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Team ZillowBears from Morgan State University won first place and \$20,000 at Zillow's HBCU Housing Hackathon during Zillow's second HBCU Housing Hackathon. (L-R) Nanfwang Dawurang; Godsheritage Adeoye; Oluwadara Dina; and Saad Nadeem were awarded the top prize for their "Z-Save" application. It estimates monthly mortgage costs and allows users to deposit that amount into a virtual wallet that tracks their payment trends. The app also helps lenders to determine if potential homeowners qualify for a mortgage. Photo courtesy of NNPA (See more on page 8)

Artist Finds Solace in Gospel Music, Brings Christian Men Together Through Brotherly Movement

By Andrea Blackstone

September is Gospel Music Heritage Month, but Cheston Green routinely upholds the immeasurable power of the Christian music genre. Green has been singing gospel since he was four years old. The Columbia, Maryland based gospel singer and songwriter spreads spiritual messages through his music and methods of showing up to support other men.

“I want those who feel like no one cares or understands, to know that they aren’t alone, and that God loves them and understands,” Green said.

Green recalls growing up in North Carolina watching icons such as gospel singer and pastor Shirley Caesar, and his grandfather, Allen

“Sunnyboy” Green sing from their souls about Jesus. Allen was a member of a gospel quartet in Oxford, North Carolina. Cheston’s Southern gospel roots provided an impactful foundation to arm him with tools to conquer life’s valleys.

“Later in life, I battled depression and suicide ideations and it was the power of gospel music that made me want to keep living,” Cheston said, mentioning childhood trauma was a cause. “As an adult I have been diagnosed with ADHD. I suffered from asthma as a child. I had a bit of a challenging childhood being sick a lot, but it all built my faith in God.”

The performer who overcame mental health challenges wants other people to realize that hope in Jesus

will carry them through anything they face. Through his songs, Cheston strives to reach anyone who ever feels hopeless.

Therapy helped Cheston to become the man that he is today after feeling invisible for years. He helps youth to know that they can also live beyond the dark days. Cheston works for an agency providing psychiatric rehabilitation for young men in Baltimore. Additionally, the gospel singer said that he creates programs with Canaan Baptist Church of Baltimore City for their youth and young adults.

Cheston’s journey includes uniting Christian men of various denominations through a movement he calls #OhMyBrother. The sanctuary for Christian men is intended to create lifelong bonds and enable them to find real relationships that challenge their growth and Christian walk. It has been in existence since 2019 after taking root as a private Facebook group. “I created #OhMyBrother because the statistics of men having healthy friendships are despairing. I read an article that stated that men are more likely to commit suicide and it is linked to



Cheston Green is a gospel singer and songwriter who is a suicide prevention advocate and founder of a Christian group for men called #OhMyBrother. Photo courtesy of Philippe Celestin

a lack of intimate male friendships. I watched men in church call each other brother but they had no connection outside of what they did in the church. That was alarming,” Cheston said.

Cheston called a few of his “brothers” who are now #OhMyBrother’s co-founders

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Don't Get Too Comfortable, Maybe The Pandemic Isn't Really Over

When President Joe Biden said that the pandemic is over in the U.S. during a “60 Minutes” interview nearly a few weeks ago, I considered a few contradictions. Experts in the President’s own administration remarked that the country is not exactly in the green.

“The pandemic isn’t over. And we will remain vigilant, and of course, we continue to look for and prepare for unforeseen twists and turns,” Dr. Ashish Jha, the White House COVID-19 Response Coordinator said on September 6, 2022.

During a briefing, Jha pointed out that “the FDA authorized, and the CDC recommended new updated COVID-19 vaccines for all Americans 12 and above. This makes us, the United States, the first nation with new vaccines that match the version of the Omicron variant that is currently dominant — dominant both here in the U.S. and around the world.”

Nevertheless, just because vaccines have reportedly “caught up with the virus” doesn’t mean that the pandemic in the U.S. is truly over. Government data from over 70 sources presented by USAFacts offer a map that tracks coronavirus cases in America. Although updates are still being made, the approach to gathering data is falling off. Perhaps leaders seem to be regarding COVID-19 as a weaker threat.

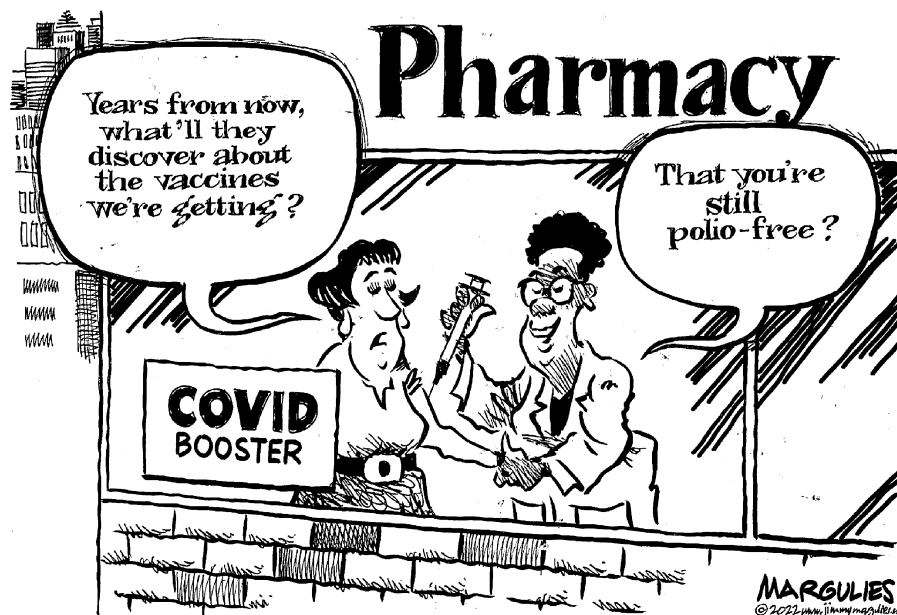
“All states updated case and death data daily early in the pandemic, but many have slowed/stopped. As of spring 2022, dozens of states update daily, others provide data once a week. Nebraska and Missouri have stopped providing regular updates,” per information provided by USAFacts.

Millions of Americans of all ages were vaccinated. The pandemic threat is no longer as severe. The *panic* is over. We can resume speaking to people up close; shaking hands; kissing cheeks; and hanging out together in big crowds. Right? Probably not. Dr. Anthony Fauci, the White House Chief Medical Advisor and the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) at the U.S. National Institutes of Health, also provided remarks at the White House briefing on September 6.

“And so, my message to you is simple: Get your updated COVID-19 shot as soon as you are eligible in order to protect yourself, your family, and your community against COVID-19 this fall and winter. I certainly will do so,” Fauci said. So, if the pandemic is over, why would Americans need to keep up with more COVID-19 shots? The double talk becomes dizzying considering what Fauci added just days after Biden’s controversial declaration about the pandemic. Fauci referenced Biden’s remarks adding a clearer view.

“He was saying we’re in a much better place with regard to the fulminant stage of the pandemic,” Fauci said, according to The Atlantic. “It really becomes semantics and about how you want to spin it.”

Yes, death toll numbers are not as alarming. Yes, the world is not locked down. However, it is a dangerous proposition to pretend as if there are no consequences for completely returning to business as usual. If masks still protect people from the spread of Covid-19, I’m not throwing all of mine away just yet. It is still being reported that COVID-19 related deaths are averaging hundreds a day. Every life counts.



Community Affairs

A One-Stop Shop to Find Aging Services in Your Community

The Eldercare Locator is regarded as “the only national information and referral resource to provide support to consumers across the spectrum of issues affecting older Americans,” per according to the website, eldercare.acl.gov. It is a public service of the U.S. Administration on Aging that is intended to connect people to services and local resources for older adults and their families.

Support Services; Housing; Elder Rights; Insurance and Benefits; Health; and Transportation are among points of interests that are addressed by The Eldercare Locator. The resource provides options for older adults to find everything from a ride to an appointment, and getting meals delivered to their homes, to obtaining information about modifying their homes for safety reasons.

A Caregiver Corner is also available online via <https://eldercare.acl.gov/Public/Resources/Topic/Caregiver.aspx>. It provides useful links and resources for caregivers. Answers to common questions submitted to the Eldercare Locator are available to read there. Additionally, help in a person’s community can be located by entering his or her zip code or a city and state.

Individuals may call the Eldercare Locator at 1 (800) 677-1116 from Monday–Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. Information specialists are available to answer questions. The Eldercare Locator provides informational booklets and fact sheets. Partner sites are also listed. Visit <https://eldercare.acl.gov> <https://eldercare.acl.gov/Public/Index.aspx> for more information.

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A New Kind of Hope Lives Here

By Amanda Mahan, Operation New Hope, Chief Communications Officer

Research has found that 70 million people in the United States have criminal records. Of that number, 63 percent are no longer in jail, on probation, or on parole, yet roughly 27 percent of these ex-offenders remain unemployed due to their criminal records. This disproportionate statistic to the overall unemployment rate confirms the realization that the challenge of finding work for the formally incarcerated can be a daunting task.

Evidence indicates that ex-offenders have substantially lower probabilities of being hired than members of other disadvantaged groups – such as welfare recipients, high school dropouts, unemployed people, and those with “spotty” work histories – who do not have a criminal record. Dionne Barnes-Proby, a researcher at the non-profit, non-partisan think tank the RAND Corporation, has studied how to improve employment outcomes for ex-offenders.



Evidence indicates that ex-offenders have substantially lower probabilities of being hired than members of other disadvantaged groups – such as welfare recipients, high school dropouts, unemployed people, and those with “spotty” work histories – who do not have a criminal record. Photo Courtesy NNPA

“People transitioning from incarceration to employment face many challenges,” says Barnes-Proby, “from limited education, skills, and work history to stigma and employers’ fears about criminal behavior and reincarceration.”

Barnes-Proby led a study of the Sacramento Probation Department employment program Career Training Partnership (CTP), which offers career and life skills training and a comprehensive support team, to analyze how these combined elements can positively affect program participants and identify remaining challenges.

RAND’s research of the CTP program suggests that combining education, vocational training, and job placement with staffing agencies or reentry programs, local employers, and union relationship building can yield positive results.

At Operation New Hope (ONH), we understand that people returning from

incarceration face a multitude of barriers, with employment, transportation, and housing being three of the most reported obstacles. Without these necessities, people often feel less connected to their environments, creating communities that experience higher rates of crime, unemployment, and recidivism.

ONH supports life and job skills training for people with a history of involvement with the criminal justice system and places them in employment that offers a sustainable quality of life. People like Kendall McCoy, a convicted felon, can attest to the effectiveness of the non-profit’s mission. For months, McCoy had tried unsuccessfully to navigate a wary job market with limited skills. At the not-so-subtle urging of his probation officer, he reluctantly showed up at the facilities of ONH. He found we offer family reunification services, a galaxy of job training and employer partnerships, mental and emotional therapy, and other

wraparound services. As it turned out, working with his probation officer was a tremendous benefit.

For McCoy, it was important that ONH’s program qualified him to make a sustainable living wage while paying restitution and court costs, making the decision not to consider illegal sources of income that much easier. RAND’s study revealed that securing employment at a livable wage is one of the most significant challenges facing ex-offenders. Career training can be a way to obtain a hand-up, not a handout.

Josh Martino, a partner and board member at ONH, says he’s hired several ex-offenders in his businesses. He realized that hiring employees through ONH’s “Ready4Work” program cut down on time, hiring costs, and his concerns as an employer. He appreciated that employment candidates had been thoroughly vetted and came with a qualified endorsement.

To make training programs more successful, RAND suggests removing obstacles to participation, for example, by providing transportation or helping ex-offenders address driver’s license issues. Providing a subsidy or stipend may also help participants offset costs and increase their chances of completing the program.

ONH understands the importance of providing support to the ex-offenders and continues to work every day to build a stronger community by creating opportunities to realize second chances and reduce recidivism.

Evidence indicates that ex-offenders have substantially lower probabilities of being hired than members of other disadvantaged groups – such as welfare recipients, high school dropouts, unemployed people, and those with “spotty” work histories – who do not have a criminal record.

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Observing World Alzheimer's Month

Spotlighting a Mysterious, Debilitating Disease

By Andrea Blackstone

The sixth leading cause of death in the United States is Alzheimer's. "Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of a group of brain diseases called dementias," according to the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The search for a cure is still underway.

World Alzheimer's Month is an international campaign from Alzheimer's Disease International that takes place each September. 'Know Dementia, Know Alzheimer's' is this year's theme, per Alzheimer's Disease International.

Preventing and managing high blood pressure; managing blood sugar; maintaining a healthy weight; being physically active; quitting smoking; avoiding excessive drinking; preventing and correcting hearing loss; and getting enough sleep are healthy lifestyle choices that can reduce the risk of Alzheimer's, per information provided by the CDC.

The disease which can "affect one's ability to carry out routine daily activities" destroys brain cells. It causes memory, thinking, and behavior problems. The drastic impact of Alzheimer's can be severe enough to impact "work, lifelong hobbies, and an individual's social life," according to the CDC.

In 2014, the late former model and restaurateur B. Smith announced that she had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's.

"Women account for almost two-thirds of Americans with Alzheimer's disease," Johns Hopkins Medicine reported.

The Alzheimer's Association reminds that Alzheimer's disease typically progresses slowly. Early, middle, and late mark three general stages of it. In the early stage, a symptom such as coming up with



Individuals with Alzheimer's disease often feel more confused and forget conversations as the disease progresses.

Photo credit: clipart.com

the right word or name may be identifiable. In the middle-stage Alzheimer's, which is the longest stage that last for many years, a person who lives with it may become "forgetful of events or personal history." Extensive care may be required in the late stage, per The Alzheimer's Association. For many Alzheimer's caregivers in this position, taking care of someone who has been diagnosed with the serious health issue can require around-the-clock care, especially during late stages of the disease.

"Everyone living with Alzheimer's or other dementia is at risk for wandering," according to more information provided by The Alzheimer's Association.

And when an Alzheimer's patient is missing, exhausted families often panic. Some have turned to inventions such as GPS SmartSole®, a wearable GPS tracker system that can be worn in shoes, to help track down loved ones.

Seniors who can still maintain their independence in home settings may call people like Tyre Larkins to give families a caregiver break in a home setting. The Annapolitan works as a

patient care technician and runs her business called Agape' Love Senior Care part time. She has cared for the elderly in different settings over the years.

"I love seeing how excited they are to see me when I come," Larkins said.

Larkins added that companionship is provided for lonely seniors who need someone to listen to them, in addition to meeting services ranging from transportation to bathing through her business. Some of her clients consist of seniors who do not want to burden their family with small tasks. Larkins charges a flat rate plus mileage for rendering services.

"Our main priority is safety but beyond that each client's needs set is different. Some clients may just need someone to run errands for them or provide transportation to an appointment. Other clients, including

our clients living with Alzheimer's need more detailed care. They require more patience and empathy with their care," Larkins said. "They may need someone to help with bathing and dressing or someone just to keep an eye on them to ensure that they don't injure themselves. We want them to all still have some sense of independence, even with us there."

The certified geriatric nursing assistant of eight years said that the most rewarding thing about running her business is the bonds that she creates with her clients. Striking a balance between independence and support can impact a senior's feelings about transitions or needing help.

The National Institute on Aging pointed out that activities that involve engaging the mind include playing a board or card game; working on a puzzle together; reading poems or a book together; writing cards to other

family members and friends; and playing a computer game.

"Participating together in activities your loved one enjoys can help improve their quality of life and manage behavior changes that may come with the disease, such as sleep problems, aggression, and agitation. It can

also help grow and strengthen your connection," the National Institute on Aging reported.

Learn more about Alzheimer's disease and dementia via https://www.alz.org/alzheimer_s_dementia. Connect with Agape' Love Senior Care through <https://www.facebook.com/agapeloveseniorcare>.



Tyre Larkins is the owner of Agape' Love Senior Care.

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Morgan State University students win Zillow's HBCU Hackathon with app that measures financial credibility outside of credit scoring

Second-annual competition challenged participants to develop new technologies to help consumers during their journey to find a home.

SEATTLE – Zillow's second HBCU Housing Hackathon, which drew more than 200 students from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), awarded top prizes to teams that developed innovations to help renters and first-time buyers find their dream homes.

The top three finishers in the hackathon, in collaboration with the United Negro College Fund (UNCF) and Amplify 4 Good, won over the judges with projects that offer impactful tech solutions that

align with Zillow's mission to help consumers overcome obstacles in their journey to find a home

ZillowBears, a team of four Morgan State University students, won first place and \$20,000 for its "Z-Save" application, which estimates monthly mortgage costs and lets users deposit that amount into a virtual wallet that tracks their payment trends. The app also shows lenders data points to help determine whether potential homeowners qualify for a mortgage and offer them a way to prove creditworthiness outside the traditional credit scoring system. Zillow® also will donate \$25,000 to Morgan State's computer science program as part of the first-place prize.

"I wanted to participate in the hackathon to learn more about the real estate industry and explore on a deeper level how technology can help solve the most prominent issues people face every day when trying to secure a home," said Nanfwang Dawurang, a member of ZillowBears and a senior computer science student at Morgan State University. "Seeing how different people look at the same issue in completely different ways and

the various innovative and exciting ideas presented in tackling housing issues showed me that progress can always be made when people come together and are intentional about solving a problem."

The HBCU Hackathon brought together 65 teams. Six

teams advanced to the final round and had five minutes to present their ideas virtually, using live demonstrations and presentation decks, to a panel of judges made up of Zillow and tech industry leaders.

"We are very impressed with the caliber of the work, the quality of the presentations, and the outstanding, innovative ideas the students displayed at Zillow's second HBCU Housing Hackathon," said Aldona Clotey, Zillow vice president of Corporate Social Responsibility and one of the judges. "With 20 schools represented, this hackathon not only helps Zillow continue to foster engagement among HBCUs, but it allows us to tap our next generation of technology leaders

to help ensure we are continuously evolving as a company and positively impacting the technology industry as a whole."

Joining Dawurang on the first-place team were Oluwadara Dina, Saad Nadeem and Godsheritage Adeoye. Their winning "Z-Save" application was designed to address disproportionate mortgage denial rates for Black and Latinx borrowers due to low credit scores by providing an alternative way for lenders to assess financial credibility. Users can build a positive payment history and receive a "Z-score," which can be used as an indicator of creditworthiness.

Zillow HBCU Hackathon Runners-Up

The other hackathon prize winners were teams Straw Hat Crew of Fisk University and First Move of Howard University.

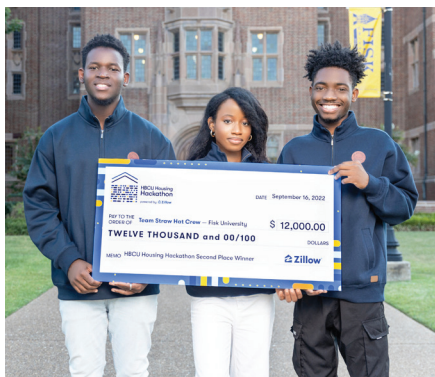
Team Straw Hat Crew won second place and \$12,000 for its "Hey Roomie" concept, a Zillow rental hub integration that uses machine learning to pair renters with potential compatible roommates or cosigners based on housing and lifestyle preferences.

Straw Hat Crew included Collins Ikpeyi, Sopuruchi Ndubuisi and Elijah Okoroh.

Team First Move won third place and a \$6,000 prize for "VibeZ", an application geared toward millennial and Gen Z home shoppers that lets users search for homes based on community preferences, such as access to nightlife, greenspaces, the presence of an art scene and more.

First Move team members included Bryce Gordon-Pinkston, Ife Martin, Ayotunde Ogunroku and Joshua Veasy.

The semifinalist teams were: Team Atom of Alabama State University, with team members Arnold Bhebhe, Best Olunusi, Robert Mukuchura and Lucky Chitundu; Broker Bears of Morgan State



Team Straw Hat Crew from Fisk University won second place at Zillow's HBCU Housing Hackathon: (L-R) Collins Ikpeyi, Sopuruchi Ndubuisi and Elijah Okoroh.
Photos courtesy of NNPA



Team First Move from Howard University won third place at Zillow's HBCU Housing Hackathon: (L-R) Bryce Gordon-Pinkston, Ife Martin, Ayotunde Ogunroku and Joshua Veasy.

University, with Efosa Isujeh, Subomi Popoola, Martin Adu-Boahene and Dimitri Watat

Rocket of Howard University, with Jeremy White Jr., Karis Lewis, Morayo Adeyemi and Tyler Williams

Judges of the semifinal round included Lakshmi Dixit, Zillow vice president of Tech Engineering and Operations; Kevin Regensberg, Zillow senior technical product manager; Damien Peters, founder, Wealth Noir; Richard Clay, investment partner, Door Room Fund; and Chad Womack, Ph.D., vice president of National STEM Programs and Tech Initiatives at UNCF.

All students from the top three teams also will receive new laptops and textbook gift cards, and all eligible hackathon participants interested in a role at Zillow will have an opportunity to interview for an internship.

The hackathon's final pitch round was judged by Zillow and tech industry leaders that included Eric Bailey, vice president of Experience Design at Zillow; Aldona Clotey, vice president of Corporate Social Responsibility at Zillow; April Daley, software engineer at Etsy; Jonathan Rabb, founder and CEO of Watch The Yard; and Chad Womack, Ph.D., vice president of National STEM Programs and Tech Initiatives at UNCF.

Sandy Spring Museum Awarded Groundbreaking Grants to Unlock Local African American History from Museum's Archival Collection

Sandy Spring, Maryland -- Sandy Spring Museum, a community-driven cultural arts and educational center, was awarded two grants from The Institute of Museum and Library Services and Maryland Heritage Areas Authority to unlock the history and contributions of the local African American community. In addition, the grants will enhance access to the museum's archival collections that is publicly accessible through a generous partnership with Digital Maryland.

The grants totaling \$91,616 will support the museum's "Equity in Metadata" project that aims to build a more inclusive and equitable archival collection by redressing the systemic issues of bias and racial inequities in the cataloguing of the museum's historical documents and other research materials.

The museum has a vast archival collection of more than 10,000 historical documents including letters, photographs, ledgers, and diaries from the Sandy Spring community, dating back to 1650. The "Equity in Metadata" project was born from the recent digitization of the museum's archives. The process uncovered, within the individual pages of historic documents, rich information explicitly related to the local African American community. In the past, these documents were exclusively associated with the early White settlers who created them, yet they contain valuable information about specific African American families on topics such as tenancy, wages, skills, health care access, and the local barter economy.

"This exciting project will provide us with the opportunity to tell the full Sandy Spring story for the first time, particularly how the African American and White communities of Sandy Spring were mutually dependent upon one another. The historic gap is



Allison Weiss
Photo credit: Kim Kellar

significant," said Allison Weiss, the museum executive director.

The Sandy Spring community was once the largest settlement of free people of color in Montgomery County, Maryland, at the turn of the 20th century. This project will confirm the actual ratio of African Americans to White residents in the community. Anecdotal evidence suggests African Americans outnumbered the White community by three-to-one.

The museum is partnering with the Sharp Street United Methodist Church, the oldest African American church in Montgomery County, on the project. The church is marking its' 200th milestone anniversary this year.

"We're thrilled to partner with the Sharp Street United Methodist Church community on this project to tell the full story through the overall findings. Partnering with the Sharp Street community will ensure that we use appropriate and accurate language and terminology that could be missed by a community outsider," said Weiss.

Rev. Dr. Diane Dixon Proctor, pastor of Sharp Street United Methodist Church, emphasized the importance of ensuring that local African American history is recognized and preserved in the museum's historical records and collections.



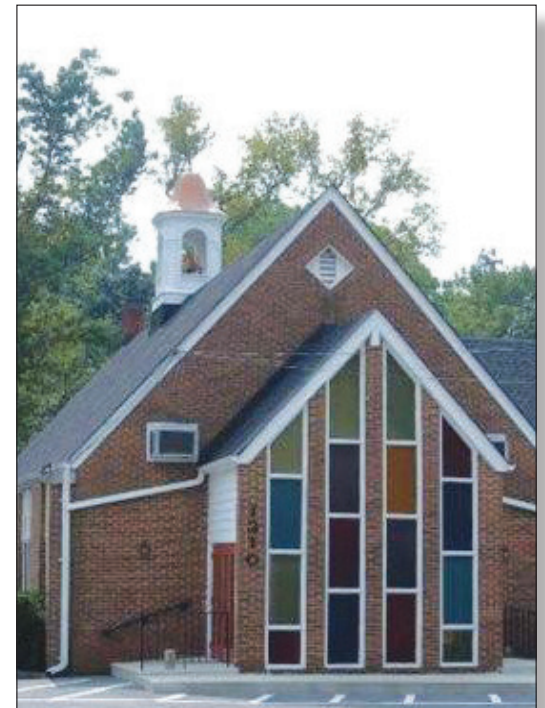
Rev. Dr. Diane Dixon Proctor
Photo credit: Sharp Street UMC

"As we celebrate our 200th anniversary this year, members of the Sharp Street community look forward to working closely with the Sandy Spring Museum to ensure equity in cataloguing research materials to shine a light on the historic significance of African American families in the community – many of whom are ancestors of our church members," said Rev. Dixon Proctor.

The project will dramatically improve the patron experience in accessing historical data relevant to African Americans in Sandy Spring. The project includes five critical components:

1. Identify archival materials containing references to specific African Americans and their families living in Sandy Spring, Maryland in the 19th century;

2. Compile a list of all enslavers and free African Americans in the Sandy Spring neighborhood from 1800 to 1864 as well as all African American citizens in the area from 1865 to 1900. U.S Census data will be leveraged for this aspect of the project;
3. Apply page-level descriptive Metadata (data that facilitates the identification, discovery and understanding of archival items) to increase findability of information on African American men and women;
4. Prioritize transcribing these materials so content is more accessible; and,
5. Establish partnerships to communicate findings and encourage community interpretation.



Sharp Street UMC
Photo credit: Sandy Spring Museum

Rambling Rose

**OPERA ON THE AVENUE,
A DAYTIME FESTIVAL**



Rosa Pryor Trusty



The Baltimore Symphony Orchestra is performing on Sunday, October 2, 2022, from 11 a.m.- 3 p.m. at the Baltimore Farmers' Market underneath the Jones Falls Expressway at Holliday and Saratoga Streets. It is free and open to the public.



Adrienne Danrich is the curator of Opera on the Avenue. The day-long festival takes place on Saturday, October 8, 2022. The festival is a joint venture between the Arch Social Club and Opera Baltimore.

Hello Everyone,

I hope that my words find you and your family in good health. Well, my friends, there is not much going on this weekend. Nothing much came across my desk about the first weekend of the month except for a couple of events, but honey child, check out what I have for you next weekend!

First, let me tell you about this Opera on the Avenue event celebrating creator and performer Anne Brown. The Baltimore Concert Opera (BCO) and the Arch Social Club announced a new partnership to bring diverse communities together. The goal is to use opera as the bridge while fulfilling BCO's vision to build community through opera. Adrienne Danrich is the principal creator of it. The BCO and the Arch Social Club will introduce the premiere of a walking tour. It will center around the life and story of Anne Wiggins Brown. The Baltimore-born operatic soprano was the first person to play the role of "Bess" in the famous 20th century American opera, "Porgy and Bess." Composer George Gershwin was inspired to create the character "Bess" after she auditioned for him. A celebration of the African American opera singer will be held on Saturday, October 8, 2022, from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. at Arch Social Club, located at 2426 Pennsylvania Ave. The free day-long festival will feature live entertainment, a mini-block party, and a premiere ticketed concert in the evening. Additionally, a part of the mini-block party in the afternoon will consist of vendors selling their wares outside in the rear of the Arch Social Club. For more information, contact Adrienne at 646-334-4302.

This weekend, the G. Thomas

Allen Quintet will be performing at Morgan State University's Murphy Fine Arts Center, located at Morgan State University, 2201 Argonne Drive in Baltimore on Saturday, October 1, 2022 at 7 p.m. For more information, call 443-885-4440.

I want to give the DJs a little plug, even though it is not my thing. If you are reading my column at this time, you might enjoy an event called The Kings of DJ's, The Best of Both Worlds Day Party. It features DJ Thommy Davis; DJ Biskit; DJ Kenny K; DJ Tanz; DJ Sean Marshall; and DJ Kasper Burnstein. You can find the party at the Safari, located at 5625 O'Donnell St. on Saturday, October 1, 2022, from 4-8 p.m. For more information, call 410-624-5662.

The B-Side of the Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts will present a special end to their B-Side featuring the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra on Sunday, October 2, 2022, from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. It will be held in the same space as the Baltimore's Farmers' Market, underneath the Jones Falls Expressway at E. Saratoga St. and Holliday St. After the regular market ends, you can enjoy food and drink vendors and a free performance.

DJ Mel's Birthday & 40th DJ Anniversary Celebration is where I will be on Saturday, October 8, 2022, from 9 p.m.-1 a.m. at the Delta Community Center, located at 2501 Springhill Ave. The event requires semi-formal attire. It will include free food and an open bar, but if you choose, you can bring your own food and bring your own drinks. The live entertainment will feature the Feelin' the Funk Band. For more information, call 410-493-3512.



The Family Band will perform at the American Legion Hall, located at 115 N. Bond Street in Belair, Maryland, from 7-11 p.m.

I am really excited about the 20th Annual Pigtown Festival. It will be held on Saturday, October 8, 2022, from 12 p.m.-7 p.m. at 700-1100 blocks of Washington Blvd. It will include pig races; live entertainment; local foods and beer; arts and crafts; and a lot more. Check it out. I think you would like it. Pigtown is a small neighborhood with a big heart. It is one of the most culturally and economically diverse communities in Baltimore where people pull together to make wonderful things happen.

Another event coming up on Saturday, October 8, 2022, at 2 p.m. will be presented by The Homecoming Committee of Waters African Methodist Episcopal Church. Violinist Eric Taylor will be featured at the Waters African Methodist Episcopal Church, located at 417 N. Asquith Street. Rev. Charles Baugh is the pastor. For more information, call 410-675-2640.



DJ Mel's Birthday & 40th Anniversary Celebration is Saturday, October 8, 2022, from 9 p.m.-1 a.m. located at the Delta Community Center on 2501 Springhill Avenue. The event requires semi-formal attire and includes an open bar plus free food. It is BYOB and BYOF, meaning you can choose to bring your own drinks and food.

There will be live entertainment provided by "Feelin' the Funk Band."

The Festival on the Hill, produced by the Bolton Hill Community Association, will also be held on Saturday, October 8, 2022, from 10 a.m.- 5 p.m. There will be live entertainment by Mambo Combo; Todd Marcus Jazz; a kid's zone; a "juniquities" auction; arts and crafts booths; food; a pet parade; books; baked goods; wine and beer; and much more. The event will take place rain or shine. All the festivities will be held in the 1300 block of Bolton St. and Lanvale St. between Park Ave. and Bolton St.

Well, my dear friends, I have run out of space. I must go, but if you need me, call me at 410-833-9474. You can also email me at rosapryor@aol.com. UNTIL THE NEXT TIME, I'M MUSICALLY YOURS.

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25 Local Women to Be Honored During 27th Annual Fannie Lou Hamer Awards Reception Oct. 2

(Annapolis, Md. – September 19, 2022) — Chosen from across Anne Arundel County, 25 trailblazing women will be honored during the 27th annual Fannie Lou Hamer Awards Reception, held from 4 to 6 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 2, at the Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts in Annapolis, Md. Known for impacting their community — whether through social justice or advocacy — each woman has made a lasting mark on Anne Arundel County. This year's honorees — Phyllis “Tee” Adams, Angelia Brown, Monique Brown, Lynda Davis, Claudia DeGrate, Mary Grace Gallagher, Glenda Gathers, Erica Griswold, De Lorma “Dee” Goodwyn, Denise Henderson Hector, Laticia Hicks, Delegate Dana Jones, Gabrielle Martinez, Heidi May, Dr. Tawana R. Offer, Councilwoman Lisa Rodvien, The Honorable Dana Z. Schallheim, Michelle Stephenson, Alderwoman Eleanor Tierney, Dr. Joanna Tobin, Darla Watts, Jacqueline V.

Wells, Marion “Murnie” Wenn, Ethel Leon Wirth, and Jane Zanger — join the ranks of more than 100 notable women, including former Sen. Barbara Mikulski, Administrative Law Judge Tracey Warren Parker, and former Annapolis Mayor Ellen Moyer, who were nominated in years past.

Mayor Gavin Buckley, County Executive Stuart Pittman, and Jackie Coleman, executive director of the Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts, will provide remarks during the event. The evening will also feature a one-woman performance of “The Fannie Lou Hamer Story,” written and performed by Mzuri Moyo Aimbaye, award-winning playwright, actress, and internationally acclaimed vocalist. A reception with heavy hors d’oeuvres will follow the program. The event is sponsored by the Martin Luther King Jr. Committee of Anne Arundel County. For more information, go to MLKJrMD.org or call 443-871-5656 or 301-538-6353.

“The Fannie Lou Hamer Story” received Best Actor, Best Play, and Best Producer during the 2015 Atlanta Black Theater Festival, and the Best Solo Performance for the 2002 Audelco Viv Award. Hamer’s courage and compassion inspired Aimbaye to write the one-woman play, which follows Hamer’s rise from Jim Crow’s Mississippi to the halls of Congress as a powerful voice in the 1964 voter’s rights movement. She has performed this play for more than two decades. Aimbaye has also performed in small productions in the New York/New Jersey area and was cast in the role of Lucy for the first Black African American film depicting a slave revolt, “SANKOFA,” which was recently re-released on Netflix.

Fannie Lou Hamer, 1917-1977, was an American voting rights activist,

civil rights leader, and philanthropist. The awards that bear her name recognize women from various racial backgrounds who, while not necessarily household names, have excelled in their chosen fields while working diligently to improve civil and human rights in the region.

“We congratulate all of the recipients of the Fannie Lou Hamer Awards, whose commitment to social justice is seen in the work that they do daily,” said Carl Snowden, chair of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Committee. “These women run the gamut. They

are legislators, activists, and they are committed to making America better and not bitter.”



Fannie Lou Hamer



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Ravens J. K. Dobbins Excited to be Back in the Game



J. K. Dobbins

Photo credit: Will Newton/Getty Images Sports

By Tyler Hamilton

It has been a very long time since Baltimore Ravens running back J. K. Dobbins took the field. As a rookie, Dobbins had 134 carries for 805 yards and nine rushing touchdowns, plus another 120 yards and four scores on 18 receptions.

Dobbins was expected to take over Baltimore's backfield in 2021 and build on his 6.0 yards per carry to make a push to become a top back in the league, but he suffered a torn ACL in the preseason on August 28, 2021. Dobbins was placed on injured reserve a few days later.

Last Sunday's game against the New England Patriots offered Dobbins a chance to get back to doing what he loves: play football.

"The emotions were very high," Dobbins said after the game. "When I got out there, I wasn't even worried about taking that first hit; I was just worried about making a play. The night before, I was thinking about it, but it was good to get back out there."

When he did get out there, Dobbins ended up rushing for 23 yards on seven carries and catching two passes for 17 yards.

The long recovery process was a grind for Dobbins. He worked to be back for the season opener during the

offseason but began training camp on the physically unable to perform list. He eventually passed a physical and was eligible to return to practice.

Dobbins said the journey was very tough and made him a better man. He missed the first two games of the season before showing enough during the practice week to make head coach John Harbaugh feel he was ready to take the field.

"He was kind of getting to the point where we kind of just felt like this week would be the week, and it just kind of made sense this week in terms of how he looked," Harbaugh said.

The waiting process made Dobbins' appreciation for the game increase, but he still feels like there's unfinished business.

"It felt great. [I'm] blessed to be back out there. I'm the type of guy that – yes, I got back out there, I'm blessed, [and] I'm happy about that, but now it's time for me to try to do what I do. And that's run for 100 yards and stuff like that," Dobbins said.

Dobbins will get his next opportunity to carry the football this week when the Ravens face the Buffalo Bills at M&T Bank Stadium. Rest assured he's looking forward to it.

Added Dobbins, "I keep chipping away, keep getting better each week."

continued from page 2

Artist Finds Solace in Gospel Music, Brings Christian Men Together Through Brotherly Movement

to provide foundational support. Dominique Malone; James Powell; Chris Smith; and Michael Guess assisted with planning and creating group guidelines. Members may now catch up on life happenings, discuss current events, hold conversations about empowering Bible scriptures, and participate in quarterly meetings.

"Any brother that wants to join can search for us on Facebook #OhMyBrother and request to join," Cheston said. "We hope to begin having in-person meet-ups as the world has opened back up again."

Cheston is also taking his gospel music interest to new heights after working on a solo music project for 10 years. He will be performing songs from it live during a pre-release event at Busboys & Poets on Saturday, October 15, 2022, located at 6251 Mango Tree Rd. in Columbia, Md. at 5 p.m. The single is called "Identity RMX."

"My goal is to get my music in front of listeners while getting the message of Jesus and suicide prevention out to the people as well. Maryland

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) is providing information to help with mental health resources," Cheston said.

"On average, there are 130 suicides per day," according to data provided by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

On October 22, 2022, Cheston will partner with the AFSP Maryland American Foundation to raise money and perform for their Out of Darkness Walk. He lost two male cousins to suicide.

The performer noted that he wants to see more "brothers" find healthy communities that encourage them to go to church, the doctor, and a therapist.

"I want to see men change the world for the betterment of women and children and other brothers," Cheston said.

Visit chestonthegreen.com to purchase event tickets or donate to the walk. See Cheston perform "Hosanna" via <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qn0zOtW2XzM>.



Cheston Green sings gospel music onstage at a church in 2018. Courtesy of Cheston Green

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**CITY OF BALTIMORE
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Sealed Bids or Proposal for the **F.A.P. NO. NHPP-251-1(88) E, S.H.A NO. BC420018, CITY OF BALTIMORE CONTRACT NO. TR12309, Replacement of Bridge No. BC 5202 on Wilkens Avenue over Gwynns Falls** will be received at the Office of the Comptroller, Room 204, City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland until **November 16, 2022** at 11:00 A.M. Board of Estimates employees will be stationed at the Security Unit Counter just inside the Holliday Street entrance to City Hall from 10:45 A.M. to 11:00 A.M. every Wednesday to receive Bids. Positively no bids will be received after 11:00 A.M. The bids will be publicly opened by the Board of Estimates in Room 215, City Hall at Noon. As of **September 23, 2022**, the Contract Documents may be examined, without charge by contacting Brenda Simmons at brenda.simmons@baltimorecity.gov or (443) 865-4423 to arrange for a copy of the bid book labeled **"NOT FOR BIDDING PURPOSES"** to be emailed to you. Anyone who desires to purchase a bid book to be used for bidding purposes must do so in person and by contacting Brenda Simmons at the email address or phone number above. The non-refundable cost is **ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS AND NO CENTS (\$100.00)** at the Department of Transportation 417 E. Fayette Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21202 made 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 S. 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 Categories required for bidding on this project are **C03300 (Concrete Construction)**. Cost Qualification Range for this project will be from **\$10,000,000.00** to **\$15,000,000.00**. A "Pre-Bidding Information" session will be conducted via Microsoft Teams on **October 20, 2022** at 10:00 a.m. hosted by the Department of Transportation. **By no later than October 17, 2022**, all Bidders must email your contact information to include your name, company name, phone number and email address to ravic.miller@baltimorecity.gov to receive an invite to the Microsoft Team (video conference meeting). Principle Items of work for this project are: **SUBSTRUCTURE CONCRETE FOR BRIDGE - 1,650 CY; TEMPORARY PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE - L.S.; REMOVE AND RELOCATE 20 INCH WATER MAIN - 274 LF.** The DBE Goal is **25%**. APPROVED: Celeste Amato, Clerk, Board of Estimates

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