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Bowie State University's Performing Arts Theater Named After Dionne Warwick



Donald Hoffman, president and CEO of EXCEL Services Corporation; Dr. Aminta Breaux, president of Bowie State University (BSU); music icon and philanthropist, Dionne Warwick; BeBe Winans, gospel singer; and Franco Nuschese, restaurateur and owner of Cafe Milano celebrate the renaming ceremony of BSU's theater in honor of Warwick on April 1, 2023 at BSU. The theater is now the first performing arts venue named in her honor. A program included Warwick and Breaux publicly unveiling the Dionne Warwick Theater at Bowie State University. / Photo credit: Ryan Pelham, BSU staff photographer



Local Nonprofits Provide Free Legal Assistance in Baltimore for Families at Risk of Losing Their Homes Due to Unpaid Property Taxes

Free Clinics Offering One-on-One Counseling to be Held April 15 and April 19

BALTIMORE – With Baltimore City’s tax sale date set for May 15, homeowners who owe at least \$750 in property taxes or citations, or a combination of both, are at risk of losing their home to tax sale. To help families hold onto their homes, [Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service](#) (MVLS) in partnership with the [Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland](#) and [Stop Oppressive Seizures \(SOS\) Fund](#) will host three free tax sale prevention clinics to help struggling homeowners. These homeowners will meet one-on-one with a pro bono attorney and get legal advice about their options and the tax sale process. Homeowners also will get connected to critical resources like the Homeowners’ Property Tax Credit Program. After the clinic, if homeowners need ongoing assistance and representation, MVLS will place them with a pro bono attorney.

Unpaid property taxes often affect the poorest homeowners in the most distressed neighborhoods. Tax sales have a disproportionate effect on Black homeowners and communities of color as well as the elderly. Many of these homeowners survive on fixed incomes and struggle to pay their bills even before a tax sale happens. Most of these homeowners also live in multigenerational households where they provide shelter and support for their children and grandchildren. For these families, the predominant form of accumulated wealth that they have, and that they can pass on to their families, is the equity in their homes. But the property tax system, by taking these properties, continues to strip wealth from Black families and communities – further exacerbating the existing wealth gap and contributing to vacant and abandoned properties all over the state.



WHEN / WHERE: **Saturday, April 15, 2023, from 12-3 p.m.**

Collington Square Recreation Center

1410 North Patterson Park Avenue

Baltimore, MD 21213

Wednesday, April 19, 2023, from 4-7 p.m.

C.C. Jackson Recreation Center

4910 Park Heights Avenue

Baltimore, MD 21215

BACKGROUND:

Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service (MVLS) is a nonprofit that mobilizes volunteers to provide free civil legal help. The organization serves thousands of people each year who otherwise would be unable to afford representation, focusing on six issues that have a big impact on peoples’ everyday lives – family law, housing, finance, tax, criminal record relief and estate planning and administration. Through outreach and education, MVLS brings legal services to people who need it most. Through advocacy, MVLS fights for racial and economic justice. To learn more, visit [mvlslaw.org](#).

Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland (PBRC) is Maryland’s hub for pro bono civil legal assistance provided by volunteers. Equal access to justice is a core value of our nation, yet hundreds of thousands of our state’s residents cannot afford the legal help they desperately need and have no legal guarantee of a lawyer. As the pro bono arm of the Maryland State Bar Association, PBRC plays a unique role as the training, support, innovation and advocacy center for pro bono and also offers remote consultations via telephone. For more information, visit [probonomd.org](#).

The Stop Oppressive Seizures (SOS) Fund aims to disrupt then dismantle predatory systems that erode ownership within Black, Indigenous and communities of color, while decolonizing our understanding of property to support models of collective land stewardship. To find out more, visit [thesosfund.com](#).

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HEALTH BEAT

The Face of Health Disparity

By Jayne Hopson

I am proud to be one of three journalists selected nationwide to represent The Baltimore Times as a 2023 Commonwealth Health Reporting Fellow. This yearlong writing fellowship is awarded and funded by Knight X LMA BloomLab.

In no small measure The Baltimore Times was awarded this prestigious fellowship in recognition of their longstanding commitment to look beyond the headlines to better inform its readers. Each week the editorial staff develops and delivers honest, straightforward stories curated to educate, entertain and improve our well-being. These are The Baltimore Times' guiding goals. The writers ask themselves does this article fulfill one or more goal?

For the next 12 months, I shall go behind the front-page news to develop meaningful stories about health disparities and show how it diminishes the lives of Americans. The objective is to identify strategies that will bring bias-free healthcare to marginalized communities. It will offer a look at common inequities found in unexpected places, practiced by familiar faces.

In my experience as a consumer and health journalist, the alarming truth is African Americans, rich or poor are at risk for biased treatment during any encounter with medical providers. That is not a new or unexamined problem.

The primary focus of HealthBeat will be the long-and short-term consequences of differential treatment. Weekly stories will identify possible solutions or provide suggestions for seeking further information, with advice and recommendations from respected members of the medical community and health care stakeholders.

My professional relationship with The Baltimore Times began in 1996. As a child, if anyone asked me what I



Freddie Gray
Courtesy photo

wanted to be when I grew up, my answer would have been a newspaper columnist. When I pitched the idea of a features column titled "Health Matters," I was given my dream job by Joy Bramble, The Baltimore Times founder and publisher. A remarkable media visionary, Mrs. Bramble has kept the paper true to its original mission of positive stories about positive people!

A year after its launch, the column was published weekly. It immediately proved an effective way to reach a wider audience for the minority wellness articles I wrote for the WK Kellogg Foundation's Vision for Health initiative. Topics included: hypertension, kidney disease, diabetes, asthma, obesity, dental, maternal, men's health and persistent environmental hazards such as lead paint poisoning.

The program's offices were in the heart of West Baltimore's long troubled Sandtown-Winchester community. It is the same neighborhood where riots broke out, triggered by the police involved death of a longtime resident named Freddie Gray. Baltimore and the Maryland National Guard grappled with days of lawlessness and shunning the national media attention. Meanwhile, it was reported that Mr. Gray's blood had tested "dangerously toxic" for years.

Records showed that he and his twin sister were lead poisoned as young children.

Freddie struggled academically; his classroom difficulties were attributed to irreversible brain damage caused by the lead. The frequent exposure lowered his IQ, significantly shortened his attention span, and increased the capacity of impulsive, irresponsible behavior. Medically, he was a victim of an illness the CDC says is completely preventable. Long ago his mental and health issues should have been treated accordingly. His mistreatment does not end there.

With smoke and widespread destruction filling the streets of West Baltimore, a large local newspaper ran an editorial paraphrased by, "yes Freddie, life dealt you a few bad cards, but it was your decision to repeatedly break the law that led to the fatal police wagon ride."

Some of the people who shared that opinion were Black. Proof that racial disparities can be rigorously practiced by members of the victim's own race. Bolstered, perhaps by the media's portrayal of Freddie Gray as a lawless nuisance who did not deserve to be seen as a martyr, a victim of police brutality.

But what if the poisoning had crippled his body, rather than his brain? Without the use of his legs, would anyone expect him to walk or run? With a more obvious affliction, he may have been assigned a treatment plan more appropriate to his underlying illness.

We must consider as well, if the daily perils of a young, poor, under-educated, Black man had not cut Mr. Gray's life short. The exposure to poisonous paint dust and chips would have made his prospects for a healthy, productive future equally dim.

Nevertheless, inexcusable gaps in public health policy and spotty enforcement of lead paint abatement mandates have damaged the lives and compromised the future of poor, medically underserved children for decades. There is chilling predictability to what usually happens next: a host of problematic behaviors, such as short attention spans, poor judgment skills

and other neurological deficits begin to surface in school.

Black kids like Freddie are frequently placed in special education. Without well informed student advocacy many children languish and continue to underperform. Studies show Black youngsters are less likely to be offered early testing for neurological and psychological disorders.

Like it or not Freddie Gray is one of the faces of health disparity. Not a sympathetic victim, he was a petty criminal without any felonies who sold drugs to support his habit. Nevertheless, he is one of scores of underserved black kids who failed to launch after exposure to an environmental toxin.

So, what one might ask is positive about Freddie Gray's tragic story? I am positive that a closer, less reactionary examination of factors surrounding his life and death reveals at least one way to help eliminate a health disparity. We can begin by identifying illnesses considered completely preventable by the medical community, then advocate to increase community awareness for ways to avoid, treat, and eliminate environmental hazards and other preventable threats to wellness.

For nearly four decades The Baltimore Times has created and implemented strategies to promote the mental, physical, and spiritual health of our community. This fellowship will assist The Baltimore Times to continue its policy of forming productive partnerships with readers and health care providers. **BT**

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FEATURE

Recent statistics show that African Americans comprise a large share of taxpayers in the United States



Courtesy photo/nnpa.org

By Stacy M. Brown

NNPA Newswire Senior

National Correspondent

@StacyBrownMedia

As the April 18 deadline to file 2022 income taxes arrives, many African Americans share their experiences with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Some have said that filing their taxes was hard and they ran into problems, while others were happy with the process.

Recent statistics show that African Americans comprise a large share of taxpayers in the United States. However, many still need help navigating the complex tax system and dealing with the IRS.

One common issue African American taxpayers report is difficulty accessing tax services and resources.

Many live in areas that need access to qualified tax professionals, making it harder for them to file their taxes accurately and on time. This can lead to costly mistakes, late fees, and other penalties.

Many have reported experiencing discrimination and bias while dealing with

the IRS. Such actions can come in many forms, such as being audited unfairly or getting less help than other taxpayers.

A recent study confirmed that Black Americans are three to five times more likely to face an IRS audit when compared with other taxpayers.

Evelyn Smith, an economics graduate student at the University of Michigan and visiting fellow at Stanford University's RegLab, told CNBC that the audit rate differences seem to be driven by the agency's focus on "low-dollar, high-certainty cases."

Specifically, the study examines audits of filers claiming the earned income tax credit, a tax break for low to moderate earners. The credit is refundable, meaning eligible filers can receive it even with zero taxes due.

The findings show Black filers claiming the earned income tax credit were more likely to be audited than non-Black filers claiming the same credit.

"It's a type of audit that the IRS does a lot," Smith told the network "It's cheap, it's easy to perform and Black taxpayers get caught up in that disproportionately relative to non-Black taxpayers."

Those facts have proven discouraging for African American taxpayers, who

already have to deal with systemic racism and discrimination in other parts of their lives. Despite the problems, many still have found ways to deal with the tax system and file their taxes successfully.

Some have sought free or low-cost tax preparation services provided by community organizations or the IRS. Others have relied on online tax software and resources to file their taxes independently.

Those who have had positive experiences with the IRS emphasize the importance of being organized, keeping good records, and staying on top of tax deadlines. They also say to find tax professionals or resources early on to ensure the filing process goes smoothly and without stress.

Overall, the experiences of African Americans with the IRS show that the tax system needs to be fairer and easier to use.

"Taxpayers of all backgrounds should have access to high-quality tax services and resources, regardless of where they live or their income level," Alton Moore, a tax preparer and accountant, insisted.

"The IRS should get rid of bias and unfair treatment so that all taxpayers are treated equally," Moore asserted. **BT**

The Redemption Voyage will Give Young, HBCU Voyagers a Trip of a Lifetime

By Andrea Blackstone

Audri Scott Williams, a global peace advocate and Alabamian, is preparing to launch an epic journey called the Redemption Voyage 2026 to heal the wounds of American people of African descent.

“It’s probably the most important thing I feel that I’ve ever done in my life. That is why we are beginning now, for a voyage that will happen in 2026. We will be taking 18 to 20 young, 21- to 28-year-olds on a journey from America, leaving out of Mobile [Alabama], going to Quidah, a country in Benin West Africa, following the same route of the Clotilda, and then going from Benin north along the West Coast going to Ghana, The Gambia, and Senegal,” Scott Williams said, noting the journey will end in Virginia at Fort Monroe.

The ship will leave from Mobile, Alabama because the Clotilda slave ship was the last documented U.S. ship that illegally brought West African captives to Mobile after the international slave trade was no longer legal. The community of displaced Africans, who became free Americans, became known as Africatown. It is located near downtown Mobile.

“It’s about redeeming what was lost; reconnecting with our African roots,” Scott Williams said, referring to the voyage.

In 2000, Scott Williams led a group of five women and one man on a three-month walk on the Appalachian Trail where escaped slaves sought freedom along with Native Americans. The group of walkers took a journey from North to South on the famous “Trail of Tears” that took place from 1831 to 1850. Williams and the group “reversed the energy” during their “Trail of Dreams” journey. Scott Williams also became the first woman to lead a global walk for human rights and environmental justice.

The upcoming journey will allow a select group of young people to set

sail for the West Coast of Africa on a commissioned ship.

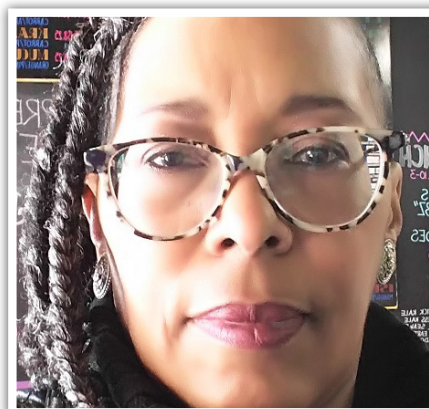
“The ship will actually leave in November of 2025, and arrive in Africa right at the turn of the year in 2026,” Scott Williams said.

Eighteen African Americans— nine young men and nine young women— will share stories of their journey while learning to navigate, collect water samples from the ocean, document, and share their experiences by utilizing advanced technology. Scott Williams added that they will be college students who attend HBCUs, working at either college or graduate level studies.

“The artistic part of this voyage is going to be incredible because there’s going to be a lot of artistic collaboration and storytelling through art of all kinds,” Scott Williams said.



Audri Scott Williams with staff. Photo credit: Karen Hunter Watson



Lenett Nef'fahititi Partlow-Myrick aka “Mama Nef”/Photo credit: Ricardo Myrick



Dr. Mary Elizabeth Hargrow, Audri Scott Williams and Karen Hunter Watson at the Golden Temple in India. /Photo credit: Chandelle Binns

The experience will connect with science, technology, engineering, arts and math. Conducting scientific studies, learning about history and culture and technology to share elements of the trip will be an integral part of the voyage.

Students will receive a scholarship for the field work they will be conducting on the Redemption Voyage, according to Scott Williams.

Specific departure and arrival dates are still being worked out, according to Scott Williams.

“We’ll be recruiting through the HBCUs starting in about five to six months,” she added.

A press conference providing information about Redemption Voyage 2026 will be held on April 14, 2023 at 10 a.m. at the Robert Hope Community Center, located at 850 Edwards Street in Mobile, Alabama.

Dr. Muhjah Shakir is one of the Queen Mother’s/Advisors for Redemption Voyage 2026. She explained that the Queen Mother title is a special designation that’s given to a woman who has an exemplary lifestyle or life experiences devoted to the upliftment of the people.

“In this case, in particular, our focus is on the African American or Black American, indigenous American people,” Shaikir said.

The Queen Mothers will be there to keep the collective group of people involved, moving in the direction

of the vision and mission. Shakir also stated that Scott Williams is an exemplary vehicle for doing great work in the elements of peace and uplifting historically disenfranchised communities.

Lenett Nef’fahititi Partlow-Myrick, aka “Mama Nef,” is a poet, writer, scholar, educator, spiritual activist, visual artist and grandmother who is Baltimore County based. Partlow-Myrick stated that she is a member of the planning committee who explained the significance of the voyage in 2026.

“I believe it is significant for us to, at every opportunity, to retrace our ancestors footsteps and their pathway so that as we go forward, we have a clearer understanding, not only intellectually, and not only from the things that we have learned and read from the actual experience, but as much as we can of walking in their footsteps and being in the physical places and spaces that they occupied, to understand where we have been, in order to gain a greater appreciation for where we are now,” Partlow-Myrick said.

According to Scott Williams, “This is a true Sankofa moment. We are going back to retrieve what we have lost and bring it into the now, as we deepen our understanding of the wisdom that runs deep in our blood. I am grateful that our African brothers are opening their hearts to welcome us to embrace our roots.” **BT**

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Bowie State University's Performing Arts Theater Named After Dionne Warwick



(L-R): BeBe Winans lifts his arm as Dionne Warwick (center) and Dr. Aminta Breaux, president of Bowie State University, rejoice after Warwick's name was unveiled at the school's performing arts venue. / Photo credit: Ryan Pelham, BSU staff photographer

By Andrea Blackstone

Bowie State University (BSU) honored Dionne Warwick by naming the Dionne Warwick Theater at the school's Fine and Performing Arts Center after the six-time Grammy winning music legend on Saturday, April 1, 2023. Dr. Aminta Breaux, BSU's president, explained the significance of BSU being selected to have a first performing venue named in Warwick's honor.

"First of all, it's historic, because she [Dionne Warwick] does not lend her name to other opportunities like this except for her elementary school. She made that clear when she visited here about three years ago.

We started the conversation. She was right here in this building. When I told her about Bowie State University and our history but also the vision of where we're going, she said she wanted to be a part of it, so this is thrilling," Breaux remarked. "It's historic and the future is going to be very bright because she's leading and will certainly inspire others to support the arts in our communities, because the arts are part of our society and our culture. Unfortunately, they are the first to go when a budget cut comes around."

Breaux mentioned that Warwick will
Warwick Theater - continued on page 12



Inspirational Teen from D.C. Selected as Class of 2023 Disney Dreamer

By Andrea Blackstone

Miguel Coppedge, 17, was among 100 young people who participated in this year's Disney Dreamers Academy's class. The event was held in Orlando, Florida at Walt Disney World from March 22-26, 2023. Miguel is an ambitious graduating junior who attends Richard Wright Public Charter School located in Washington, D.C.

"I learned so much about my [intended] field of work and how it actually is to interview other people," Miguel said.

The aspiring sports analyst will graduate from high school in May.

Teen Dreamers were students from across the country who were selected from among thousands of applicants. They convened at Walt Disney World to take part in a unique mentoring program during an all-expenses-paid trip that was purpose-filled.

"Created and hosted by Walt Disney World, the program is designed to broaden career awareness and create opportunities for Black students and teens from underrepresented communities across America," per information provided by a Disney press release.

Miguel was a teen who was selected to receive a "dream-come-true" career opportunity experience. The student leader also remarked that he received a substantial amount of advice about how to achieve his goals. Participants were able to obtain a "feel" for their prospective field of study.

Miguel had never visited Walt Disney World before the event. His favorite activity was venturing inside the Disney parks, but Miguel's favorite memory was being surprised by Good Morning America (GMA).

"They surprised me unexpectedly. I will be going to New York on a tour of GMA and go behind the scenes," Miguel said.

The Washingtonian recalls meeting celebrities including, singer-songwriter and actress Halle Bailey, actress Priah Ferguson, actress Marsai Martin, actor Jalyn Hall, actors Amir and Amari



Miguel Coppedge with his mother, Yolanda Coppedge at Walt Disney World /Photo courtesy of Miguel and Yolanda Coppedge

O'Neil, stylist fashion designer, Misa Hylton actress Paula Jai Parker and others when he travelled to become immersed in inspirational experiences.

Miguel landed a spot the very first time he applied for the prestigious opportunity at the special event which has been up and running for 16 years. Exhibiting consistent diligence is paying off for Miguel. He has been applying for colleges after fulfilling his graduation requirements ahead of schedule.

"My academic goals are to graduate college with at least two degrees," Miguel said.

The author has penned three books to date. Miguel's resume includes motivational speaker, nonprofit leader, entrepreneur and CEO who also sells his product, Krulle (pronounced Kru-la-la) curl crème and hair butter for boys and men.

Miguel's story is layered in additional inspiration. His mother, Yolanda Coppedge adopted him when he was two years old.

"I was blessed with Miguel from a good close friend of mine that I worked

with. Miguel is her cousin and she asked if I wanted to get him because she didn't have enough room in her home because she already had Miguel's older brother and her own children. Miguel was in an infant home at the time. He went there five days after he was born in the shelter his birth mother stayed in. I got him at two months old and put in my petition to adopt him at six months old," Yolanda said.

Yolanda and her son have become a testament of love. Miguel gained a forever home that was provided by a relentless woman who has been willing to invest in his development over the years. Yolanda stated that Disney provided the parents with celebrity speakers to give them praise, motivation, inspiration and encouragement.

"It was an awesome feeling that I got to be with him for this special moment in his life," she said.

The proud mother believes that Miguel's Disney Dreamer opportunity will be a big steppingstone for him for the career path that he chooses, especially with getting hands-on experience.

"I hope people learn that foster children can do and be anything they choose to be especially when they have someone who believes in them, supports them, and most importantly loves them unconditionally," Yolanda said. "I feel optimistic and that Miguel's destined for greatness. He's already great to me. He's going to change the world."

Although Miguel was blessed to connect with Yolanda, he remembers to give back to foster children in his community. He provides comfort bags filled with toiletries. Miguel's self-motivation and positive attitude helps him to shine wherever he goes.

"My career goals are to never stop and keep going even when I reach the top," Miguel said.

Visit www.disneydreamersacademy.com to learn more about Disney Dreamers Academy and www.krulle.com to learn additional details about Miguel's product, Krulle. **BT**

Reverend's Book on Conceptual Solutions to Black Communities Worldwide Joins London Book Fair

Peter W. D. Bramble's *The Overcome: A Black Passover* proposes a liturgy of black remembrance called "The Overcome," which seeks to change the character of blacks worldwide by adding essential concepts about triumph, winning, and overcoming negative aspects of their lives or community, ultimately becoming a celebrated character trait. The book will be part of Bookmarc Alliance's exhibit for the London Book Fair scheduled on April 18-20 at Olympia London.



The Overcome by the Reverend Canon Peter W. D. Bramble offers a conceptual solution to the question of "Where do we go from here?" that was raised by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. more than two decades ago. The book argues that the first move out of the "crossroads" or dilemma must be conceptual, as there is no lack of programs, activities, or even money in the black communities of America. The book proposes that adding certain essential concepts that are missing can change the character and stature of blacks worldwide. *The Overcome* marks the beginning of a victorious walk into the future, just like the Jewish Passover.

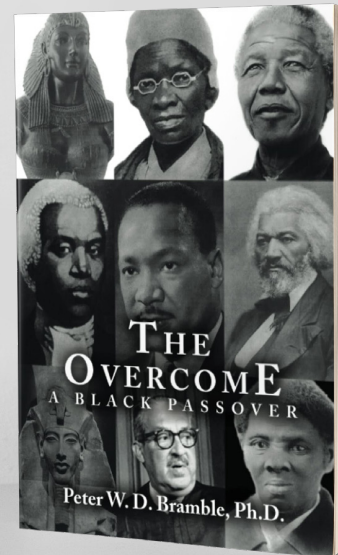
The Reverend Canon Peter W. D. Bramble is a retired black Episcopal priest now residing in Maryland. He served as Rector of St Katherine of Alexandria Episcopal Church in Baltimore from 1976 to 1997 and as Rector and Pastor of St Mark's Episcopal Church in Brooklyn, New York from 1997 to 2015. In 1989, The Baltimore Black Academy of Arts and Letters named Father Bramble the "Living Legend in Religion."

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shine a light for others to follow.

Although the historic occasion was marked by student performances, artistic tributes that were made in different media and renditions of Warwick's, the afternoon also highlighted a call to action. The public was encouraged to donate to BSU's Department of Fine and Performing Arts' Dionne Warwick Theater.

A story shared from a professional musician and BSU's former Fine and Performing Arts Department Chair, Dr. Clarence Knight, Jr., further revealed the significance of the special day. Knight, who retired in 2015, noticed that the old fine and performing arts department's building facility was not large enough.

"We shared it with a lot of other departments. The acoustics were terrible," Knight said.

He stated that the newer building is acoustically sound. Knight explained that a former president of Bowie State University put him in charge of the

building project. He investigated what needed to be done to construct a building in the state of Maryland. The result was the current theater where Warwick's relationship with Bowie State University was solidified.

"I'm mostly proud of the fact that Ms. Warwick is putting her name on something that I helped build," Knight said, referring to the venue. "Ms. Warwick, I just love you. I appreciate you so, so much and thank you for allowing us to use your name to make this a more dynamic place for all of these young people that we're trying to support."

BSU is the oldest HBCU in Maryland. The university's academic community and supporters hope to bring additional programming and events to the recently named venue.

"I also want you to know, this theater bearing my name, I do not lend my name to everything. This is something that I am not only very, very happy but proud to be able to say 'yes.'" Warwick reminded.

Breaux read a proclamation to the audience who attended the program.

She explained that it will be added into BSU's archives.

"The resolution for Ms. Dionne Warwick reads, 'Whereas Ms. Dionne Warwick began singing in church during her childhood years in East Orange, New Jersey, and began singing professionally in 1961, after being discovered by Burt Bacharach, and Hal David and whereas Ms. Ward's 1963 performance in Paris, France skyrocketed her to international stardom, and she has earned 75 charted hit songs and sold over 100 million records,'" Breaux said.

Thunderous applause erupted as Breaux reminded attendees of Warwick's musical accomplishments that include winning Grammy Awards, induction into the Hollywood Walk of Fame, the R&B Music Hall of Fame and the Apollo Theater Walk of Fame. The international icon's 60-year career has included support of causes and charities such as AIDS, children's hospitals, world hunger, disaster relief and music education.

Warwick broke barriers. She also became the first African American solo

female artist of her generation to win a GRAMMY award for Best Contemporary, Female Vocalist Performance.

A dance rendition of "Then Came You" followed with eclectic performances including a saxophone serenade. Congratulatory video messages included remarks from Maryland's Governor Wes Moore to actor Tom Selleck and rapper Doug E. Fresh. Vocalist Tamara Wellons, Miss 1999 Bowie State University and president of the DC Chapter of the GRAMMYS performed Warwick's hit "Deja Vu."

Singer BeBe Winans belted out a rendition of "Amazing Grace" in the newly named theater as Warwick watched smiling.

"She has been a friend. She has been a door opener and she has been consistent, and her heart is even better than her voice," Winans said. **BT**



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Ravens Mock Draft Roundup

By Tyler Hamilton

The 2023 NFL Draft is now less than three weeks away. The Baltimore Ravens hold the No. 22 overall pick. Their team needs include wide receiver, offensive line, cornerback, EDGE and possibly running back.

As we get closer to draft day, more and more mock drafts are made available to us. Let's take a look at what direction some of the various draft analysts have the Ravens going.

Todd McShay, ESPN

Quentin Johnston, WR, TCU

I like the idea of the big 6-3 receiver in new coordinator Todd Monken's offense. Johnston is still refining his route running, but he has a big catch radius, can make plays in the vertical pass game and will pick up chunks of yardage after the catch. The Ravens averaged 12.2 yards per catch on throws to wideouts last season (23rd in the NFL), so having a player like

Johnston on the outside could take the offense to another level.

Daniel Jeremiah, FL Network

Joey Porter Jr., CB, Penn State

How fun would this be? Joey Porter to the Ravens. That just sounds amazing. He would be a tremendous value at a position of need for Baltimore.

Mike Tannenbaum, ESPN

Zay Flowers, WR, Boston College

Mark Andrews led the Ravens in receiving last season with 848 yards. The next closest player? Demarcus Robinson at 458 yards. No Ravens wide receiver scored more than three times and the only addition this offseason has been Nelson

Agholor. Rashod Bateman, a 2021 first-rounder, has missed 16 games over the past two seasons, too. Long story short, the

Ravens desperately need a difference-making wideout. Flowers has game-breaking speed and quickness, and he posted tremendous numbers last season with 78 catches for 1,077 yards and 12 touchdowns.

Bucky Brooks, NFL Network

Jaxon Smith-Njigba, WR, Ohio State

Perhaps new offensive coordinator Todd Monken can create a scheme that maximizes pass catchers on the perimeter while retaining the physicality of Baltimore's running game. Smith-Njigba is a polished pass catcher with the route-running skills and hands to thrive against one-on-one coverage at the next level.

The Draft Network

Jordan Addison, WR, USC

Let's assume Lamar Jackson remains a Raven in 2023. If so, adding wide receiver talent is important. Jordan Addison would be a nice complement to Rashod Bateman and Devin Duvernay at the wide receiver position. His route-running and ability to find soft spots in zone as a quick passing option would benefit this offense.

USA Today Sports

Devon Witherspoon, CB, Illinois

Darius Slay revealed this weekend on his podcast that he was "this close" to linking up with Baltimore before

returning to the Eagles. That pursuit should make clear that a team that has been otherwise nearly motionless in free agency is on the hunt for a cornerback opposite Marlon Humphrey. In this scenario, the Ravens follow up last year's Kyle Hamilton selection by again landing another dynamic playmaker in coverage who drops further in the first round than many expected.

The Sporting News

Cam Smith, CB, South Carolina

The rise of the other corners means the Ravens can benefit by getting Smith, the former consensus No. 1 prospect at the position. Smith did look pretty smooth in the positional drills to think he will be a solid plug-and-play starter replacing Marcus Peters.

Pro Football Network

Bryan Bresee, DL, Clemson

As football becomes more and more positionless, writing about the game becomes as frustrating as it is rewarding. Yes, Bryan Bresee was a defensive tackle for Clemson. However, some of his best tape actually came from him playing as a 5-technique, and he has the length, strength and athletic ability to blur the line between EDGE and DT. Injuries and personal tragedy harmed his production in 2022, but that could mean Baltimore gets him at a discount. **BT**



Zay Flowers

Photo credit: Getty Images

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Sealed Bids or Proposals, in duplicate addressed to the Board of Estimates of the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore and marked for **SANITARY CONTRACT NO. 978-Small Diameter Sewer Main Replacement in Roland Park of the Jones Falls Sewershed** will be received at the Office of the Comptroller, Room 204 City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland until 11:00 A.M. on **May 3, 2023**. Positively no bids will be received after 11:00 A.M. Bids will be publicly opened by the Board of Estimates and can be watched live on CharmTV's cable channel 25/1085HD; charmtvbaltimore.com/watch-live or listen in at (443) 984-1696 (ACCESS CODE: 0842939) from City Hall at Noon. The Contract Documents may be examined, without charge, at Contract Administration 4 South Frederick Street Baltimore, Maryland 21202 on the 3rd floor (410) 396-4041 as of **April 7, 2023** and copies may be purchased for a non-refundable cost of **250.00**. **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 OBC at 4 S Frederick St., 4th Floor, Baltimore, MD 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 **B02552 – Sewer Construction or G90099 – Cured-in-Place Pipe Lining**. Cost Qualification Range for this work shall be **\$20,000,000.01 to \$30,000,000.00**.

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This project is a recipient of the State Revolving Loan
This is a State Funded Job.

The DBE/MBE goal is **22%**

The DBE/WBE goal is **16%**

APPROVED:
Clerk, Board of Estimates

APPROVED:
Jason W. Mitchell
Director
Department of Public Works

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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
OFFICE OF ENGINEERING AND CONSTRUCTION
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Sealed Bids or Proposals, in duplicate addressed to the Board of Estimates of the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore and marked for **WATER CONTRACT NO. 1435-Urgent Need Water Infrastructure Rehabilitation and Improvements Phase III-FY22** will be received at the Office of the Comptroller, Room 204 City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland until 11:00 A.M. on **May 3, 2023**. Positively no bids will be received after 11:00 A.M. Bids will be publicly opened by the Board of Estimates and can be watched live on CharmTV's cable channel 25/1085HD; charmtvbaltimore.com/watch-live or listen in at (443) 984-1696 (ACCESS CODE: 0842939) from City Hall at Noon. The Contract Documents may be examined, without charge, at Contract Administration 4 South Frederick Street Baltimore, Maryland 21202 on the 3rd floor (410) 396-4041 as of **April 7, 2023** and copies may be purchased for a non-refundable cost of **100.00**. **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 OBC at 4 S Frederick St., 4th Floor, Baltimore, MD 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 **B02551 – Water Mains**. Cost Qualification Range for this work shall be **\$10,000,000.01 to \$15,000,000.00**.

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The MBE goal is **10%**

The WBE goal is **4%**

APPROVED:
Clerk, Board of Estimates

APPROVED:
Jason W. Mitchell
Director
Department of Public Works

VISIT BALTIMORE PUBLIC HEARING ON THE BALTIMORE TOURISM IMPROVEMENT
DISTRICT FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024
FINANCIAL PLAN

The District Management Committee of Visit Baltimore will meet on Friday, April 21, 2023, at 10:00 AM at a virtual public meeting hosted by Visit Baltimore to conduct a public hearing on the Baltimore Tourism Improvement District (BTID) FY2023-24 Financial Plan. The public hearing is a requirement of Article II, §70 of the Baltimore City Charter, and Article 14, §20 of the Baltimore City Code. At the public virtual hearing, the District Management Committee will review the BTID FY2023-24 Financial Plan for approval. The BTID FY2023-24 Financial Plan includes the proposed budget and BTID special assessments to be levied on any "Hotel" as defined in City Code Article 28, §21-1(c). The FY2023-24 Financial Plan will also outline proposed services to be provided by the BTID. If approved, the FY2023-24 Financial Plan will be submitted to Baltimore City Board of Estimates for final approval. The public hearing will allow for public comment on the FY2023-2024 Financial Plan. For more information and registration link contact: Mia Blom, Visit Baltimore's Sr. Director of Government & Community Affairs at 410-659-8373 or mblom@baltimore.org

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