
THE BALTIMORE TIMES

Vol. 36 No. 25

April 22 - 28, 2022

A Baltimore Times/Times of Baltimore Publication



Vice President Harris, Others Marvel Over Stunning Opening of 'Afro Atlantic Histories'



Vice President Kamala Harris welcomed the National Gallery of Art's Afro-Atlantic Histories exhibition as well as Trustees from the National Art Gallery in Washington, DC. The event was followed by a panel discussion which included the first African American curator Kanitra Fletcher, Phd, Associate Curator of African American and Afro-Diasporic Art and moderated by Darren Walker, President of the Ford Foundation and Trustee of the National Gallery of Art. Photo Credit: Ben Rosser, (See article on page 8)

The AFRAM Festival Takes Over Juneteenth Weekend

The Cultural Festival Returns to the Historic Druid Hill Park June 18 – 19

BALTIMORE, MD – On Tuesday, April 19, 2022, Mayor Brandon M. Scott and Baltimore City Recreation and Parks (BCRP) announced major updates for the 45th Annual AFRAM Festival. After a successful hybrid experience in 2021, the festival will return to a **two-day, in-person event** on Saturday, June 18 and Sunday, June 19. Commemorating the Juneteenth holiday, AFRAM will honor the holiday by showcasing Baltimore’s best and brightest in Black fashion, art, music, business and culture. The historic Druid Hill Park will once again serve as the backdrop for the 2022 festivities.

Talent, sponsorship, volunteer, and vendor applications are now open for those interested in joining in on the fun. This opportunity will allow local makers, business owners and artists a chance to showcase their goods, talents and services to thousands of attendees.

This year’s performers include:

- Rapper and singer, **Yung Bleu**
- Famed DJ and radio host **DJ Quicksilva**



(l-r) Councilman Robert Stokes, Sr. (District 12), Mayor Brandon Scott, Council Vice-President Sharon Green Middleton (District 6), Councilman James Torrence (District 7)

- Superstar performer, songwriter and producer, **Ne-Yo**
- Gospel musician and songwriter, **Le’Andria Johnson**
- Actor, singer, and model, **Rotimi**
- R&B crooner, **El DeBarge**
- Baltimore party starter, **DJ Tanz**
- Superstar R&B group, **The O’Jays**

“I am incredibly excited to be welcoming residents and visitors back to the historic Druid Hill Park for the return of one of Baltimore’s most time-honored traditions, AFRAM,” said Mayor Brandon M. Scott. “To further highlight the black excellence that is AFRAM, I am proud to announce that we are moving the festival to the Juneteenth weekend. Thank you to Baltimore City

Recreation & Parks for all they did to continue to hold AFRAM amid the pandemic and their tireless work to bring the live festival back to the City this year with an amazing lineup. The return of AFRAM is another signal that Baltimore is back.”

“Baltimore has been waiting and our agency has been working! We are so excited to bring the AFRAM experience back to Druid Hill Park,” said Reginald Moore,

BCRP’s executive director. “Please stay tuned for additional festival updates as we work to bring the city its best AFRAM yet.”

The Baltimore AFRAM Festival remains one of the largest African-American cultural arts festivals on the East Coast. AFRAM is made possible with the support of sponsors like the official broadcast media partner, WJZ-TV. **The festival is free and open to guests of all ages.**

Attendees are encouraged to follow AFRAM on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook for real-time updates and visit aframbaltimore.com for more details.

About the Baltimore AFRAM Festival

The Baltimore AFRAM Festival is presented by Mayor Brandon M. Scott and the City of Baltimore. The Festival officially started in 1976 as a part of Baltimore City’s Showcase of Nations. The multi-generational two-day live experience is slated to bring together the most dynamic voices in music, art and creativity.

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The Baltimore Times (USPS 5840) is published every Friday by **The Baltimore Times**, 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 St, Suite 201 Baltimore, MD 21218



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- Rushern Baker
- Jon Baron
- Peter Franchot
- Doug Gansler
- Wes Moore
- Tom Perez



Kelly Swoope
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Day 1



Jamie McDonald
CEO at Upsurge Baltimore

The Launch of an
Equitech City:
The Future of Baltimore

Closing Plenary Speaker
Day 1



Dr. Tammira Lucas
CEO Cube Cowork

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Guest Editorials/Commentary

CSE hosts Economic Empowerment Gubernatorial Candidate Forum and Economic Inclusion Conference

The university's entrepreneurship center will host a pre-conference forum with candidates for Maryland governor followed by its annual Economic Inclusion Conference to highlight economic opportunities in West Baltimore

Coppin State University, College of Business, Center for Strategic Entrepreneurship (CSE) is a non-academic unit bringing technical assistance, entrepreneurial education, and research-informed innovation to small businesses, organizations, and aspiring entrepreneurs in Baltimore, Maryland.

On April 26, 2022, from 6:15 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. the CSE will host the Economic Empowerment Gubernatorial Candidate Forum with an esteemed panel of candidates discussing the economic plans for expanding economic opportunities in West Baltimore and the state. The forum will be held in the James Weldon Johnson Building on the Coppin State University campus and moderated by Kelly Swoope, news anchor for WMAR ABC2 in Baltimore. Participating candidates include Rushern Baker, Jon Baron, Peter Franchot, Doug Gansler, Wes Moore, and Tom Perez. The forum precedes the annual Economic Inclusion Conference at Coppin (EICAC) which is held virtually on April 28 and 29 from 9:00 AM until 1:00 PM, an experience that brings thought leaders and the community together to address barriers to economic upward mobility faced by many in marginalized communities.

During the forum, candidates will respond to questions inspired by eight of the 12 categories identified by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Center for Economic and Social Science, Genuine Progress Indicator, and The Maryland Quality of Life Initiative. The categories of questioning will include education, healthcare, housing, income and poverty, social justice, personal and public safety, transportation, and the environment. The goal is to provide citizens with insight into their policy perspectives affecting the socio-economic future of the community.

The Economic Inclusion Conference brings together local and national thought-leaders from the corporate sector, academic, public sector, and the community for networking and developing strategies for a brighter economic future. The first EICAC event for held in 2016 and was brought back in 2021 as an inaugural event during the launch of the CSE.

The forum and the conference align with several initiatives launched by the CSE to advance the university's legacy as an anchor institution and conduit for positive economic mobility. With programs offering startup assistance, real estate licensing for students, K-12 engagement, a 12-month undergraduate entrepreneurship certificate, alumni-led opportunities, faculty research, and unique social and community innovation, the CSE is at the forefront of transformation and revitalization in West Baltimore.

"Coppin State University, is pleased to bring these opportunities to our community; connecting the entrepreneurial ecosystem influencers, corporate sponsors, community college and K-12 partners, business leaders, and aspiring entrepreneurs," said Coppin State University College of Business Dean, Sadie R. Gregory, Ph.D. Her statement was echoed by the center's director, Dr. Ronald C. Williams who described the events as "representative of Coppin's position as an academic and socio-economic innovator."

To attend the Economic Empowerment Gubernatorial Candidate Forum in person or virtually, register at www.bit.ly/CoppinForum. EICAC 2022 is a free virtual event and participants may register to participate at www.bit.ly/EICAC2022

For additional information, call 410-951-3444 or email jllassiter-mangana@coppin.edu.



Community Affairs

Giant Pharmacy Administering Second COVID-19 Booster Vaccinations for Individuals 50 Years of Age and Older

In accordance with the latest FDA and CDC guidance, Giant pharmacies are administering a second booster dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine to individuals 50 years of age and older at least four months after receipt of a first booster dose of any authorized or approved COVID-19 vaccines.

Customers are encouraged to schedule an appointment or walk-in to their local Giant Pharmacy to receive their vaccinations. Individuals are asked to bring their health insurance card and driver's license to

their appointment and will also be required to show their vaccination card at the time of their visit. Giant encourages all of its neighbors to stop by their local Giant Pharmacy for free consultations with one of the Giant licensed and trained pharmacists to discuss preventative measures, additional CDC/ACIP recommended immunizations to stay healthy and assistance with selecting appropriate over-the-counter (OTC) and prescription (Rx) products. For more information, visit giant-food.com/covid-info.

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Across America, Students Must Learn All History

By Ben Jealous

Black history is American history. That shouldn't be a controversial statement. But thanks to politicians like Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin, teaching honestly about history is getting downright dangerous.

Youngkin got elected in part by embracing a dishonest campaign launched by far-right activists to make parents fear that teaching about racism represents some kind of sinister plot to shame and indoctrinate children.

Once he took office, the very first official action he took as governor was to sign an executive order supposedly designed to "get divisive concepts out of our schools."

You know what was "inherently divisive?" The Confederacy, which waged a brutal war to defend slavery from its capital in Richmond, Virginia. How about massive resistance to the desegregation of schools? How



Ben Jealous

about Virginia's law that made interracial marriage illegal until the U.S. Supreme Court overturned it in 1967?

Youngkin has claimed that his order will still allow students to learn about history—both good and bad. But he also set up a tip line that parents could use to report on "divisive" teachers.

That's in the worst tradition of authoritarian politicians everywhere. It's a terrible policy. It's a terrible way to think about education.

And, I will admit, I take it a bit personally. My ancestors were enslaved in the state of Virginia. One of my forefathers was elected to the state legislature during Reconstruction. He helped create the state's system of public education. Then white supremacists took back power, made segregation the law of the land, and

made it impossible for Black Virginians to build political power for decades. That's pretty "divisive" stuff.

A coalition of civil rights groups has launched the *Black History is American History* campaign to push back on Gov. Youngkin's efforts to force teachers and schools to white-wash teaching about history and racism. Students have the right to learn the truth about our history and our present.

We are inviting Virginia parents and families to use the governor's "tip line" to tell Gov. Youngkin that denying students the freedom to learn is bad for children, families, and the future.

Unfortunately, Virginia is far from alone. Politicians and political operatives are out to build power by mobilizing a backlash to honest teaching about racism in our history and institutions. And those efforts are connected to campaigns for so-called "Don't Say Gay" laws, which threaten teachers who acknowledge the reality of LGBTQ students and families.

And all of this goes hand in hand with a surge in censorship in classrooms and libraries. The American Library Association recently released its list of the books most often challenged last year. Most of them were about Black and LGBTQ people. And that reminded me that Gov. Youngkin's campaign actually ran an ad featuring a woman who objected to the teaching of Toni Morrison's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel "Beloved" in her son's senior-year English class.

Watching politicians build power by inflaming fears about Black people can be deeply discouraging. It can also be intensely motivating.

As a Black Christian, I draw strength from the historic witness of the Black church and its role in supporting and sustaining Black people as we made history. I celebrate the power and impact of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s appeal to both the Constitution's promise of equality under law and the great faith traditions' call for us to treat one another with decency and respect.

And I lift up the words of Lonnie Bunch, the founding director of the National Museum of African American History and Culture and now the director of the Smithsonian Institution, who reminds us that "there are few things as powerful and as important as a people, as a nation that is steeped in its history."

#

Ben Jealous serves as president of People For the American Way and Professor of the Practice in the Africana Studies Department at the University of Pennsylvania where he teaches leadership. Jealous has decades of experience as a leader, coalition builder, campaigner for social justice and seasoned non-profit executive. In 2008, he was chosen as the youngest-ever president and CEO of the NAACP. He is a graduate of Columbia University and Oxford, where he was a Rhodes Scholar, and he has taught at Princeton and the University of Pennsylvania.

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Mentor on the Move

Baltimore's Motivational Champ Turned His Life Around, Leads Boxing Workout Classes

By Andrea Blackstone

Boxers Errol Spence Jr. and Yordenis Uga competed in the ring on April 16, 2022, in Arlington, Texas. According to ESPN, Spence reigned victorious after a 10th-round technical knockout. Uga is a Cuban boxer who was left with a fractured eye from the hard-fought battle. Brendan Lee—a Baltimore-based, certified boxing trainer and coach—knows that National Physical Fitness & Sports Month is prime time for anyone to get in shape through boxing without giving and taking brutal hits.

The sport which is gaining popularity in the lives of everyday people can offer an excellent way to improve mental and physical health. The sport is not only reserved for seasoned boxing professionals like Spence and Uga. Lee has been training novice boxing enthusiasts for a year. He works clients out at Onelife Fitness Hunt Valley, located in Cockeysville, Md.

“You can get to the shape of your dreams literally in six weeks,” Lee said. “Most people that I train have no desire to ever get in the boxing ring. Some lawyers, doctors, accountants, they just simply want

to release some stress and get fit while doing so.”

A boxing ring is not required for Lee to make his clients feel the burn. He pumps up the fitness challenge by integrating the use of boxing gloves; heavy bags; boxing mitts; medicine balls; jump ropes; free weights; and other items. The space holds up to 15 people who want to take Brendan's fitness challenge. Classes are fifty minutes long.

Although Lee is a fitness enthusiast, he brings other elements of his journey to the conversation. His motivational speaking, community activism, and work as a behavioral specialist shaped who he has become as a leader. An earlier aspect of Lee's story begins at the age of 17, when he used boxing to release internal anger and push his mind, body, and soul. While growing up in Park Heights, Lee once dreamed of becoming a professional boxer. Getting shot prevented him from pursuing the sport after a robbery gone bad.

Despite selling drugs at the age of 12 years old, and joining a gang at the age of 16, Lee found his way back to a straight path. He grad-

uated from an alternative school Called Francis M. Wood High School. Today, Lee has his own nonprofit called Heart To Heart Circles. He serves Baltimore City School students, parents, and teachers by conducting workshops to improve building relationships and to **improve the staff climate**. Mentoring youth and leading large anti-violence rallies are also a part of Lee's work. Rhonda Richetta, Ted Sutton, and Lee's sister, Airielle Lewis are among mentors who contributed to his rebirth, in addition to getting shot. During it all, Brenda Rucker's tough love helped her son.

“I had a mother that never gave up on me and did the best that she could with 10 children,” Lee said. “She even put me in a Scared Straight program,” Lee said.

Lee became a Christian at 22 years old. His life's journey supports his belief that boxing works every muscle out in a person's body, in addition to tapping into the brain as well, too. Lee remarked that he never forgot that mental strength is required to persevere through life.

“I always tell people before they start my class, at some point you're going to want to quit doing this workout,” Lee said. “But if you can push yourself through each class, when life hits, whether it's schoolwork, real work or obstacles, you won't quit in real life either because you will be mentally strong enough to overcome each obstacle.”

Elizabeth Maraj said that she once worked with Lee at a school. So far, her schedule has permitted her to take four of Lee's boxing classes at Onelife Fitness. She felt that physical activity would be good for her. That is when Maraj gave something new a try, after the new gym opened. The Baltimore City resident now plans to stick with boxing to stay fit in more ways than one. Slight weight loss and increased arm definition are just some of the benefits she noticed.

“I definitely get a good workout and... it does a lot for my mental health,” Maraj said. “When I leave class, I feel free,” Maraj said.

Follow Lee on Instagram via <https://www.instagram.com/thisisgodsworx/>. Watch “Rebirth of a Sinner” by clicking here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3e-2jGvvXE_8. It chronicles Lee's miraculous journey to become who he is today.

National Physical Fitness & Sports Month is a great time to jumpstart a fitness plan, after the pandemic left many people engaging in less physical activity. Brendan Lee is a Baltimore-based certified boxing trainer and coach, nonprofit leader, motivational speaker, behavioral specialist, and father who turned his life around to do God's work. He leads adults to improve mental and physical fitness through boxing workouts. When Lee is not inspiring Baltimoreans to slip on boxing gloves or use medicine balls, he works to uplift in Baltimore through his nonprofit called Heart To Heart Circles.



Brendan Lee



Boxing offers a full-body workout, including a cardiovascular health component. Individuals take a class from Brendan Lee at Onelife Fitness. All photos are courtesy of Brendan Lee

Listen to Your Heart: Raising Awareness of a Serious Heart Condition in African American, Black, and Afro-Caribbean Communities

By Dr. Carlos Ince
Chief of Cardiology,
St. Agnes Hospital

More than a year and a half into a global pandemic that has disproportionately impacted communities of color, we continue to live through a public health tragedy. If there is any hope to be drawn from so much hardship and loss, it's that COVID-19 has reignited new conversations about disease awareness and the inequality that still exists in our healthcare system.

As a cardiologist practicing in Baltimore who has been treating heart disease for 23 years, I've witnessed how delayed visits can impact care within our community. It is always upsetting when patients come to my office with advanced heart disease that potentially could have been diagnosed and treated earlier.

That's why there is one condition I want every patient to be aware of. It's called transthyretin amyloid cardiomyopathy, or ATTR-CM. ATTR-CM is a serious and often underdiagnosed cause of heart failure.

ATTR-CM is a progressive disease, in which over time the heart muscle begins to thicken and stiffen. There are two types of ATTR-CM; the wild-type, which is associated with aging, and the hereditary type, which is associated with a gene change (mutation) and can be passed down from a relative. The most common mutation in the United States, known as V122I, is found almost exclusively in African Americans. Approximately 3% to 4% of African Americans are thought to have the



Content developed by Pfizer in collaboration with Dr. Carlos Ince. Dr. Ince is a consultant on Pfizer's Voices for the Heart program.

V122I mutation, although not all individuals with the V122I mutation develop symptoms of hereditary ATTR-CM.

While heart failure is common among Black, African American, and Afro-Caribbean communities, hereditary ATTR-CM in these populations is often overlooked by doctors for several reasons. In fact, some patients with ATTR-CM say they visited up to five doctors before receiving an accurate diagnosis.

This is why I am excited to be partnering with Pfizer on Voices for the Heart in Baltimore—a community-based initiative bringing together physicians and trusted local organizations within African American, Black, and Afro-Caribbean communities around the country to increase awareness of hereditary ATTR-CM as an often-underdiagnosed cause of heart failure.

Early signs of ATTR-CM can

include an irregular heartbeat, fatigue, shortness of breath, carpal tunnel syndrome, swelling in the hands and feet, and numbness and tingling in the hands. Some of these symptoms are not traditionally associated with heart disease, which may contribute to multiple doctor's appointments and a delayed or incorrect diagnosis.

I'm committed to spreading awareness of hereditary ATTR-CM because I have seen firsthand how a delayed diagnosis can adversely impact a patient (and their loved ones), making it essential to inform our community about this condition – including everyone from patients to caregivers to local healthcare providers.

If you're experiencing seemingly unrelated signs and symptoms (e.g., irregular heartbeat, fatigue, shortness of breath, or carpal tunnel syndrome), have a family history of cardiac issues, and have been diagnosed with heart

failure, talk to your primary care doctor or an experienced cardiologist. Whether they seem related or not, it's important to share your symptoms and health history. This will allow your doctor to provide the care you need and to make an appropriate diagnosis.

Family members and caregivers also have an important role to play because they sometimes notice or remember health symptoms that the patient may forget or neglect to mention and help people with hereditary ATTR-CM manage their disease.

As part of the *Voices for the Heart* effort, myself and a hereditary ATTR-CM patient will be featured speakers at virtual town hall on April 28, 2022. I will share more information about hereditary ATTR-CM symptoms and diagnosis, and there will be additional educational resources on hereditary ATTR-CM available to the community. For additional information on the event, please scan the QR code below.

Working together, we can overcome the challenge of low awareness and raise our collective voices to help educate family members, friends, and neighbors at risk of developing hereditary ATTR-CM.

For resources on hereditary ATTR-CM, including a discussion guide to help conversations with your doctor, you can visit www.yourheartsmessage.com/don.

Content developed by Pfizer in collaboration with Dr. Carlos Ince. Dr. Ince is a consultant on Pfizer's Voices for the Heart program.

Vice President Harris, Others Marvel Over Stunning Opening of ‘Afro Atlantic Histories’

By Stacy M. Brown

Stunning and as powerful as it is large, a stainless-steel work of art served as a welcome greeting for guests at “Afro-Atlantic Histories,” the highly anticipated exhibition at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.

The piece, Hank Willis Thomas’s “A Place to Call Home (Africa America Reflection),” strikes quite a tone for the acclaimed exhibit that covers 400 years of the African Diaspora and examines the multiple histories and legacies of the transatlantic slave trade.

“The opening was a wonderful experience. It was such an honor to have so many artists there to celebrate with us and see everyone’s excitement about the exhibition,” said curator Kanitra Fletcher, who configured a similar but smaller touring show for Houston and the National Gallery.



L-r: Curators: Molly Donovan, Steven Nelson, Kanitra Fletcher and Kaywin Feldman
Photo Credit: Ben Rosser

“Our special events team outdid themselves and created such a joyful and celebratory feeling, with the design, food, dancing, and of course our very special guest – Vice President Kamala Harris. It was an honor to give her a tour of the exhibition and see how much it spoke to her. I could not have asked for a better debut for the exhibition,” Fletcher stated.

“This exhibit, of course, is a part of reminding us that we must always remember where we come from,” Harris stated.

“Let us always appreciate where we are and have faith about where we can go, knowing we can see what can be, unburdened by what has been,” she asserted.

Darren Walker, president of the Ford Foundation and a Trustee at the National Gallery of Art, proclaimed the exhibit “extraordinary.”

He said it’s an “unprecedented moment in the history of the National Gallery of Art and the D.C. community.”

“Never before has there been a more diverse, vibrant and range of people gathered,” Walker insisted.

He said individuals arrived from Lagos, Accra, London, Los Angeles, Rio, and numerous other



Vice President Kamala Harris welcomed the National Gallery of Art’s Afro-Atlantic Histories exhibition as well as Trustees from the National Art Gallery in Washington, DC. The event was followed by a panel discussion which included the first African American curator Kanitra Fletcher, Phd, Associate Curator of African American and Afro-Diasporic Art and moderated by Darren Walker, President of the Ford Foundation and Trustee of the National Gallery of Art. Photo Credit: Ben Rosser

places to see the exhibit. Walker also noted that he learned important lessons by viewing the exhibit.

“I learned how the challenge of racism binds us across the hemisphere from Brazil to the U.S. and everywhere in between,” Walker recounted.

“I also learned that Paul Mellon owned some beautiful paintings with Black subjects.”

He urged everyone to “run, don’t walk” to visit the National Gallery.

“This show will help your spirit soar,” Williams concluded.

“Afro-Atlantic Histories” features over 130 works that Art News writer Alex Greenberger said speak to the horrors of slavery and the

persistence of Black communities across the world in the years since the slave trade’s end in the U.S., Europe, and Brazil.

“It is an extremely ambitious show, with works from centuries past by Frans Post and John Phillip Simpson alongside works of the past 100 years by Glenn Ligon, Zanele Muholi, Barrington Watson, Frank Bowling, Paulo Nazareth, and more,” Greenberger wrote.

Among the many works is Aaron Douglas’s “Into Bondage,” the 1936 artwork that focuses on the inhumanity of slavery and the quest for freedom.

As noted in the work’s description, “Into Bondage” appears to signal some hope as a

woman raises her hands towards the sky and a man gaze toward the North Star.

Zanele Muholi's "Ntozahke II," a 2016 self-portrait, also counts among the featured masterpieces. Mimicking the Statue of Liberty, the work is a commentary on freedom.

"We had to reduce the number of works from over 400 to approximately 130, which was difficult but also enlightening because I learned a lot and discovered new works that are rarely seen in museums or discussed in art history courses," Fletcher said.

She said she enjoyed reviewing works from the National Gallery's collection and collaborating with curators in other departments to find ways to supplement the exhibition with works from the collection.

Fletcher, a renowned curator, added that the exhibition also provided an education for her.

"I learned about several new artists and artworks from the Caribbean and Europe that were new to me," Fletcher noted.

"I hope our visitors find their works as enriching as I have and that the show leads to more scholarly attention and monographic exhibitions of many Black artists in the show who are revered in their own nations but rarely are seen in the U.S."

The curator also noted that the exhibition isn't the only reason to visit the National Gallery of Art.

"There will be many ways to experience the cultures of the African Diaspora at the National Gallery this spring, through related concerts, a film series, lectures, a day-long festival, and even special offerings in our Cascade Café," she said.



*Aaron Douglas
Into Bondage, 1936
oil on canvas
National Gallery of Art, Corcoran
Collection (museum purchase and
partial gift from Thurlow
Evans Tibbs, Jr., The Evans-Tibbs
Collection)*

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*Daniel Lind-Ramos Figura de
Poder, 2016–2020 mirrors, con-
crete blocks, cement bag, sledge-
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paint bucket, wood panels, palm
tree trunk, burlap, leather, ropes,
sequin, awning, plastic ropes,
fabric, trumpet, pins, duct tape,
maracas, sneaker, tambourine,
working gloves, boxing gloves,
acrylic overall: 274.32 x 152.4
x 119.38 cm (108 x 60 x 47 in.)
National Gallery of Art, Washing-
ton New Century Fund 2022.6.1 ©
Daniel Lind-Ramos*



*Zanele Muholi Ntozahke II, (Parktown), 2016 photographic wall mural
from digital file sheet: 355.6 x 254 cm (140 x 100 in.) National Gallery of
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Zanele Muholi. Courtesy of the artist, Yancey Richardson, New York, and
Stevenson Cape Town / Johannesburg*



*Samuel Fosso
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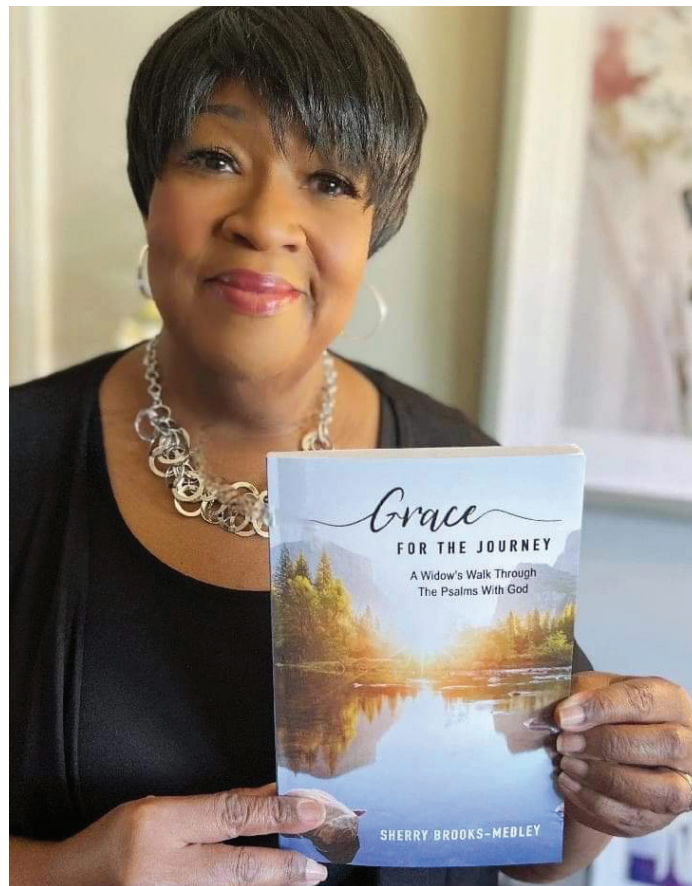
Annapolitan, Nonprofit Leader Pens Book About Coping with Loss of a Loved One

By Andrea Blackstone

Sherry Medley, a longtime Annapolis resident of 60 years, recently became a published author of “Grace For The Journey: A Widow’s Walk Through Psalms With God.” Her literary journey started after one shocking phone call changed her life. Her beloved husband, Raymond Medley, died suddenly in 2017.

Sherry—who is the visionary behind the Annapolis and Glen Burnie-based nonprofit, Hands of Hope, Inc.—became widely known for providing educational training and a host of community services beginning in 2009. When her husband of 39 years passed away, shock set in. Raymond had been helping Sherry to take care of her sister, Gloria Brooks. Her life ended after battling Lou Gehrig’s Disease. Within 24 hours of her burial, Raymond was next.

Sherry turned to counseling and grief groups to cope with her soulmate’s death. She realized self-care was needed, so her former program manager who ran the Hands of Hope, Inc. enabled her to take a hiatus. While embarking upon a healing journey, Sherry turned to writing and bonding with fellow women who understood how it felt to lose a soulmate. After sending texts to find out if they wanted to participate in supporting each other, Grace for the Journey—a group for



Sherry Medley is a longtime Annapolis resident and nonprofit leader. After losing her husband of 39 years suddenly, Sherry Medley decided to publish a book about her healing journey. The new book called “Grace For The Journey: A Widow’s Walk Through Psalms With God” was published in March of 2022. The book can help widows and anyone who is trying to cope with the grief process. A book signing will be held at Fresh Start Church, located at 120 Langley Rd., North Glen Burnie, on April 30, 2022 from 2-5 p.m.

Photo credit: Photo by Melissa Caskey-Dorsey

widows—evolved within a month. “Everything just started falling in place. God woke me up one night, and I just started writing, and I wrote an eight-week session manual for widows. I started looking back at women who I knew who lost their husbands, and I just started contacting them and invited

them. They came out and they were so enthusiastic and so appreciative that there was a sisterhood for widows being put in place,” Sherry said. “We had gatherings, various workshops and retreats along with our weekly meetings.”

The group’s number swelled to approximately 30 women who attended Medley’s group. The widows discussed self-care. They tackled topics such as loneliness and depression, and even met for Christmas and Spring get-togethers. When the pandemic hit, Zoom sessions became their monthly glue to hold the support system together.

But away from the group, Medley kept putting pen to paper about how she felt. Journaling led to the birth of her 30-day devotional and journal book. The finished product consists of stories, scriptures, and life lessons. “I wanted to share my healing journey with other women. I just want women to understand what you are going through is



Raymond Medley, right, and Sherry Medley, left, married on July 22, 1978. They made their union official in Anne Arundel County.

Photo: Courtesy of Sherry Medley

not strange, because sometimes widows will go through so much pain,” Sherry said. “I wanted them to understand that they can embrace that pain. Grief is not an enemy. It’s a part of knowing that you love somebody. That pain is feeling the pain of love. The deep pain that you had with a person you love is so very deep... because that person is gone.”

Although “Grace For The Journey: A Widow’s Walk Through Psalms With God” is a book that is deeply rooted in Medley’s walk within becoming a widow, she believes that anyone who needs help moving through the grief process can benefit from reading it. Apostle Craig Coates, Ph.D., who is Senior Pastor at Fresh Start Church—located in Glen Burnie—is Sherry’s pastor. Coates wrote one of two forewords for

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With a Tax Lien Sale Date Imminent, Help Available for Baltimore City Homeowners

By Stacy M. Brown

On May 16, 2022, thousands of Baltimore City homeowners are in danger of having their unpaid bills sold to outside entities. Such a sale could jeopardize properties – and, in some cases, result in the loss of a home or other property. Liens are placed on the owner-occupied property and made eligible for tax sale if the total of its unpaid city bills is \$750 or more.

The liens include unpaid real property taxes, special benefits assessments, alley and footway paving bills, streetscape, minor privilege, multi-family dwelling, clean and board, environmental control citations, and residential registration charges.

“During the first week of March, the city of Baltimore mailed notices to the owners of over 4,500 properties, informing them that their properties will be included in the city’s annual tax lien certificate sale if the outstanding bills are not paid by April 29,” said Claudia Wilson-Randall, the executive director of the Community Development Network of Maryland.

“Taxpayers have until April 29, 2022 to pay or get their balances under \$750. The average owed is \$2000 to \$3000. So mainly senior homeowners can lose their homes over a small amount of money,” Wilson-Randall stated.



Claudia Wilson-Randall
Courtesy Photo

However, resources are available, including the Tax Sale Help Baltimore online tool, which assists homeowners in navigating the complicated tax sale process.

Wilson-Randall, who enjoys a long history in community development in the state, noted that residents

could get resources and information about preventing a tax sale by answering a few simple questions.

A former director of Housing Counseling & Operations for Southeast Community Development Corporation and one-time deputy director of the Maryland Center for Community Development, Wilson-Randall, has worked on foreclosure prevention issues.

In an email, she explained how the tax sale works.

“It’s a way for the government to privatize collection of real property taxes and liens,” she noted. If a purchaser successfully bids on tax liens, that individual receives a tax lien certificate and the ability to collect unpaid taxes and fees.

Failure to pay taxes, interest, and fees could lead to the purchaser filing a tax sale foreclosure in Circuit Court and

assuming property ownership.

Wilson-Randall noted that taxes include property taxes, assessments, citations, and any other charges and liens on the property under Maryland law.

Homeowners facing tax lien sales are urged to call the Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland for free legal help and advice. The agency holds free tax lien clinics and can be reached at 443-703-3052 or www.probono.org.

Wilson-Randall also noted in the email that other assistance remains available, including the Homeowners Property Tax Credit.

This yearly tax credit could add as much as \$1,000 primarily to the

pockets of senior homeowners.

For more information, visit www.MarylandTaxCredit.com, or call the Maryland Tax Credit Hotline at 443-961-6220.

Residents can also reach out to the Homeowner Assistance Fund from the State of Maryland or www.taxsalehelpbaltimore.org.

“Liens on these properties will be sold during the May 16 city-run tax sale, opening the door for investors to foreclose on the properties, wiping out accumulated wealth and disrupting Black neighborhoods and generational wealth,” Wilson-Randall stated. “It’s time for Mayor Brandon Scott to cancel or delay the tax sale.”



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Ravens mock draft roundup

By Tyler Hamilton

As the countdown to the 2022 NFL Draft continues to go on, more mock drafts are emerging. Some mocks portray what analysts think teams should do while others portray what teams are expected to do.

The Baltimore Ravens are slated to have a total of 10 picks in the 2022 NFL draft, including nine in the first rounds. Their first selection is No. 14 overall.

Team needs for the Ravens include: outside linebacker, cornerback, wide receiver, offensive line and inside linebacker. Various mock drafts have the Ravens selecting players from most of those positions.

Here's a look at four mocks for the Ravens at No. 14 with analysis:

Charles Davis - NFL.com **Tyler Linderbaum | Center | Iowa**

The Ravens need stability at the pivot on offense, and this latest Hawkeye OL prodigy is the 2022 version of Creed Humphrey (who was fantastic for K.C. in 2021). I know, I know—DT is also in heavy consideration here.

Chad Rueter - NFL.com **Projected trade with Chiefs**

The Chiefs package is the 29th and 30th overall selections and send them to the Ravens for the right to draft Alabama WR Jameson Williams.

No. 29 Ravens select Linderbaum.



Iowa Center Tyler Linderbaum

Photo Credit: Robin Alam/Icon Sportswire via Getty Images.

Baltimore needs a new center after letting Bradley Bozeman walk, and Linderbaum is a much better value here than at No. 14. The team hit a home run with Iowa lineman Marshal Yanda years ago, so picking up this Hawkeye seems like a natural fit.

No. 30 Ravens select Andrew Booth, cornerback, Clemson

Booth's a top-20 talent who is still available because of injuries. The Ravens simply need more bodies at cornerback, so they take a shot on his athleticism and nasty attitude outside.

Diante Lee - The Athletic **George Karlaftis | EDGE | Purdue**

Karlaftis and Jermaine Johnson are just about tied in my draft evaluations, but Karlaftis comes into the league with the size necessary to be a versatile piece in Baltimore's defense. Odafe Oweh needs to take a step forward and develop into a lead rusher, and Karlaftis can play a role of run stopper on the edge and kick inside on obvious passing downs to crush the pocket and move quarterbacks with stunts and twists.

Mel Kiper Jr. - ESPN **Trent McDuffie | Cornerback | Washington**

The Ravens could go in several directions here, including offensive tackle (will Ronnie Stanley ever be the same again?) and defensive end (Calais Campbell is back, but he's

35). When I look at this depth chart, though, I see corner depth as an issue. McDuffie has the versatility to play outside and in the slot, and he also will wrap up and bring down ball carriers in the run game. He's physical.

Todd McShay - ESPN **Jermain Johnson | EDGE | Florida State**

Iowa center Tyler Linderbaum would be a good pick after the Ravens lost Bradley Bozeman to free agency. But could the Ravens afford to ignore Johnson's fall out of the top 10 right into their lap at No. 14? They were in the bottom 10 last year in sacks (34), and only Tyus Bowser (seven sacks) and Odafe Oweh (five) made much of a dent there. Johnson had 12 sacks and 46 pressures at FSU in 2021, frequently using his quick feet, powerful hands and arsenal of pass-rush moves to overwhelm blockers.

If Linderbaum does end up with the Ravens, I'd bet it comes after a trade down the Round 1 board.

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Nonprofit Leader Pens Book

“Grace For The Journey.” He also knew Sherry's spouse.

“I have known Raymond and Sherry for more than 40 years. Prior to serving as their pastor for the past 10 years, I have known them to be the most wonderful example of Godly love and marital commitment. During his short but impactful time at Fresh Start Church, Raymond served as a faithful deacon and friend to me as well. His sudden death was certainly one that none of us could have ever prepared for,” Coates said. “While writing, I hoped to give readers a perspective that is often only understood through the lens of the pastor serving those who are grieving, that God will take you through the process while giving you grace sufficient for each turn in the road.”

Coates also remarked that he believes that Sherry's documented journey will assist other widows in healing from grief.

A book launch will be held at Fresh Start Church, located at 120 Langley Rd., North Glen Burnie, on April 30, 2022 from 2-5 p.m. Send an email about the event to info@sherrymedley.com. You may also contact Sherry to inquire about joining her group for widows. Please visit <https://www.sherrymedley.com/> to learn more about “Grace For The Journey: A Widow's Walk Through Psalms With God.”

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