

# THE BALTIMORE TIMES

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## NNPA and Transformative Justice Coalition Announce National GOTV Campaign Targeting 10 Million More Black Voters



Individuals riding in new and COVID-safe tour buses would hit swing states ahead of the November elections to register and mobilize GOTV for 10 million new Black voters. (Pictured from left to right: Jackie L. Hampton, NNPA National Secretary and Publisher of the Mississippi Link; Attorney Daryl Jones, Board Chair of the Transformative Justice Coalition; Attorney Barbara Arnwine, the founder, and president of the Transformative Justice Coalition; Fran Farrer, NNPA Second Vice Chair and Publisher of the County News; Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr., NNPA President and CEO; Karen Carter Richards, NNPA Board Chair and President of the Houston Forward Times; Cheryl Smith, NNPA National Treasurer and Publisher of the Texas Metro News; Janis Ware, NNPA Vice Chair and Publisher of the Atlanta Voice. (See more page 9)

# Baltimore City's Leading Figures Gather for Press Conference to Bring Young Voters to the Polls

By Megan Look

BALTIMORE CITY—With the 2022 Maryland Primary elections right around the corner, Mayor of Baltimore Brandon Scott urged the people of Baltimore—specifically young residents—to register to vote at a press conference Monday afternoon.

The conference focused on emphasizing the end of voter registration in Maryland ending on Tuesday, June 28, 2022.

Mayor Scott was joined by several members of the Baltimore community such as Ben Cardin, a Democratic Senator from Maryland.

“The message is simple. We want all eligible voters to register to vote, then we want all registered voters to vote... and then the third request is to be an informed voter,” Cardin said.

According to Mayor Scott, the upcoming primary election is a “critical crossroad” on both a local and national level as all three branches of government are represented on the ballot this year: U.S. Congress and Senate, state legislators, city committee members,



*Deputy Director of Advocacy for Black Girls Vote Inc. speaks at a press conference on June 27, 2022. (l-r) Baltimore City Mayor Brandon Scott, Deputy Director of Advocacy for Black Girls Vote Inc. Natasha Murphy, Elections Director of Baltimore City Armstead C. Jones Sr., U.S. D-Sen. Ben Cardin*  
Photo by Megan Look

Sherriff, Attorney General, and state governor.

To represent and advocate for young voter registration, Mayor Scott introduced the Founder of the Baltimore City Youth Voter Registration Committee Aeriss Prince, and Deputy

Director of Advocacy for Black Girls Vote Inc. Natasha Murphy.

The decision by the Supreme Court to overturn Roe v. Wade was a hot topic for all leaders who participated in the conference.

Both Prince and Murphy lead non-profit organizations that are nonpartisan, meaning that they focus on providing the necessary tools and information to empower young voters to be civically active regardless of party affiliation.

However, when asked about Roe v. Wade, Murphy said that the Supreme

Court decision “highlights the fact that elections at every level have consequences and, if anything, it really reveals that the critical importance of ensuring that the electorate is electing individuals that represent the will and the voice of the people.”

Voter registration numbers are currently unknown, according to Elections Director of Baltimore City Armstead C. Jones, Sr.

While he did not confirm that voter registration is down, Jones said that numbers have not been enlarged through the [registration] process this year as he “has not seen a large number of people come in requesting forms to do that.”

In a slight pivot from these topics, Jones also said that they are still looking to fill 800 to 1,000 election judge positions not just in the city but statewide due to continuing pandemic anxiety.

Most of these positions in the city were traditionally filled by 60+ retired citizens that would work; the Board of Elections found that most of these persons “are not coming to train and to work.”

If you are interested in becoming an election judge call 410-396-5550 and let the elections board know.

Early voting is set to take place July 7-11, 2022 with Election Day being on July 19, 2022.

## Correction!

**Correction: Last Week's (Vol.36. No. 34.) Cover Photo Caption (page 1) originally misidentified Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD).**

The caption should read:

*(l-r) Dr. David Wilson, President, Morgan State University; Senator Chris Van Hollen; Honorable Robert M. Bell, retired Baltimore Chief Judge, Court of Appeals; Kevin Johnson, CEO, Commercial Group, Maryland State Senator Mary Washington, 43rd District; John Lewis, President & Chief Operating Officer, The Harbor Bank of Maryland; Joseph Haskins, Jr., Chairman and CEO, The Harbor Bank of Maryland; Maryland Lieutenant Governor Boyd K Rutherford; **Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD)**; Congressman Kweisi Mfume (D-7th); and James Degraffenreidt, Jr, Board Member, Harbor Bank of Maryland.*

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## Black Women will Suffer the Harshest Consequences After the Overturn of Roe

By Glynda Carr

The Supreme Court just dealt a devastating blow to reproductive rights. With its decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson*, five Republican-appointed Justices on the U.S. Supreme Court swept away half a century of progress and eviscerated women's rights and equality. After last month's leaked opinion, we knew this moment could come, but that doesn't make today's news any easier to digest.

For Black women in this country, today's decision is especially devastating. Thirteen percent of American women are Black, but 38% of people receiving abortion care are Black. Abortion is necessary healthcare – and a lack of access can quite literally mean life or death for many Black women. This is especially true for Black women who have lower-incomes, live in rural areas, and do not have access to health care because of systemic racism and discrimination.

According to CDC data, Black women are nearly three times more likely to die during childbirth than white women and are more likely to face maternal health issues. With new abortion restrictions and bans, these health outcomes are expected to get even worse: a 2021 Duke University study estimated the potential death toll following a total abortion ban and found a 33 percent increase in Black women who died due to pregnancy-related complications.

The states that are already moving to ban abortion are among those with the largest Black populations in the country. Consider Mississippi, the state with the highest percentage of Black residents in the nation, and one of the 13 states with a "trigger law" that ensured today's decision would result in a near-immediate ban on abortion access. Three other states with the highest proportion of Black residents – Tennessee, Louisiana, and Arkansas – have these trigger laws in place, and many other states, especially in the South, are moving to severely restrict or outright ban abortion.

The impact of new abortion bans and restrictions will be felt most acutely by poor and working-class Black women – Black women are significantly more likely to live in poverty compared to white women. For these women, the overturning of *Roe* won't mean that abortions will end; it will mean that access to critical, potentially life-saving healthcare will move hundreds of miles out of reach. It will mean time off of work (likely unpaid) and travel and childcare costs – expenses that may not be possible for women living paycheck to paycheck, struggling to simply put meals on the table.

At a time like this, when daughters suddenly have fewer rights than their mothers and grandmothers, it is challenging to imagine a way forward. But the answer is to do everything we can to restore our rights and ensure every woman has access to the healthcare they need and deserve, a right afforded to them under our nation's Constitution. To do that, we need to elect and elevate more Black women. Black women have been at the forefront of the fight to protect and expand reproductive rights – from members of Congress like Reps. Cori Bush, Ayanna Pressley, and Lauren Underwood, to our first Black woman Vice President Kamala Harris, to soon-to-be-seated Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson. We must elect Stacey Abrams to lead the state of Georgia – one of the states that is now positioned to severely restrict, or overturn the right to access abortion care under the leadership of their current Governor, Brian Kemp. And finally, we need to not only encourage, but throw our unwavering support behind more Black women from all across the country to run for office – women who personally understand the deep impact that a lack of healthcare and abortion restrictions have on communities that have lacked fair representation for far too long.

Today and every day, I stand with my partners and allies ready to continue the critical fight for access to affordable, safe, legal abortions for all women, no matter where they live, how they identify, or how much money they have. We will not back down.

*Glynda Carr is president and CEO of Higher Heights for America, the only national organization providing Black women with a political home exclusively dedicated to harnessing their power to expand Black women's elected representation and voting participation, and advance progressive policies.*



## Letter to the Editor

### Editor:

This is a scary moment. The Supreme Court just dismantled abortion rights across America. As a result, twenty-six states could outlaw abortion, including 13 that have passed "trigger" laws to take effect immediately after the Court overturns *Roe v. Wade*.

This news should set off alarm bells for all Americans. Our fundamental freedoms are coming under attack by a hyper-partisan supermajority on the Court. And this could just be the beginning. But there's a way to fight back, which is why I'm urging Congress to pass the Judiciary Act of 2021.

The Judiciary Act would rebalance the Supreme Court by adding four new seats, giving us 13 justices in total. It's just what we need to move away from extremely partisan rulings and restore the legitimacy of the Court—and it's been done before. In fact, Congress has changed the size of the Supreme Court seven times already in our nation's history. A recent poll showed that the majority of Americans support expanding the court again now.

It's past time for Congress to get on board with this crucial bill.

**Kenneth Berry**  
Baltimore, MD

### Editor:

Nowhere in the Constitution does it say that we have to have 9 Supreme Court Justices. Nor would it require a Constitutional amendment to add more seats. In fact, Congress has expanded the Supreme Court five times throughout American history.

Congress should use its constitutional authority to rebalance the Supreme Court, which has been taken over by a supermajority that holds extreme views outside of the mainstream of legal thought and out of step with most Americans. That's why Congress must pass the Judiciary Act, which would add four seats to the Supreme Court and help stem the right-wing supermajority's attacks on our fundamental freedoms, including the right to access abortion care.

There's nothing stopping Congress from adding justices—except for the political will to do it, of course. In fact, recent polling showed that the majority of the American voters they represent support expanding the court. That's why I'm urging Congress to pass to support the Judiciary Act of 2021 and add four seats to the Supreme Court.

**Anna Susic**  
Baltimore, MD

## Innovative Howard County program will provide access to prenatal and post-partum care to women of color, closing health disparity gaps

By Calvin Ball,  
Howard County Executive

As Howard County keeps working toward becoming the healthiest community in the nation, we have recognized that significant health disparities need our attention. Examining data and listening to our community, we identified major gaps in resources for mothers and babies in need of prenatal and postpartum care, and those discrepancies became even more worrisome during the pandemic.

Almost eight percent of Black mothers in the county received late or no prenatal care in 2019, and for Hispanic mothers, that figure rose to 12 percent – four times the rate of white mothers.

At the same time, 14 percent of Black residents and 11 percent of Hispanic residents reported having no health insurance.

As a parent and as an elected leader committed to the health of all, I was



**Calvin Ball,**  
**Howard County Executive**

disturbed by those statistics and knew we needed to act.

We have now designed an innovative and transformational program to protect the health of mothers and babies at greatest risk of poor outcomes. Working together with our public health experts, providers, and community members, we included \$1.3 million the coming year's budget to launch this comprehensive initiative.

This funding, which was approved by our County Council last month [May], will make vital prenatal and postnatal care available and affordable for uninsured and underinsured women in our community. It will mean that additional wrap-around and navigation services are available for mothers at risk of delivering a low-birth weight baby.

This funding will:

- Increase training for prenatal supports such as doulas to provide guidance and support to women during labor;

- Support pregnant women and new moms on breastfeeding, healthy eating, postpartum and more;

- Expand nurse home visits for new moms;

- And support teen parents with educational, daycare, and health needs.

We are confident that this new program will meet our important objectives of improving early access to a nurturing prenatal care experience for reproductive-aged women of color; decreasing disparities in pre-term and low birth weight births; and promoting equitable access to bias-free and culturally congruent prenatal and postpartum support services.

In the first year, we project coverage for 300 women, predominantly women of color.

This is the type of innovation that must happen at the local level, due to lack of progress at the state and federal levels.

A decade ago, the state of Maryland eliminated funding for maternal health for all moms when it cut health department budgets, and never restored the resources.

State lawmakers in Annapolis took steps toward helping these mothers by adopting the Healthy Babies Ace, which will extend prenatal and postnatal care to uninsured pregnant women and their babies regardless of their immigration status. But that bill won't take effect until the Maryland Department of Health applies for a special waiver to expand Medicaid, which may not happen soon.

Government will never be the full solution to our health problems, which is why this program creates a network of providers and funders that will work together on this initiative, including the

Chase Brexton Health Care, the Horizon Foundation and Howard County General Hospital, a division of Johns Hopkins Medicine, and the Howard County Health Department.

Our community has long supported these services, and we listened to the needs of the African American Community Roundtable of Howard County, which has been an important advocate for the health of the community. After establishing the La Alianza Workgroup in September 2020, which worked collaboratively with CASA, we responded to their recommendation to create a full program for underinsured and uninsured women.

I recently spoke with a young mother who is from Honduras, and who is undocumented, the mother of a four-month old baby who went through her pregnancy without health care. She was afraid and struggled to find clinics that would see pregnant women. She said she should have seen doctors much more frequently had this program been established, but was hopeful that it will help many young mothers like her to have a better, healthier experience.

Just last year, Howard County received the Robert Wood Johnson Culture of Health Prize, becoming one of just four communities in the nation singled out for our work supporting our community's health. With that prize, we committed more strongly than ever to closing all disparities and focusing on health and social determinants of health.

Our new innovative program is taking a giant leap in that direction, and will serve as a model of success for others in Maryland and beyond looking to improve health outcomes.

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# New Organ Donation Law in Maryland Will Begin in July, Improves Disease Treatment Possibilities

By Andrea Blackstone

Lisa Spicknall, Donate Life Maryland's (DLM's) Executive Director, said that a new organ donation law goes into effect on July 1, 2022, per Maryland House Bill 301.

"What it states is that Marylanders who choose to donate their organs, eyes, and tissues at the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) will have an option to donate these gifts for research and education purposes, in addition to transplantation and therapy," Spicknall told The Baltimore Times. "This new law will allow the research and education aspect to help provide valuable and meaningful ways for researchers to develop ways to treat diseases."

DLM, a state-authorized nonprofit organization which strives to save and enhance lives through registering organ, eye and tissue donors also houses names of Marylanders who donate them. The organization also partners with Maryland's MVA. Potential registered organ donors may sign up while renewing their driver's license there. DLM testified in favor of the bill, according to Spicknall.

The Executive Director provided an example of how a researcher could study donated kidneys to better understand how to treat kidney disease. Spicknall added that any donated organ that could not be used for transplantation and therapy could be used for research and education purposes under the new law.

"I think we are seeing an increase in donors recently, which is a great sign. I feel like this (new organ donation law) is going to open up opportunities to just simply save more lives. I think we're going to see more lives saved with the potential for research and education and studying disease and figuring out ways to treat disease. So, I think that's what this is going to open up possibilities for," Spicknall said.

She clarified that Marylanders who



*A new organ donation law goes into effect in Maryland on July 1, 2022.*

**Photo: Canva.com**

were registered donors before July 1, 2022 are limited to becoming an organ transplantation and therapy donor, through the MVA. Donors who registered before the date would need to make the "research and education purposes" donation change with renewal of a driver's license.

But even without the new law, one organ donation can save up to eight lives. Up to 75 lives can be enhanced from a tissue donation, Spicknall said.

"Approximately 2,500 people in Maryland are on organ transplant waiting lists; there are over 106,000 people waiting for organs nationwide," according to data shared by Maryland's DMV.

Danette Ragin was on a transplant waiting list, while facing an end stage renal failure diagnosis, according to DLM's website. After she was fortunate enough to receive a kidney transplant, her nephew was reportedly shot and killed several years later. His family passed along the chance for someone else to experience another chance at life, too.

And while waiting for a donated organ can be stressful for someone

who needs a second chance at life, if donors in Maryland have a chance to decide how they would like their organs or tissues used, broadening options to donate could boost numbers of participants who sign up. The power of choice could resonate with more Marylanders.

Although research and education pushes are not completely new concepts, Marylanders will soon be in the position to make an informed decision about their "donated gifts." Information provided by The Autosomal Recessive Polycystic Kidney Disease and Congenital Hepatic Fibrosis (ARPKD/CHF Alliance) mentioned that "the need for organs and tissues to be donated for medical research becomes even more important when people are suffering from a rare disease, because too often so few, if any, answers are available."

ARPKD/CHF Alliance aspires to provide support and life improvement for individuals who are affected with specific types of kidney disease and congenital hepatic fibrosis, but the idea of donating organs and tissues for medical research was highlighted as

one way to help. The National Disease Research Interchange (NDRI) is involved in handling the process.

Theoretically, Maryland's new donation law could also help patients who are living with various diseases, since discovering new treatments and cures is a manner of making significant strides in advancing modern medicine. Due to the human body's complexities, generous donors could positively impact medical professionals who need to learn more about caring for patients with various health needs.

When Marylanders head to the MVA in July, information about the new organ donation law must be accessible. Locations are required to prominently display educational materials about choices under the new law and provide them to "prospective donors on request," according to Maryland House Bill 301.

Visit <https://www.donatelifemaryland.org/> to learn more about DLM. Email [info@donatelifemaryland.org](mailto:info@donatelifemaryland.org) to ask about the new law.

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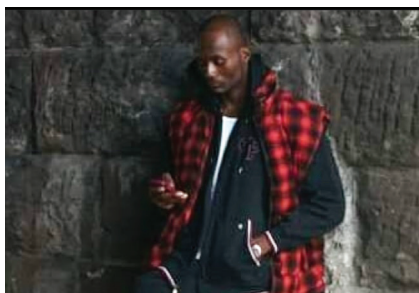
## Meet the Man Who Became a Judge After Serving Time in a State Penitentiary

Gregory Robinson grew up attending church in a God-fearing family, along with his brothers and sisters. The ambitious young person made money honestly doing odd jobs in New York until a friend he wanted to help wound up in trouble. The streets pulled him in another direction after a friend was locked up for selling drugs. Displaying loyalty to the wrong people in his teen years challenged the morality of his upbringing.

“You can befriend Satan, and so that was kind of my problem,” Robinson said. “I remember telling God one night when I was sitting in the car, I said, ‘Lord, you know, I wish I could get locked up. But if I get locked up, that will really help because I can’t do this myself. I need to find a way to get out of this life because I am tired.’”

Another friend suggested that selling drugs would raise enough money to get their associate out of jail. The situation led Robinson to start dealing drugs. At the age of 18, the price that Robinson paid for taking that advice was his own freedom.

“I know miraculous things happened in that trial, and I ended up being found guilty. I think it was 36 out of the 39 counts. I was found guilty of the three counts, and those were lesser counts, ... it was a constructive possession charge. And everything was constructive meaning I didn’t do it myself for these particular charges. Someone else did it, but I had control



**Gregory Robinson in 2018.**  
Courtesy of Gregory Robinson



***The Chief of Department of Economic Security and Office of Inspector General (DES/OIG) provided a job to Gregory Robinson as an Administrative Law judge in 2021 because he finished law school. His previous employer felt that he could do the job although he is not yet a licensed attorney.***

**Courtesy of Gregory Robinson**

of those other people who did it, and then they found me guilty and sentenced me to 12 and a half to 25 years,” Robinson said. “The first time they put me in cuffs (handcuffs), I felt relief.”

Prosecutors ultimately wanted Robinson to serve 144 and a half years. He was able to be released early on parole after serving eight and a half years, although he was sentenced to serve 12 and a half to 25 years in prison. Later the Court of Appeals overturned his gun conviction and his sentence was reduced to 10 -20. While being detained in Clinton Correctional Facility, which is a maximum-security state prison in New York located in Dannemora, Robinson found himself shielded from shootouts and street life. In his late 20s, he enjoyed the best sleep he had in years, although it came behind bars.

Motivational seeds blossomed. Robinson became intrigued by the law and how it worked. His earlier dream of becoming an attorney resurfaced.

“My first time getting locked up, I just was intrigued with the men coming into the cell to the bullpens in the back, they were attorney’s public defenders,” Robinson said, mentioning

that he observed Black men and women in the role. “I was looking at them like ‘I can do that.’”

Another pivotal moment of Robinson wondering about being on the other side of the law was sparked when he prepared for his release from prison. While completing different classes and courses in a pre-release at the classroom, Robinson spotted a bulletin board in a corner. Yellow stained newspaper articles displayed stories on it. Accounts about imprisoned people who served time for various offenses, but later became attorneys and even a judge, were shared. Even murder did not stop one person from entering the legal profession.

“Once I read that, I knew that God was letting me know, ‘you could do it,’” Robinson said, referring to his dream of becoming an attorney.

Although Robinson took college classes before he was incarcerated, he dropped out. He was inspired to return after prison and later graduated with a bachelor’s in English from John Jay College (CUNY).

His sister, Wanda Robinson-Burns, played a critical role in supporting her brother’s journey to restart life after incarceration. She offered a job to

Robinson at a daycare center that she ran in her home.

“I made him (Gregory) one of the daycare providers,” Robinson-Burns said. “He could really relate to children... all the way up to the elderly.”

Robinson-Burns said that she was legally permitted to allow Robinson to work at her business if she remained on the premises. Robinson ended up working as Robinson-Burns’ Parent Educator in a supervisory role, although Robinson-Burns had been discouraged from taking a chance to allow her brother to work around children. Robinson pushed forward relentlessly, balancing work and school. His current wife encouraged him to focus too. The CUNY alumnus decided to apply to law school. Robinson moved to Arizona after navigating through Law School Admissions Test (LSAT) challenges.

“Phoenix School of Law which later became Arizona Summit Law School, which [sic] was the school that gave me an opportunity,” Robinson said.

He earned his law degree in 2017. An opportunity to become an Administrative Law Judge in the Inspector General’s office in Arizona arose in February of 2021, although Robinson is not yet licensed. He reportedly worked in the position for 10 months. He also became a father and decided to study for the bar exam.

“I think that I’ve learned a lot and it has helped me determine that ... I want to have my own law practice,” Robinson said.

Robinson currently works for a law firm in Arizona. No matter what else Robinson decides to do professionally, Robinson-Burns will continue to feel proud of her younger brother.

“I love him, regardless if he was not a judge, or whatever,” Robinson-Burns said. “I love the man of God that he is. I love the man that he has become, so I will always support him.”



# NNPA and Transformative Justice Coalition Announce National GOTV Campaign Targeting 10 Million More Black Voters

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

Ahead of the all-important 2022 midterm elections, reports show that more than 55 million Americans remain unregistered to vote – and about 10 million are African Americans who are eligible to vote but who are unregistered.

Whether the reason is apathy, suppression, or something else, the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) and the Transformative Justice Coalition seek to get to the bottom of why, with so much at stake, voter registration and GOTV mobilization remain lacking notably among Black Americans across the nation.

During the national convention marking the 195th-anniversary celebration of the Black Press of America in New Orleans, leaders of both organizations announced a get-out-to-vote campaign aimed at registering and mobilizing GOTV for 10 million more African Americans to vote in time for the 2022 midterms.

“The NNPA has talked about the vote, and there is no better time for us to show our power,” NNPA Chair Karen Carter Richards stated during the announcement at the national convention in the Big Easy.

“Let us take the lead and not be on the tail-end so we can show the present-day power of the Black Press,” continued Richards, who publishes the Houston Forward Times.

“This is a great opportunity for us; we’ve got to make this happen.” Attorney Barbara Arnwine, the founder, and president of the Transformative Justice Coalition, and her board chair and fellow lawyer Daryl Jones, told a captivated panel that their organization had recorded 72 voter suppression tactics to prevent a large population from casting ballots.

Among them are strict voter laws in



**Attorney Daryl Jones, Board Chair of the Transformative Justice Coalition (pictured right) and Attorney Barbara Arnwine, the founder, and president of the Transformative Justice Coalition. Courtesy NNPA**

many Republican-led states, deceptive practices like robocalls; early voting cuts; and voter intimidation.

“Black voters did our share in 2020,” Arnwine remarked.

“Ninety-three percent of all eligible Black voters registered in Georgia. Yet, in the 2021 Georgia Senate run-off, 93 percent of all registered Black voters turned out. That’s why people don’t understand where the real power is.”

Along with NNPA President and CEO Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr., Richards, NNPA Executive Board members Janis Ware, Fran Farrer, Cheryl Smith, and Jackie Hampton, Arnwine and Jones announced that the groups would utilize a multivehicle “voter-cade” to get out the vote.

They said individuals riding in new and COVID-safe tour buses would hit swing states ahead of the November elections to register and mobilize GOTV for 10 million new Black voters.

Chavis said artists from Roc Nation, the company run by hip-hop magnate and business mogul Jay-Z, would accompany the voter-cade in some cities.

Music superstar Stephanie Mills also pledged to “get on the bus with the

Black Press and the Transformative Justice Coalition.”

Chavis said he’s convinced other celebrities will also join the national GOTV campaign.

“The first form of voter suppression is self-suppression,” Dr. Chavis asserted.

“This last primary election showed that some of us were keeping ourselves from voting. There are 55 million unregistered Americans eligible to vote, and 10 million are African Americans,” Chavis continued.

“What if those 10 million were registered? We wouldn’t have worried about Donald Trump or the craziness of what the U.S. Supreme Court is doing now. Elections have consequences. The overturned Roe v. Wade, the overturned gun laws – are consequences of elections.”

With more than 235 African American-owned newspapers and media companies serving as members, the NNPA represents the Black Press of America.

The Transformative Justice Coalition’s mission includes the systematic change that achieves racial justice, gender, economic and social justice, and human rights through public edu-

cation and engagement initiatives that attend equally to hearts and minds as well as the social systems and structure in which they exist.

Further, the coalition dedicates itself to informed civic engagement and equal voting rights for everyone.

They use a voting rights map of shame to inform the public of threats to America’s democracy, how to protect their voting rights, and steps to take to ensure the ability to cast a ballot and make sure it’s counted.

The organization also seeks the restoration of voting rights for ex-felons.

“[Anti-voting rights organizations and individuals] have trained 10,000 people to be poll disruptors to go to only Black polling sites,” Arnwine declared.

“They’re not sending them to white polling sites, and if you watched the [Jan. 6] hearings, this is a concentrated effort to disempower Black voters,” she stated.

According to Davis, more than 18 million people are eligible to vote but don’t know it.

“They are the felony disenfranchised,” Davis insisted.

“They are confused. It’s intentionally done in various states. For example, in some states, you never lose your right to vote, and in some states, you can run for office if you’re incarcerated,” he explained.

The voter-cade would help educate voters and explain what’s legal, among other things. “We’re calling on all 235 NNPA members,” Dr. Chavis encouraged.

“That call and response from our brothers and sisters are vital. It’s movement time, it is time Get-Out-The-Vote” he declared further.

“With the Transformative Justice Coalition, the NNPA will help move our people forward to get out this vote. In 2022, we will make the critical difference in the midterm elections in terms of increasing Black voter participation throughout the country.

# Native Annapolitan Reminds that Black Creativity, Content Ownership Matters

By Andrea Blackstone

Although African-American Music Appreciation Month ends in June, a native Annapolitan affirms the value of producing quality content and retaining control over original works. Parris Lane is an accomplished actress, singer, author, filmmaker who was raised in Annapolis, Maryland. She recalls a time when bands were plentiful while growing up.

“Everyone was in a band. Everyone was out rehearsing. They were playing instruments,” Lane told *The Baltimore Times*. “We were having... Battle of the Bands. That was a normal part of Annapolis and growing up in Annapolis.”

Today, Lane stays busy utilizing her God-given talent in various formats and spaces from singing to acting.

“Parris has performed for audiences around the world from Carnegie Hall to London, Paris, Geneva, Rome and Bangkok,” according to her website.

Before the pandemic hit, Lane was hired in the entertainment world



*Parris Lane is an accomplished creative professional who was raised in Annapolis, Maryland. Singing is just one of Lane's many talents. Her first audiobook novel called "ABELLA" was Grammy considered for Best Spoken Word during the 64th Grammy Awards. Lane's journey reminds that Black content creation is worthy of proper legal protection. Rights to work should be taken seriously.*

Photo by Alloria Winters



*Parris Lane sings during her "ABELLA" soundtrack recording session held at Pajama Studios. Photo by Paula Telander*

producing shows. In addition to working as a teaching artist with The Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, visiting schools, and incorporating arts into the curriculum with The Smith Center for the Performing Arts in Las Vegas, Nevada, Lane toured Europe singing classical music and Asia performing jazz. Her experience includes working as assistant casting director for films and movies. She is now based in San Francisco, California.

“You get a gift. You either use it or lose it,” Lane said.

The eclectic songstress and entertainer is carving out a customized space for content creation by upgrading offerings online.

“We are in the process this summer of launching our own video/music online streaming service called “PAROLDPRIME” to subscribers. This will feature all of our original content, including short films, music videos, audiobooks, and music, as well as our e-commerce site (Parold.store),” Lane said. “The company we were with originally for our e-commerce site was bought out by Amazon so as not to be put in this

situation ever again, we decided to have our own platform built.”

A bass drummer-percussionist and entertainer named Harold “Homeboy” Wilson is president of Parold Entertainment Inc., and Lane is vice president, according to information provided on parold.com. She mentioned that she prefers working as an independent artist.

“And as you see right now, a lot of artists are trying to get their masters (original recordings),” Lane said. “I own all of my masters.”

Retaining creative control over original work preserves copyright ownership. Attempting to regain ownership after a record company gets involved with an artist can be complicated.

“Due to a legal provision outlined in the 1976 Copyright Revision Act, artists whose albums were released in the year 1978 and afterward all become eligible to file paperwork with the U.S. Copyright Office allowing them to reclaim ownership of their music copyrights and master recordings from their record labels after a period of 35 years,” The Recording Academy explained in

online information.

Lane serves as an example of becoming a savvy Black creator who can turn heads in an industry without giving up control. “ABELLA: A Voice for the Voiceless”—which is a historical fiction story turned into a music audio book Lane created about a “slave girl” who possesses a singing gift—became a Grammy considered project in the Best Spoken category. 26 spirituals that are included in it. Some of Lane’s musical selections were also Grammy considered in 2021.

“I narrated, I wrote it, and...sang every single part,” Lane said.

James Gardiner is a Grammy nominated producer and engineer who submitted the work for “Abella.” Paula Telander is the producer, director and studio manager of Oakland-based Pajama Studios who has worked as business partners with Gardiner for 30 years. Gardiner is a voting member with The Recording Academy. He recorded Lane’s audio book in the studio along with editing, sound design, mixing and mastering. Telander added that Lane’s 26 songs were also recorded, mixed, and mastered at Pajama Studios.

“She (Lane) wrote the manuscript, and then she was in the studio with James. I was given the manuscript and she was in the vocal booth, recording her part,” Telander said, explaining details about the three-year project. “She became the character of Abella.”

Telander and Gardiner explained how Lane “shapeshifted her voice and went into character,” while becoming various “characters in the book.”

“God always likes you to hear and keep your door open, so you can let Him walk through what you’re doing and get you on the right path,” Gardiner said, reflecting on Lane’s journey to work on the project with them.

Visit <https://parrislane.com/> to learn more about Lane.

# 2022 Fourth of July Happenings Around the Beltway

By Andrea Blackstone

From July 2 to July 4, 2022 a host of events will occur around the beltway to celebrate America's birth. A list of local festivities has been compiled below. Independence Day, otherwise known as the Fourth of July, is commonly a time to reflect on the passage of the Declaration of Independence. Celebrations mark this country's separation from the British Empire in 1776. The Library of Congress reported online that "observing Independence Day only became commonplace after the War of 1812." Although a law made Independence Day a federal holiday in June of 28, 1870, some African Americans have struggled with celebrating it.

Many African Americans were still enslaved when the Declaration of Independence was signed. Frederick Douglass was an abolitionist and orator who pointed out the hypocrisy of slavery's existence in America, since the Founding Fathers of the Declaration of Independence who upheld the ideas of "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness" in it skipped the reality that enslaved people lacked these same rights. Frederick Douglass' descendants recreated his famous "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?" July 5, 1852 address in a presentation offered by The Smithsonian. Please visit <https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/stories/nations-story-what-slave-fourth-july> to hear them.

It is also noteworthy to mention that the Banneker Institute of Philadelphia, located in Pennsylvania, "urged African Americans to celebrate Independence Day while bearing witness to the inconsistencies between the ideals

espoused in the Declaration of Independence and the practice of slavery" in 1859, per The Library of Congress. Jacob C. White Jr. was cited as the Chairman of the meeting who "promised his audience a brighter future." Remarks were extracted from a rare book called "The Celebration of the Eighty-Third Anniversary of the Declaration of American Independence." Since African Americans contributed to this Nation's story, a positive aspect of the holiday can be marked by a mixture of celebration and education.

## Annapolis

On Saturday, July 2 from 5 p.m.-10 p.m. enjoy Dinner Under the Stars in Annapolis, Md. under a canopy of white lights. Live music and art demonstrations will be held under the backdrop of an open-air café feel. Please note that West Street's first block in downtown Annapolis will be closed to traffic on Wednesday evenings and some Saturday evenings this summer. Visit <https://www.visitannapolis.org/events/annual-events-and-festivals/4th-of-july/> for more information.

Take a tour of one of Maryland's signers of the Declaration of Independence's home and garden to find out more about William Paca. A Historic Annapolis 4th of July Celebration will be held at the William Paca House and Garden, located at 186 Prince George Street in Annapolis, Md. from 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. on July 3, 2022. General admission prices range from free to \$12 per person. See <https://www.visitannapolis.org/event/historic-an->

[4th-of-july-celebration-william-paca-house-and-garden/9770/](https://www.visitannapolis.org/events/annual-events-and-festivals/4th-of-july-celebration-william-paca-house-and-garden/9770/) for details.

A parade will be held in Annapolis on Monday, July 4 from 6:30 - 8 p.m., beginning at Amos Garrett and West St. It will head down West Street, proceed the wrong way around Church Circle, then continue down Main St. Fireworks launching from a barge are scheduled from 8 - 9:45 p.m. The USNA Blues & Gold Independence Day Concert, located at Susan Campbell Park, City Dock, will be provided by The United States Naval Academy Band and others at Annapolis City Dock at 8:00 p.m. Plan parking options accordingly. Traffic is expected. See <https://www.visitannapolis.org/events/annual-events-and-festivals/4th-of-july/>.

## Arbutus

Celebrate America's independence with bands, classic cars, the Color Guard and more activities from 8 - 2 p.m. A parade is scheduled to be held at 12:30 p.m. in downtown Arbutus. Visit <https://arbutus.org/4th-of-july/> for more details.

## Baltimore's Inner Harbor

Fourth of July festivities and fireworks are returning to Baltimore's Inner Harbor from 4:00 - 10:00 p.m. The Navy Band Commodores at the Inner Harbor Amphitheater kick off a concert at 4 p.m. Street performers and activities will occur along the promenade on July 4. A spoken word performance of Frederick Douglass'

"What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?" will be held at 7:30 p.m. A few featured activities include a 9:30 p.m. orchestra performance followed by a 13-minute fireworks display. Read the full line up presented by The Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts (BOPA), Baltimore Symphony Orchestra (BSO) and Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore (WPB) via <https://baltimore.org/event/baltimore-4th-of-july-celebration/>.

## Bowie

The Six Flags July 4th Fest, presented by Coca-Cola, will be held at Six Flags America, located at 13710 Central Ave in Bowie, Maryland from July 2-4 p.m. All-day rides, music and fireworks displays starting at 9:30 p.m. in Gotham City are included in admission. Visit <https://www.sixflags.com/america/events/4th-of-july-weekend>. Check one-day ticket prices online.

## Cockeysville

Attend the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra's event at Oregon Ridge Park, located at 13555 Beaver Dam Rd., Cockeysville, Md. for their annual Star-Spangled Spectacular on Sunday, July 3, 2022 at 8:00 p.m. Patriotic favorites, a violin performance and a spoken word artist will be included. Bring a blanket or lawn chair. Ticket prices range from \$15 - \$25 per person. A fireworks display is included. Visit <https://baltimore.org/event/star-spangled-spectacular-at-oregon-ridge-park/> for more information.

*continued on page 12*

## Ravens Secondary Listed As Tops in NFL



**Marcus Peters (left) and Marlon Humphrey (right)**  
Photo credit: Rich Barnes/USA TODAY Sports.

By Tyler Hamilton

The Baltimore Ravens have invested heavily in their secondary over the last few years. Injuries robbed the Ravens of their two best defenders last season.

Cornerbacks Marcus Peters (torn ACL) and Marlon Humphrey (torn pectoral muscle) are back to lead the secondary this season. They'll be bolstered by the free agent addition of local product Kyle Fuller.

Baltimore is also deep at safety after selecting Kyle Hamilton with the 14th overall pick in the 2022 draft and signing former New Orleans Saints safety Marcus Williams. Hamilton and Williams join Chuck Clark to complete the Ravens' secondary.

Pro Football Focus ranked Baltimore as the NFL's top secondary.

"The Ravens simultaneously have some of the most question marks heading into 2022 from a health perspective while also possessing the highest-end elite potential," PFF's Michael Renner wrote. "Four of their five starters have earned top-10 grades at their respective positions at some point over the past four seasons. And this list doesn't even include rookie

first-rounder Kyle Hamilton, who will undoubtedly factor in heavily."

The Ravens were last in the NFL in passing yards allowed last season. Their focus during the offseason was to improve the secondary to ensure they don't finish at the bottom of the league this season.

Baltimore also drafted cornerbacks Jalyn Armour-Davis and Damarion Williams in the fourth round to add youth to the backend of the defense. The rookies have already impressed head coach John Harbaugh.

"They're doing a great job," Harbaugh said. "Those guys [are] very, very knowledgeable. They have a great feel for the game: leverage; spacing; their eyes are in the right spot most of the time; they're smart; they learn; they have good feet, and they have good ball skills. I think those guys are doing a really good job. They'll play this year. They'll play well."

New defensive coordinator Mike McDonald will have a lot to work with in the secondary which will help make up one of the best defenses in the league.

*continued from page 11*

## 2022 Fourth of July Happenings Around the Beltway

### Columbia

A 20-minute July 4th fireworks event will be held at Lake Kittamaquundi in Columbia, Md. at approximately 9:20 p.m. on July 4, 2022. Park free of charge at The Mall in Columbia. Little Patuxent Parkway may close by 7 p.m. due to traffic. Visit <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/july-4th-fireworks> to find out more details.

### Dundalk

Dundalk's 4rth of July Fireworks is scheduled to begin at 9:15 p.m. on July 4th at Grange Elementary. See <https://www.dundalkheritagefair.com/fireworks/> for more information.

### Edgewater

An Independence Day Celebrations in Edgewater will be held on July 2, 2022 from 12:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. at American Legion Cummings-Behlke Post #226 in Edgewater, located on 830 Mayo Rd. A 12:00 p.m. parade is scheduled. A fireworks display will begin at approximately 9:30 p.m. Other activities will be held during the day. Visit <https://www.facebook.com/groups/post226/posts/5376946688994987/> for details.

Fort McHenry National Monument Visit the historic landmark, Fort McHenry, located at 2400 East Fort Ave. in Baltimore to learn more about where our national anthem was born. Check admission prices and hours on-

line. Confirm that Independence Day hours will be from 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 pm. On July 4rth, 2022 and that ticket prices will begin at \$15 per person. See <https://www.nps.gov/fomc/index.htm> for more information.

### Glen Burnie

On July 3 at 9 p.m., Glen Burnie Improvement Association will host an annual fireworks display at Sawmill Creek Park on Dorsey Rd. The event's rain date is Tuesday, July 5, 2022. Visit <https://www.facebook.com/GlenBurnieImprovementAssoc/posts/10159707317312931> for parking information and more details.

### Laurel

The City of Laurel's 43rd Annual Independence Celebration is scheduled for Saturday, July 2, 2022 from 2:00 - 10 p.m. in the Laurel Lakes area. Enjoy a parade, car show, music, and a closing fireworks portion at 9:15 p.m. The car show will be held from 2:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. at Granville Gude Park (Laurel Lake) at 8300 Mulberry St. See <https://www.laurel4th.org/> for details.

### Towson

Towson's 4th of July parade commences at 10:30 a.m. at Bosley and Burke Avenues on July 4rth. See <https://www.towsonparade.com/faq> to read more information.

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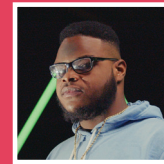
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CITY OF BALTIMORE  
DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS  
NOTICE OF LETTING

Sealed Bids or Proposals, in duplicate addressed to the Board of Estimates of the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore and marked for BALTIMORE CITY NO. RP20814R MARY E. RODMAN RECREATION CENTER RENOVATION will be received at the Office of the Comptroller, Room 204 City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland until 11:00 A.M. August 24, 2022. Positively no bids will be received after 11:00 A.M. Bids will be publicly opened by the Board of Estimates in Room 215, City Hall at Noon. The proposed Contract Documents may be examined, without charge, at the Dept. of Rec & Parks at 2600 Madison Ave, Baltimore, Md. 21217 by appointment only on Wednesdays and Fridays, 8:30am – 4:00pm by emailing [benitaj.randolph@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:benitaj.randolph@baltimorecity.gov) as of July 1, 2022 and copies may be purchased for a non-refundable cost of \$200.00. Conditions and requirements of the Bid are found in the bid package. All contractors bidding on this Contract must first be prequalified by the City of Baltimore Contractors Qualification Committee. Interested parties should call (410) 396-6883 or contact the Committee at 4 South Frederick Street, 4th Floor, Baltimore, Maryland 21202. If a bid is submitted by a joint venture (“JV”), then in that event, the document that established the JV shall be submitted with the bid for verification purposes. The Prequalification Category required for bidding on this project is E13001 Three Story and Under, Cost Qualification Range for this work shall be \$675,000.00 to 900,000.00. A “MANDATORY Pre-Bidding Information” session will be conducted via Microsoft Teams at 11:00 A.M. on July 12, 2022. Email your contact information to [bivek.poudyal@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:bivek.poudyal@baltimorecity.gov) to receive an invite to the Microsoft Team(video conference meeting) no later than July 11, 2022-12:00pm EST. Principal Items of work for this project are interior renovations, roof and skylights and windows, new exterior vestibule and doors and interior mechanical, plumbing and electrical renovations. The MBE goal is 23% and WBE goal is 7%. APPROVED: M. Celeste Amato, Clerk, Board of Estimates

## Legal Notice

CITY OF BALTIMORE  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
NOTICE OF LETTING

Sealed Bids or Proposals, in duplicate addressed to the Board of Estimates of the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore and marked for BALTIMORE CITY NO. TR22006 CONCRETE SLAB REPAIR CITYWIDE will be received at the Office of the Comptroller, Room 204 City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland until 11:00 A.M. July 20, 2022. Positively no bids will be received after 11:00 A.M. Bids will be publicly opened by the Board of Estimates in Room 215, City Hall at Noon. As of July 1, 2022, the proposed Contract Documents may be examined, without charge, by contacting Brenda Simmons at [brenda.simmons@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:brenda.simmons@baltimorecity.gov) or (443)865-4423. To purchase a contract document, you may do so by contacting Brenda Simmons 417 E. Fayette Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21202. Copies may be purchased for a nonrefundable cost of \$75.00 payable to the Director of Finance. Conditions and requirements of the Bid are found in the bid package. All contractors bidding on this Contract must first be prequalified by the City of Baltimore Contractors Qualification Committee. Interested parties should call (410) 396-6883 or contact the Committee at 4 South Frederick Street, 4th Floor, Baltimore, Maryland 21202. **If a bid is submitted by a joint venture (“JV”), then in that event, the document that established the JV shall be submitted with the bid for verification purposes.** The Prequalification Category required for bidding on this project is A02601 PORTLAND CEMENT CONCRETE PAVING. Cost Qualification Range for this work shall be \$800,000.00 to \$1,000,000.00. “Pre-Bidding Information” session will be conducted via Microsoft Teams at 11:00 A.M. on July 7, 2022. Email your contact information to [Vijaykumar.parekh@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:Vijaykumar.parekh@baltimorecity.gov) to receive an invite to the Microsoft Team(video conference meeting) no later than July 6, 2022 at 4:00pm. Principal Items of work for this project are site work including 9 in Concrete Pavement Modified Mix #6 5750 SY; 9 in Reinforced Concrete Pavement Modified Mix #9 3000 SY. The MBE goal is 22% and WBE goal is 8%. APPROVED: M. Celeste Amato, Clerk, Board of Estimates

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