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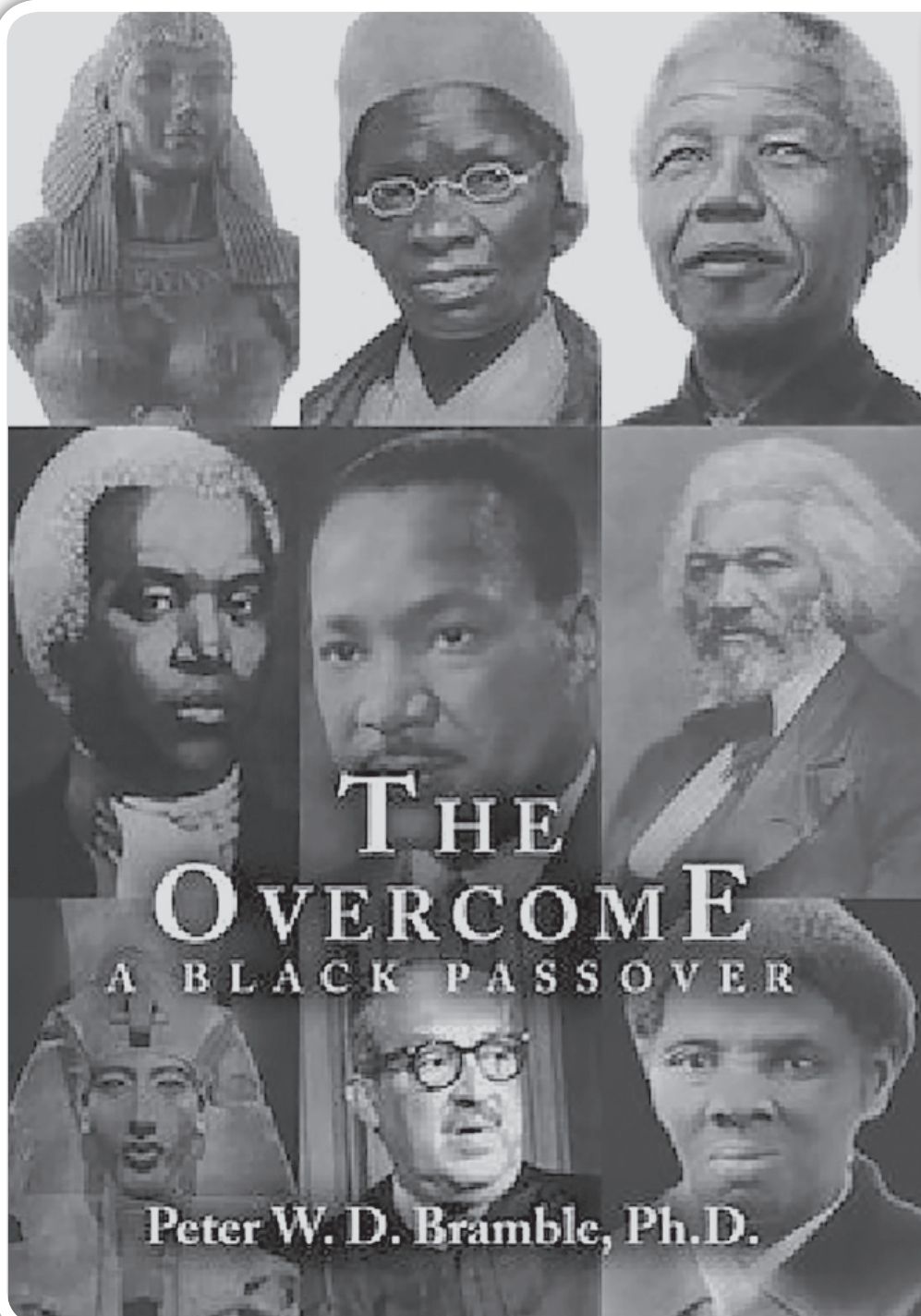
## A Call to Celebrate April 4th, as Overcomers Day: The Day Martin Luther King Jr. was Sacrificed!

By Peter Bramble

Thirty years ago, the spirit of the times elevated the Civil Rights Movement led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr who taught us that going forward, all people should be judged by “the content of their character and not the color of their skin.” That was perceived to be the closing argument of the Civil Rights Movement. No one at that time conceived that thirty years later the mantra: “to judge people by the content of their character rather than by the color of their skin,” would be canceled with the introduction of a new doctrine being propagated known as “Critical Race Theory” (CRT), which claims the very opposite of what the icon of the Civil Rights Movement, (MLK) lived, taught and died to establish.

“The Overcome, A Black Passover,” was written to install into the thinking of Blacks the fact that what they had fought for through the struggles of their foreparents had now been accomplished. All that was needed now was a new logic, a new way to interpret the fights (struggles) in such a way as to claim victory. CRT does the opposite. It directly cancels Dr. King’s message and in effect claims that there has been little progress over the years. Nothing much has been achieved after all these years of struggle and fighting for equality, because CRT claims that Blacks are effectively, because of their Black skin, which is an immutable characteristic, forever locked into an inferior status, when compared to whites who they claim have special white privileges. CRT locks Blacks into a permanent state of victimhood.

See **OVERCOME**, on page 3



# Morgan State University Achieves Record High for Single Year Patents Awarded, Topping All HBCUs Nationwide

By Morgan State University

**Baltimore** – Morgan State University (MSU) has set a record among all Historically Black College Universities (HBCUs) by obtaining the highest number of patent awards in a calendar year. In 2023, MSU secured 13 patents, surpassing the previous HBCU record of 11. This accomplishment results from the university's rapid growth in innovation and technology programs. Morgan began pursuing technology patents only eight years ago, making this an even more remarkable achievement. The annual patent increase further bolsters Morgan's efforts to become a more nationally recognized research university.

Collaborative research can generate inventive concepts and create complexity in ownership rights. The Division of Research and Economic Development (D-RED) supports and guides MSU faculty in their research efforts by managing grants and contracts that help fund faculty research activity. Additionally, the division is the first point of contact for companies interested in collaborating with MSU researchers. In 2018, the Office of Technology Transfer (OTT) was established to help faculty, staff, and students with intellectual property-related issues that may arise from their academic research or creative pursuits. As part of D-RED, the OTT assists with patent applications, trademarks and copyrights, and other forms of intellectual property (IP).

Overall, Morgan has been issued 32 U.S. Utility Patents and is currently



*Wayne Swann,  
Director of the D-RED  
Office of Technology Transfer  
Courtesy photo*

on a path to be awarded an average of at least one new patent per month throughout 2024. The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) granted the university's first patent in 2016, followed by a second one in 2018. By the end of 2023, Morgan elevated to the fifth-highest cumulative total of U.S. Utility Patents awarded to an HBCU.

In higher education, universities often transfer technology from research innovations discovered by their faculty, staff, and students to businesses and industries. This process helps in the development of products and services for public use. OTT oversees identifying potential patentable subject matter generated from Morgan's research efforts, which is a multi-year process. To determine

the viability and exclusivity of the innovation, the university partners with an outside IP firm to prepare and file U.S. patent applications. An application must be filed with the USPTO to secure a patent, followed by a complex review and examination process.

"Reaching an all-time high in the number of U.S. patents issued to an HBCU in a single year is certainly a testament to the innovative spirit at Morgan," said Wayne Swann, director of the D-RED Office of Technology Transfer. "It is, however, a mere slice of the array of intellectual outputs and outcomes generated from research conducted by faculty, staff and students at Morgan. For the past five years, we have received an average of a new Intellectual property disclosure every 12 days."

Morgan has more than 35 U.S. Utility patents currently pending at the USPTO, and is filing new patent applications monthly. Under Wayne Swann's direction, OTT has successfully navigated the complex patent process in higher education. Swann emphasizes, "Of Morgan's 35 pending patents, three applications have recently been allowed. As we file new U.S. patent applications every month, I certainly expect our rate of patent awards to continue for some time."

The Office of Technology Transfer supports D-RED's mission to create an innovative research ecosystem among faculty, students, and the surrounding community by implementing best practices commonly used in U.S. research

universities. One of the 2023 patents that emerged from the work of Morgan professors is the Method and System for Intrusion Detection. This invention relates to monitoring data network traffic to identify and respond to unauthorized intrusions into a data network. The inventors of this invention are Wondimu K. Zegeye, D.Eng., Richard A. Dean, Ph.D., and Farzad Moazzami, Ph.D., of the Clarence M. Mitchell School of Engineering (SOE).

Another of the 13 patents issued to Morgan inventors in 2023 significantly impacts the urban community, specifically public housing. The innovative computer-based tool, "System and Method for Public Housing Evaluation," creates an adaptive and dynamic index to assess the public housing environment. It provides insight into the possibility of individuals being able to live outside of public housing and improving the current state and quality of life inside public housing complexes. This invention was created by Jacqueline Holland, Ph.D., an associate professor and chair of the Department of Family & Consumer Sciences in the School of Education and Urban Studies (SEUS).

To view a comprehensive list of Morgan State's innovative research-based patent projects, visit the issued patents page at <https://www.morgan.edu/technology-transfer-and-intellectual-property/issued-patents>.

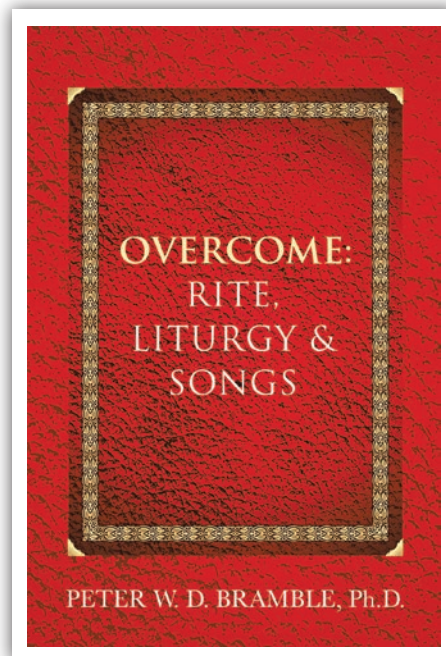
# Overcome

Continued from page 1

The attempt to crystalize into history the interpretation of the Black experience in such a way as to make them eternal “under comers” or victims, despite the great achievements of Blacks over the years, cannot be allowed to stand. A new way of interpreting what came out of centuries of Black struggles must be presented. No sensible race has ever interpreted their lives and struggles in such a way as to make them eternal losers! Rather, they interpret the facts of their history in a way to make them victorious in the end. Blacks are blessed with so many victories that can confirm their new status as Overcomers of the worse atrocities that could have been inflicted on a people. In the Overcome story, we do not diminish the atrocities. As a matter of fact, however bad they are currently described, we want to suggest that these hurts could be 1,000 times worse, and yet we overcame them to the point where we have had a two-term president of the United States of America and a Black vice president. The greater the atrocity suffered, the greater the victory over them should be celebrated.

There are currently no laws in the federal, state or local governments of America that can be classified as anti-Black. To the contrary, there are many laws, affirmative action laws, that favor Blacks. And it is to be hoped that in the future, when MLK’s doctrine of judging humans by “the content of their character and not color of their skin” is fully implemented, even such laws favorable to Blacks will be no longer needed.

The Overcome is presented here as the needed and necessary rite of passage for Blacks from the stage of victimhood, promoted and celebrated by those who profit from victimhood, to the new status where Blacks are seen, through the victories of those who have gone before, as Overcomers of victimhood. The rite should be



celebrated on April 4th, the day when MLK was sacrificed for us—Black people.

A RITE OF PASSAGE is an event, a ceremony or action that marks an important happening in the stage of development of an individual, a people or nation. There are rites of passage at birth, puberty, marriage, menopause and death. There are rites of passage when colonies become nations. The colonial flag is lowered for the last time as the national flag of the new nation is raised for the first time! These rites mark stages in development. They create the before/after thereby establishing the change in situation and character, in the case of Blacks, from victims to victors. The Overcome is the rite of passage for Blacks from victim status to Victor’s status. Overcome (to overcome or shall overcome) a verb that we are boldly changing into a noun, The Overcome. And just as the Jews changed the verb “passover” into the noun “The Passover,” the Overcome will become the rite/ceremony whereby Black people leave the status of victimhood to assume the status of Victors over victimhood. They will change the verb “shall overcome” to the noun, “The Overcome” via this simple rite and go forward living as overcomers, capable of overcoming all obstacles, small or

large placed in their future path. This will effectively mark the time when the culture changes its functional character from victimhood to victor status, not so much from their own efforts, but by the struggles and victories won by their ancestors.

Also, included in this new offering are original sketches of some of those ancestors who have contributed to the Overcome by being examples of people who despite real hardships and intentional actions to make them losers, fought the good fight and did not only survive multitudes of atrocities, but “overcame” them in more difficult circumstances, thereby assuring present and future generations that just as they were able to overcome the massive negatives of their time, so can present and future generations. Some of these past overcomers who now form what we will name “The Pantheon of Overcomers” are presented. Many more, living and dead will be added to the “Pantheon of Overcomers” over millennia to come, but no living person can join the pantheon. They must first complete their life in this world and be certified by their deeds before entering this great company/pantheon of victorious Overcomers, whom we are asked to remember, celebrate and emulate.

In this new offering of The Overcome, the rite of passage is presented first. The rest of the work then argues the logic, the reasoning, the purpose and the need for such a rite of passage. We hope most Blacks would do the rite and through that act become Overcomers as they move into their futures. It’s a terrible thing to die believing that your life and the life of those who went before were for naught, because you choose to live your life as a victim even to the very end. What a discredit to the life of all those who fought and died for the victory we can celebrate as Overcomers through their life’s work.

The OVERCOME RITE offers a fix to a way of perceiving and interpreting history. It says that the hardships, the evil intentionally wrought against Blacks, bad as they

were, actually did a great thing for us: it forged us into a new people who having overcome all that evil are now poised and steeled to overcome whatever any current or future oppressor plans for us. Let all people know, now, that we are the overcomers. We do not sing “we shall overcome someday day” anymore! That was the working song. Through MLK and all those who went before, we declare that we have indeed Overcome. We are the Overcomers. It is our new character trait to overcome all things negative. And we will.

In the next stage, after celebrating the rite of passage of the Overcome, we build all the lifesaving, life authenticating and life sustaining institutions—profit and non-profit—needed to prove and demonstrate that we are indeed The Overcomers.

One last point to note is that in the Overcome Rite, we do not name people who are still alive. Why? While they are alive, they could make massive mistakes that disqualify them from joining the pantheon of past overcomers. That is the reason why people as great as President Obama and Oprah Winfrey cannot be added yet. They most likely will be added to the pantheon after their death when they join Martin Luther King, Jr and Nelson Mandela among the great number of freedom fighters who fought and won the victories which give us the evidence we need to proclaim and celebrate that we are no longer victims trapped by the color of our skin, but victors and Overcomers who did not just survive countless atrocities, but triumphed and became stronger. We remember that just as steel is forged in fire, so our new character as Overcomers was forged through the trials and struggles of our ancestors who worked so hard to get us to this new status in life.

Companion books: “The Overcome, A Black Passover” and “Overcome: Rite, Liturgy and Songs,” written by Peter Bramble can be purchased from Amazon and other booksellers. (These books explain in detail the concepts and the rite of Overcome).

## Mothers of Invention

By Karen Clay

Clay Technology and Multimedia, L.L.C.

As we approach the last days of our nation's annual focus on the contributions of women in our society, this article will focus on four women whose contributions were so significant that it gave birth to a new era in terms of how we now experience the world. Innovation, at its core, resembles the profound act of giving birth: it begins with conception, followed by a period of gestation and growth, and finally, the introduction of a new entity into the world. This analogy beautifully articulates the journey of women who have harnessed the power of technology to give birth to inventions that redefine our experienced reality. Just as a mother brings forth life, these visionary women have brought forth technologies and achievements that have not only advanced society, but have also paved the way for future generations. Among these trailblazers are Radia Perlman, Katherine Johnson, Hedy Lamarr, and Arlan Hamilton—each a mother of invention in her own right, whose contributions have indelibly shaped the world in which we live.

**Radia Perlman**, dubbed the “Mother of the Internet,” revolutionized computer networking when she developed the algorithm behind the Spanning Tree Protocol (STP), an innovation that made today's Internet possible. STP is a fundamental element that ensures the reliability of the Ethernet (wired) network, preventing errors and allowing for the expansion of networks without interruption. Perlman's work laid the groundwork for the complex, interconnected digital world we navigate today. Her vision and expertise have been instrumental in the development of subsequent networking protocols, securing her a place among

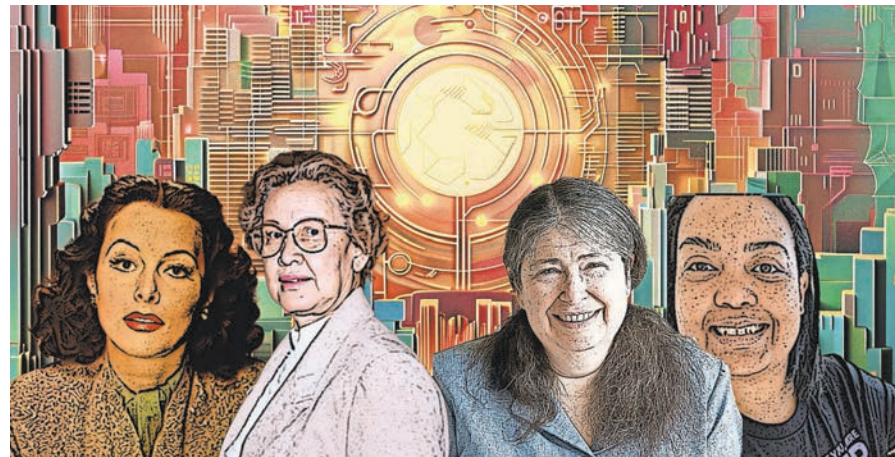


*Karen Clay,  
Clay Technology and Multimedia  
Courtesy, Karen Clay*

the pioneers who have structured the vast cyberspace that connects the global community.

**Katherine Johnson**, one of the “hidden figures” of NASA and a mathematician whose genius propelled the United States into space, played a pivotal role at NASA during the space race. Her calculations of orbital mechanics were crucial for the success of the first U.S. crewed spaceflights, including John Glenn's orbit around Earth and the Apollo 11 mission to the moon. Johnson's work transcended the barriers of race and gender, showcasing the extraordinary contributions of Black women to science and technology. Her legacy is a testament to the power of intellect and perseverance, inspiring generations to reach for the stars, both literally and metaphorically.

**Hedy Lamarr**, better known as a Hollywood movie star, was also a brilliant inventor whose contributions to technology were way ahead of her time. She co-invented a frequency-hopping spread spectrum technology during World War II, that was intended to prevent enemy interception of



*Women who have “given birth” to significant innovations in technology. Left to Right: Hedy Lamarr, Katherine Johnson, Radia Pearlman, Arlan Hamilton*

*Photo credit: Hedy Lamarr, Katherine Johnson, Radia Pearlman: Public Domain; Arlan Hamilton: [linkedin.com/in/arlanhamilton/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/arlanhamilton/) Graphic Design: Karen Clay*

Allied torpedoes. Though initially overlooked, her invention later became a cornerstone in the development of modern wireless communication technologies such as Wi-Fi, Bluetooth and GPS. Hedy's work exemplifies the multifaceted talents of women and highlights the often-underappreciated role of creativity in technological innovation.

**Arlan Hamilton**, representing a new generation of mothers of invention, used her keen insight and determination to give birth to opportunities for underrepresented entrepreneurs in the tech industry. Keeping with our analogy of giving birth, I would call Hamilton the “midwife” of access to venture capital in the tech space. As a Black woman and the founder of Backstage Capital, Hamilton has tirelessly worked to dismantle the barriers that women, people of color, and LGBTQ+ individuals face in the venture capital world. Her efforts have funneled millions of dollars into startups that defy traditional investment patterns, showcasing the untapped

potential and innovation within these communities. Hamilton's legacy is one of inclusivity and empowerment, proving that the future of technology is brighter and more diverse thanks to her contributions.

In the realm of invention and innovation, the contributions of these remarkable women resonate with the essence of creation itself. Just as mothers bring forth life and nurture development, these women have nurtured and brought forth technologies and opportunities that have transformed our world. Their legacies, each unique and powerful, remind us that the act of giving birth—whether to ideas, opportunities, or inventions—is a profound source of change. These mothers of invention have not only reshaped the technological landscape but have also inspired countless others to conceive and nurture their own revolutionary ideas. Their stories are a testament to the enduring impact of women's creativity, intellect, and perseverance in forging a better future for all.

# 4 Ways to Fight Inflation-Related Stress and Save Money Now

Lingering challenges around inflation remain top of mind for business leaders nationwide, and even so, almost half (41%) say they're using it as motivation to lay groundwork for future prosperity, according to JPMorgan Chase's 2024 annual Business Leaders Outlook. Eight in 10 leaders are confident about their company's and industry's performance (82%) and have cut non-essential expenses and embraced new technology in preparation for the year.

While you may already be cutting back on spending due to rising costs and an uncertain economic environment, it's important to evaluate your financial situation and consider implementing these lifestyle changes to help reduce inflation-related stress.

## 1. Spend with intention.

Instability in the market can make your finances feel equally unstable, so it's important to set a budget and identify where your money is going each month. Financial tracking tools like a monthly budget worksheet or digital tools like Budget, in the Chase Mobile® app, will help track your spending, allowing you to review and adjust your budget as needed. You also can set alerts to determine how you're doing throughout the month. Having a deeper level of insight will also show you where to consider cutting unnecessary expenses or allocating additional funds.

## 2. Take advantage of credit card rewards.

Many credit cards offer new card member bonuses, cashback and

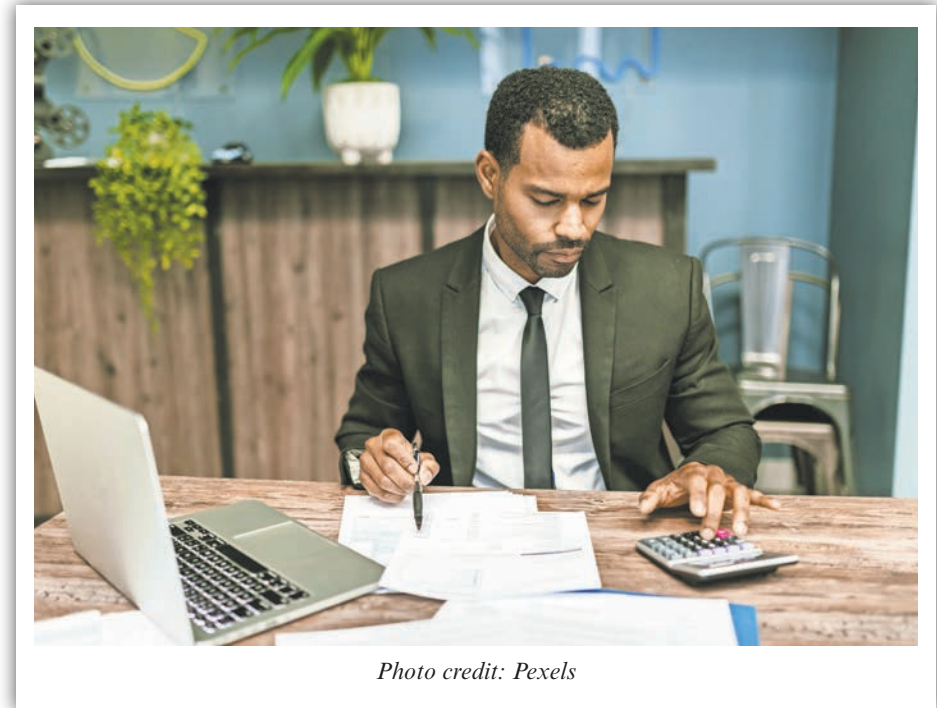


Photo credit: Pexels

rewards that can help you earn more for spending on everyday items like groceries and travel. Look for credit cards that essentially pay you back by earning more when you spend on eligible categories, including gas, groceries and utilities.

## 3. Save for an emergency fund.

Getting in the habit of saving is key, and how much you should save for an emergency fund will depend on your income and spending habits. Setting aside cash – ideally between three and six months of living expenses – will help prepare you for unexpected expenses. Consider anticipated expenses like rent, utilities, debts and food. Having an emergency fund will help ease stressful situations that can arise without warning.

## 4. Search for investments with better returns.

The uncertain global economy has created pronounced peaks and valleys in the market over the last year. Now is a good time to reevaluate your asset mix and search for options that can protect your wealth from inflation. Consider consulting a financial advisor to create a personalized financial strategy that may include investments in things like savings bonds and commodities.

Visit [chase.com/personal/financial-goals](https://chase.com/personal/financial-goals) to learn more about how JPMorgan Chase can help you combat inflation-related stress.

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# Third Annual HBCU All-Star Game to be Held, Televised April 7 on CBS

By Andrea Blackstone

An HBCU Black college basketball experience will be coming to Phoenix, Arizona and on television sets live during 2024 NCAA Men’s Final Four Weekend. The HBCU All-Star Game will be held on Sunday, April 7, 2024 at Grand Canyon University Global Credit Union Arena at 1 p.m. PST/4:00 EST. The game, which will air on CBS Television Network and stream on Paramount+, will comprise the nation’s top 24 HBCU All-Stars players who complete the rosters of Team Ben Wallace and Team Rick Mahorn.

“The 24 players that have been selected from our 2023-24 basketball season and top 65 Watch List represent the best in college basketball at our country’s esteemed Historically Black Colleges and Universities,” said All-Stars LLC Founder and CEO Travis L. Williams in a press release. “For the past five months, I have been on an amazing HBCU All-Stars national promotional tour across the country talking about this God-driven vision providing E.A.R. and O.R.R. (Exposure, Access, Recognition, Opportunities, Resources, and Results) for our proud and prestigious HBCUs, hard-working, talented, ambitious, deserving students, student-athletes, and brilliant coaches across the country.”

HBCU All-Stars, LLC is headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia. It was founded in 2019 with the mission to advocate, educate, expose, mentor and invest in talented students, student-athletes and coaches who work at HBCUs.

Ambitious HBCU players deserve to shine in the spotlight on an elite platform. Their talent and potential is greater than the limited exposure of yesteryear. While all of them may not be NBA bound, there are notable NBA players who attended HBCUs such as Earl “The Pearl” Monroe of



**Travis Williams,**  
*HBCU All-Star Game founder*  
Photo credit: HBCU All-Stars, LLC

Winston-Salem and Robert Covington, a Tennessee State University alum who plays for the Philadelphia 76ers.

This year’s Top 24 HBCU All-Stars includes Seth Towns.

“The HBCU All-Star Game celebrates the best of the best in HBCU basketball,” said Seth Towns, a Howard University basketball player. “I’m grateful to have the opportunity to represent Howard proudly.”

Williams also explained that HBCU All-Star Game players represent the four premiere Black college conferences –The Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference; the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference; Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association; and independent HBCUs.

“We represent 49 participating HBCUs within the four conferences.”

Williams divulged that he grew up in Tifton, Georgia. Sports became a way for him to cope after his single mother passed away at the age of 30.

“Basketball was kind of my refuge to keep me off the streets. During that time, it was like my sacred space,” Williams explained.

He still uses his late mother’s untimely death to motivate him. A milestone included becoming the first person in his family to attend and graduate from college. He attended Georgia



*Top HBCU athletes from across the country play against each other to determine the best of the best during the 2023 HBCU All-Star game.*  
Photo credit: HBCU All-Stars, LLC

State University on a full basketball scholarship. He later became a college coach who worked with student-athletes at HBCUs, including his alma mater.

“In October 2019, after 17 successful years of coaching, God placed a vision in my spirit and said, ‘You’re no longer going to coach anymore. I’m putting something in your spirit that’s going to change the trajectory of our Historically Black Colleges and Universities,’” said Williams, recounting parts of his journey.

He told his wife, Kaya Williams that he would focus on building a Black-owned sports marketing, events and media company. Kaya serves as the chief financial officer and co-founder of HBCU All-Stars. The couple is making notable moves.

“This is history in the making once again to host the first ever HBCU All-Star Game in the “Valley of the Sun” (Arizona) and in a part of the country where HBCUs do not exist,” Travis said.

The HBCU All-Star Game Experience kicks off the week of Tuesday, April 2, 2024 and concludes April 9, 2024. Kaya and Travis are answering the call to elevate HBCU players, culture and coaches while amplifying community voices and needs. Ancillary events are



**Seth Towns**  
Photo credit: Howard Athletics

held around the game including an HBCU college fair for high schoolers; an event-related internship component; a Black business expo for entrepreneurs; connected community initiatives; a social justice luncheon; civil rights panel discussion; an HBCU All-Star Pro Day Combine; and an awards ceremony.

Coaches and legendary careers of HBCU players are also integrated into the HBCU All-Stars’ platform.

“Our goal is to always pay homage to our HBCU legends,” Travis said. “We are able to amplify everybody in this.”

Visit [www.hbcuallstargame.com](http://www.hbcuallstargame.com) and follow @hbcuallstargame, to learn more about the HBCU All-Star Game, ancillary events and tickets.



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# Mother Makes Unselfish Organ Donation Decision, Saves Stranger's Life

By Andrea Blackstone

Pamela (Pam) Howard, a Charles County resident, knows what it is like to face a tough decision about a loved one's legacy.

Her son, Anthony Howard, was 26 years old when tragedy struck on September 1, 2018. He was a joyful music lover and "boy next door" type who was employed as a case manager that helped people.

"A friend found Anthony unresponsive and called 911," said his mother, Pamela Howard. "On the 10th day [of September], he was declared brain dead."

After Anthony's brain activity was tested a final time, Pamela was faced with making a big decision. Initially, she did not want to donate her son's organs at the time of his passing. When a Washington Regional Transplant Center (WRTC) representative who had spoken with her about organ donation turned to walk away, Pamela abruptly changed her mind.

Anthony's mother stated that her son had always been a giver who would help anyone. He possessed a smile that could light up a room. Circumstances took his illuminating expression, rendering it a sweet memory, but Pamela embraced the courage to do something. She decided to allow her son's heart, kidneys, liver and various organs to be donated to help others who needed them.

WRTC mailed a letter to Pam thanking her for donating her son's organs. She was given brief information about each recipient.

"I wanted those people to take care of what they had gotten to know and



*Pamela Howard and her son, Anthony Howard.*

*Photo courtesy of Pamela Howard*



*Pamela Howard listens to her son's heart that was transplanted into Dean Elgin. Courtesy photo*

connect with Anthony more than just an organ. I wanted them to know who he was. So, I wrote letters to my family advocator. She sent letters to the families. Everybody responded except for the woman who received a kidney," Pamela recalled.

Dean Elgin received Anthony's donated heart. Elgin met Pamela because she reached out to people who received her son's organs.

Elgin recounted how he connected personally with Pamela.

"There are many rules to the transplant process to protect the privacy of both donor and recipient. If either wants to reach out to the other, they send a letter to what was then called the Washington Regional Transplant Center (now Infinite Legacy). The staff notifies the parties that a letter has come and asks if they want it. I'm not much of a writer, so we actually got a note from Pam first. They asked if we wanted to meet, which of course we did! So, we met for the first time at WRTC," he said.

Anthony's heart donation saved Elgin's life.

"My heart had been failing for a few years and I had to use something called a left ventricular assist device or LVAD, which is a battery-operated heart machine. The doctors determined a heart transplant was the only way to keep me alive. Anthony's heart came at the right time for me and was the right size," Elgin explained. "I am extremely grateful to Anthony and his family. It is emotional to know I benefited from someone else's tragedy. Their decision and generosity have given me the ability to have a good life. It is beyond words. It is a miracle."

Pamela met her son's thankful donor and his wife, Carina Elgin, in 2019. Then, Pamela had another experience that money could not buy.

Pamela added, "I heard Anthony's heartbeat. It made me really understand the gift of giving as an organ donor. Hearing his heartbeat gave me calm in the midst of what I was going through."

She was informed that Elgin was able to walk his daughter down the aisle. That probably would not have happened if Pamela had not allowed her son's organs to be donated on that difficult day.

Elgin added, "I would have been dead five years ago without Anthony's gift, and I have expectations to live a long life. It is overwhelming to try to express my gratitude.

"I encourage everyone to consider becoming a donor."

Anthony's mother believes that her son's purpose was greater in his death than it was in his living. She became an organ donor and volunteer ambassador for what is now Infinite Legacy. Pamela began educating people about false narratives connected to organ donation by providing accurate information at events.

Pamela also started The A-Sicka Heals Foundation (ASHF) in 2019. The nonprofit organization raises awareness about mental illness and substance abuse, to prevent children and young adults from developing addictions, in memory of Anthony. Scholarships for college-bound graduates have been provided through it.

"I encourage everyone to consider becoming a donor," Elgin said.

Please visit Donate Life Maryland via <https://www.donatelifemaryland.org/> to learn more about organ, eye and tissue donation.



## Woman of Passion, Woman of Purpose

# COO Strikes Work-life Balance as a Mother, Wife and Community Leader

By Andrea Blackstone

Keiva Rodriques is an industrious woman of many talents. She serves as Chief Operating Officer (COO) for the Maryland Aviation Administration, while striking a work-life balance as an attentive mother, wife and community leader.

The career woman reflected on being reared in Baltimore by her parents and first mentors, Valerie Hughes and Charles Hughes. Rodriques attended Baltimore Polytechnic Institute in her youth which prepared her to pursue engineering.

“At the time, I didn’t know I wanted to be an engineer. I thought I wanted to be an architect, but I talked to one of my drafting teachers and told him what I wanted to do, and that I wanted to do something in urban development,” Rodriques said. “I wanted to build and do something where I could come back to the city and make it beautiful. And he said, ‘Well, you don’t want to be an architect. You want to go into civil engineering.’”

Years of focused preparation yielded earned rewards and abilities to make enriching contributions. Rodriques majored in civil engineering at University of Maryland, College Park before earning an MBA from University of Baltimore. She now sits on the Women in Engineering Advisory Board for the University of Maryland, College Park School of Engineering. She looks forward to new opportunities to contribute advice and encouragement.

“I went to the University of

Maryland, College Park’s Alumni Affairs Office and told them I wanted to get involved. I told them that I think there is a need for someone to represent aviation as a part of a potential career path for future engineers, and to also be an example for young women who may also be interested in construction management [project management] but may feel uncomfortable in those spaces because there are not many women who look like them.”

Rodriques has been serving as COO in her day job for approximately eight months.

“My core duties include oversight of all internal affairs for the Maryland Aviation Administration, and that also means that I am second in command to the Chief Executive Officer, and our Executive Director, Ricky Smith. I directly oversee our divisions of Administration and Performance Management, which I like to refer to as our people services,” Rodriques said. “I also oversee our division of BWI Operations & Maintenance; our division of Martin State [Airport] Operations & Maintenance; our division of Airport Technology and Innovation; and our division of Planning & Engineering.” Rodriques—an attentive mother—began working in the aviation field because she wanted to work closer to home and remove the need to commute to D.C.

“I was newly married. I had a new baby. Being a mom is a huge part of my life,” she further explained, stating that her family is her number one priority. “I found a construction management job with a firm with a

contract at the airport.

Her initial opportunity was approximately eight years ago. Rodriques has accomplished a great deal while climbing higher, including fostering equity, diversity and inclusion.

“I currently serve as the Chair of the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee for the Northeast Chapter of the American Association of Airport Executives. As the chair, I am responsible for promoting, not only diversity, equity and inclusion within our airports in the Northeast chapter, but also for educating... our other aviation partners and our other airport counterparts on how we need to look at operating as an airport; how we serve our community through the lens of diversity, equity and inclusion, because we don’t serve just one section of the community. We serve all of the community,” said Rodriques, also mentioning that she sits on the board.

She added that making sure there is representation within the ranks of airport management and transportation is also important to her. Rodriques noted the importance of making sure that everyone from every generation, every ability level and every ethnicity is comfortable in spaces.

Rodriques, who is a part of other committees, boards and volunteer opportunities, also makes time to contribute to Breaking Down



**Keiva Rodriques,**  
**Chief Operating Officer for the**  
**Maryland Aviation Administration**  
*Photo credit: Donovan Eaton*

Barriers (a nonprofit that removes barriers for underrepresented individuals who aspire to become pilots); Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland; and the Girl Scouts of Central Maryland.

Despite her many achievements, Rodriques acknowledged the value of impactful family support.

“I couldn’t do any of this without the support of my husband. He is a great advisor and so supportive. His more consistent schedule really helps to keep our daughter on a routine when I’m traveling or supporting other things outside of my day-to-day work activities,” Rodriques said.

## Baltimore Bridge Catastrophe: A City's Heartbreak and a Nation's Alarm

By Stacy M. Brown

NNPA Newswire Senior National Correspondent  
@StacyBrownMedia

In one of the ultimate nightmares, the Francis Scott Key Bridge, an iconic lifeline for Baltimore's bustling metropolis, was ripped apart in a thunderous clash with a colossal container ship, unleashing chaos in and around Charm City and tragedy for at least seven families. The once-sturdy structure crumbled like paper beneath the vessel's onslaught, sending vehicles plummeting into the icy depths of the Patapsco River below around 1:30 a.m. EST on March 26, 2024.

Officials immediately declared that they didn't suspect terrorism or any sabotage.

Emergency crews raced against time, battling the elements to rescue survivors trapped in the wreckage. At 8:30 a.m.,

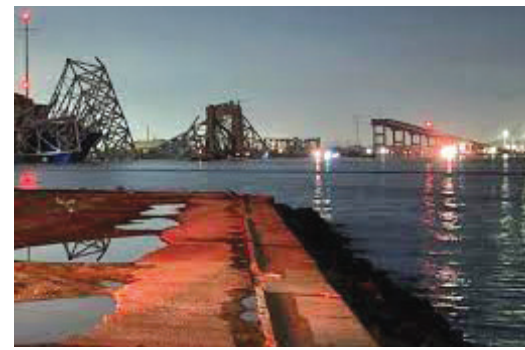
two individuals were reportedly rescued while the search intensified.

One of the victims emerged unscathed, while the other fought for life in the clutches of critical injuries.

"We're facing an unprecedented crisis," declared Baltimore Fire Chief James Wallace, his voice heavy with emotion. "Our priority remains the search and rescue efforts to locate those still missing."

Gov. Wes Moore wasted no time declaring a state of emergency and mobilizing resources and support from across the nation. "We stand united in the face of tragedy," he proclaimed, rallying a city reeling from the catastrophe.

The collision, captured in chilling detail on video, sent shockwaves nationwide, prompting an outpouring of support and solidarity. Helicopters buzzed overhead, casting their searchlights upon the river's surface as



*The once-sturdy structure crumbled like paper beneath the vessel's onslaught, sending vehicles plummeting into the icy depths of the Patapsco River below around 1:30 a.m. EST on March 26, 2024.*

Authorities moved swiftly to quell speculation, assuring the public that there was no evidence of foul play.

Yet, as investigators combed through the wreckage, unease lingered.

In the heart of the chaos, families clung to hope, their prayers echoing across the cityscape. At a nearby convenience store, relatives of the missing gathered in anguished vigil, their eyes filled with tears, their hearts heavy with fear.

The Francis Scott Key Bridge, once a symbol of progress and connectivity, now stands as a monument to tragedy. Built to withstand the test of time, it succumbed to forces beyond its control, leaving a city grappling with the enormity of its loss.

rescuers scoured the waters for signs of life.

As the day wore on, questions swirled amidst the debris. What caused this cataclysmic collision? Was it a tragic accident or something more sinister?

## Maryland Teacher of the Year Hosts Maryland Climate Teach-In Statewide Kick-off at Annapolis High

To help usher in Earth Month, the Maryland Commission on Climate Change's 2024 spokesperson, Mary Kay Connerton, along with Commission officials, and co-founder and co-president of Compostology, will convene at Annapolis High School, on April 3, 2024, where Connerton is a wellness coordinator. Connerton is the 2023-24 Maryland Teacher of the Year.

Compostology was founded in 2020 by two high-schoolers, Advika Agarwal and Angelina Xu with the aim to bring food rescue and diversion to every school



**Mary Kay Connerton**  
Photo courtesy of  
Anne Arundel County  
Public Schools

in Montgomery County, Maryland. Now a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, Compostology is expanding their movement for food waste consciousness nationwide. They fund and collaborate with schools to compost and donate food that would otherwise be wasted—up to 2000 lbs monthly per school—while fighting for policies to make these programs accessible.

The event kicks off the Commission's statewide second Annual Climate Teach-In, during the first week of Earth Month. Community and faith organizations, higher ed, and K-12 schools from every school district in

the state are invited to participate in the Climate Teach-In. The Teach-In is meant for all Marylanders.

**WHAT:** Maryland's 2023-24 Teacher of the Year will host the Maryland Commission on Climate Change's "Maryland Climate Teach-In" on April 3 at Annapolis High School during "Maryland Climate Education Week" (April 1-7). The event will kick-off the statewide initiative and include an inspiring keynote speaker, a yoga and guided meditation segment, and a panel of Climate Change Commission officials talking about the Teach-In, green careers, and other public awareness climate initiatives.

This is a zero-waste event, including the refreshments, and a demonstration of how to compost will be included.

**WHO** (speakers to include):

- AHS Principal Audra Whayland
- Mary Kay Connerton
- ...8 Advika Agarwal of COMPOSTOLOGY, co-founder and co-president of Compostology
- Panel speakers to interact with students: Jabari Walker, Amy Lambert, and Susan Casey, representing the MD Commission on Climate Change.
- High school students, including Green Club members
- College students from the Bowie State University Green Ambassadors

**WHEN:** Wednesday, April 3, 2024, 11 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

**WHERE:** Annapolis High School, Room 220 Media Contact: Bob Mosier, Annapolis High School, RMOSIER@aacsps.org

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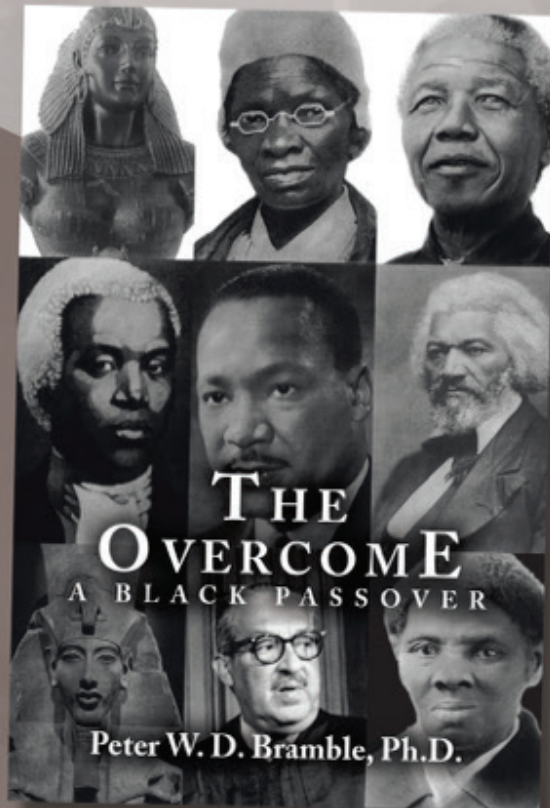
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The proposed ritual, The Overcome: A Black Passover, is the concept of a yearly celebration of and by African Americans commemorating the significance of overcoming slavery, Jim Crow, and institutionalized racism to ascent as leaders in all walks of life. This proposed ritual has been compared to the yearly commemorated Jewish Passover. The book The Overcome: A Black Passover delineates the logical explanation of a celebration. Overcome: Rite, Liturgy & Songs outlines the actual celebratory ceremony. So, like those of Jewish ancestry, **there is no going back to Egypt and for African Americans, there is no going back to slavery!**

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# Ravens Draw Solid Free Agency Grades

By Tyler Hamilton

The Baltimore Ravens had 23 players set to hit the free agent market this month. They managed to retain six of them.

After coming close to their third Super Bowl appearance last season, the Ravens took a swing for the fences by adding what they believe to be the missing piece to their offense. It's well documented how offensive coordinator Todd Monken abandoned the run in Baltimore's 17-10 loss to the Kansas City Chiefs that ended their season.

Adding future Hall of Fame running back Derrick Henry should keep Monken from any further thoughts of not running the ball.

Henry has terrorized the Ravens over the years. He'll be a part of their mission to strike fear in opposing defenses this year. Signing Henry is the centerpiece of the 2024 free agent group for the Ravens.

The move drew rave reviews from a variety of analysts. Let's take a look at the way free agency has gone with three reviews of Ravens General Manager Eric DeCosta's moves.

**Notable additions:** RB Derrick Henry

**Notable losses:** Tyus Bowser (released); Morgan Moses (traded); OG Kevin Zeitler; RB Gus Edwards; DB Geno Stone; WR Devin Duvernay; CB Ronald Darby; LS Tyler Ott; OG John Simpson; LB Del'Shawn Phillips; LB Patrick Queen; and QB Tyler Huntley.

**Notable re-signs:** WR Nelson Agholor; DT Justin Madubuike (extension); OLB Malik Harrison, DL Brent Urban; QB Josh Johnson; and DB Ar'Darius Washington.



**Derrick Henry**

Photo credit: Steve Roberts/USA TODAY Sports

## Garrett Podell – CBS Sports

The Ravens retaining one of the NFL's best defensive tackles in Justin Madubuike (four years, \$98 million) – led all DTs in sacks (13.0), QB hits (33) and QB pressures as a three-technique, per Next Gen Stats (38) – is a great start for the league's top defense.

Swapping out running back Gus Edwards, who has since departed to the other Harbaugh out West with the Los Angeles Chargers, for Derrick "King" Henry (two years, \$16 million) is a significant upgrade. Baltimore now has the NFL's most dynamic backfield with him and 2023 NFL MVP quarterback Lamar Jackson. Losing Pro Bowl linebacker Patrick Queen is an adjustment, but the Ravens develop the inside backer as good as anyone in the NFL.

GRADE: A

## Dallas Robinson – Pro Football Network

The Ravens tried to acquire Henry at last year's trade deadline but finally landed the King by handing him a two-year, \$16 million pact. His age and workload remain obvious concerns, but Henry should form a dominant rushing duo with Lamar Jackson and will benefit from playing behind Baltimore's offensive line.

That line lost two starters this week, but the Ravens have made a habit of moving on from players before they get too old (Moses) or expensive (Simpson). Queen, Edwards, and Darby are all serviceable players. Baltimore can find more affordable replacements.

GRADE: A

## Brad Spielberger – Pro Football Focus

Madubuike had one of the best contract years in recent memory, making splash plays seemingly every week and improving his efficiency as a pass rusher along with a boost to his traditional stats.

The Ravens finally get their man, with Henry, a target at last year's trade deadline as Baltimore geared up for a deep playoff run. The duo of Henry and Lamar Jackson in the backfield is going to be an absolute nightmare for opposing defenses, and we can't wait to see it in action.

GRADE: B

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conducted via Microsoft Teams on **APRIL 5, 2024**, at 10:00 a.m. hosted by the Department of Transportation. All Bidders must email your contact information to include your name, company name, phone number and email address to [Uttam.khadka@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:Uttam.khadka@baltimorecity.gov) to receive an invite to the Microsoft Team (video conference meeting). Principle Items of work for this project are: **Superpave Asphalt 12.5MM and 19.0 MM and Various Mix – 8,800 tons; Curbs, Curbs & Gutters 8,200 LF and Sidewalk 38,150 SF.** The MBE Goal is **21%**; The WBE Goal is **9%**. APPROVED: Bill Henry, Board of Estimates

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