. The Ravens were 7-5 when Jackson injured his ankle causing him to miss the next five games. The team finished with an 8-9 record. Initially, the Ravens hoped for the best with Jackson's injury, which was said to have been a bone bruise. However, Harbaugh admitted it was an unpredictable injury.

Photo Credit: Derik Hamilton/AP

don't change for change's sake, but sometimes, you have to make changes in the way you do things," Harbaugh explained.

Jackson's injury towards the end of the

season was a backbreaker for Baltimore. The Ravens were 7-5 when Jackson injured his ankle causing him to miss the next five games. The team finished with an 8-9 record.

Initially, the Ravens hoped for the best with Jackson's injury, which was said to have been a bone bruise. However, Harbaugh admitted it was an unpredictable injury.

"Lamar felt like he was going to be back. The first week, he thought he had a chance. The second week, he assured me, he said, 'I'll be back. I'll be back.' He worked really hard at getting back, but it just didn't really heal," Harbaugh said on Monday, January 30, 2022. "It was in a spot where I've come to understand from the medical people that there's not a great deal of blood flow down there in the low-ankle/foot area where the bruise was. It just didn't heal very quickly, and it was painful. You could see it. He stayed in the boot longer than we thought. He was still limping, even at the end of the season— even in his boot."

The offseason is only three weeks old for the Ravens. The rest has done Jackson well. Jackson told Harbaugh that he is getting better and feels confident that he'll be able to get started on his training for next season.

The plan is to get back to work the day after the Super Bowl. That's great news for the Ravens.



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Five fundamentals to financial recovery

News & Experts— The COVID-19 public health crisis triggered a financial crisis for many individuals and families. Whether their pain was caused by furloughs, layoffs, or pay reductions, people were thrown off track from meeting monthly obligations and from progressing toward their long-term money goals.

Now as vaccines help the U.S. edge closer to normalcy and more people regain employment, recovery can be a slow process. But there are simple steps people can take to get back on track and stay on solid financial ground, says financial planner Aaron Leak, the founder of ECL Private Wealth Management.

“The key to gaining back lost ground and full recovery is making sure you put the fundamental pieces in place,” Leak said. “One of the challenges is figuring out how to do it amid continued uncertainty with the economy. But the most important thing is to take control of all the factors of your financial situation as best you can.”

Leak offers these steps to financial recovery:

Learn about assistance programs— Leak says many people who are eligible have not pursued avenues of aid such as unemployment benefits, credit card hardship programs, and the Paycheck Protection Program, which is available to the self-employed and contractors as well as small businesses. “It’s important for people to understand what’s available to them,” he says. “Some don’t think they qualify when in fact they do, or they feel they’re being a burden, or they didn’t think the pandemic would last this long.”

Refine your budget— “Sitting in their house much of the year forced people to take a hard, honest look at their finances and ask the question, ‘What is it that I do that costs me so much money?’” Leak says. A comprehensive analysis starts with doing a deep dive on all



The pandemic exposed how many people lack a sufficient amount of savings for an emergency. You should have a minimum of three months’ worth of expenses saved up, but ideally enough money to get you through a full year. If you’re back to work, each month take a portion of the money you’ve trimmed out of your monthly expenses and build your emergency fund. Photo Credit: ClipArt.com

expenses and monthly bills, he says, and weeding out poor spending habits and things they can do without. That breakdown of costs enables one to hammer out a sensible budget that creates more room for savings, paying down debt, and investing.

Prioritize savings. Leak says the pandemic exposed how many people lacked a sufficient amount of savings for an emergency. “Having an emergency fund is essential,” he says. “You need a minimum of three months’ worth of expenses saved up, but ideally enough money to get you through a full year. If you’re back to work, each month take a portion of the money you’ve trimmed out of your monthly expenses and build your emergency fund.”

Know your 401(k) options. If you are furloughed or laid off but leaving your 401(k) with the company, you may be able to take a loan or a withdrawal from

it due to the pandemic. “This or cashing out your 401(k) should be a last option because it can jeopardize your retirement nest egg,” Leak says. “After the 2008 financial crisis, people who

stayed in the market experienced financial recovery from their losses.” Another option is rolling over a 401(k) into an IRA account. “This offers many other choices to grow your money,” Leak says, “since an IRA can be a mutual fund, annuity, CD, or almost any other type of financial instrument.”

Refinance your home. Home value is akin to having another emergency fund, Leak says. “Your home equity is sitting there doing nothing for you unless you tap into it,” he says. “Whether it be a home equity line of credit or doing a refinance and taking cash out while the interest rates are low, either could be a good option.”

“Embracing a new level of priorities and discipline will serve people well in making better money decisions,” Leak says.

Aaron Leak has 16 years of experience in the financial industry and is the founder of ECL Private Wealth Management. He holds Series 7, 6, 63 and 66 licenses as well as life, health, and property and casualty insurance licenses. For more information about Aaron Leak, visit: www.eclpwm.com.



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