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COLAB Exhibit Debuts with Immersive Sound and Vision at the Eubie Blake Center



An invitation-only opening reception of COLAB: Art and Music from Baltimore and Beyond was held at the Eubie Blake National Jazz Institute and Cultural Center on Saturday, May 17, 2025. Nearly 200 art enthusiasts, cultural leaders, and artists attended the multisensory exhibition. (L-r): Multimedia artist Joyce Scott; Kibibi Ajanku, textile artist; Alma Roberts, abstract painter; and Megan Lewis, Impressionist painter shared a celebratory moment reflecting on the multi-generational legacy of the Eubie Blake National Jazz Institute and Cultural Center. COLAB will remain on view at the Eubie Blake Center through August 16, 2025. (See article on page 8)

Photo: Catalina Byrd

Juxtopia Develops Law Enforcement AI Product

Baltimore IT Company Developing Product to Address Police Brutality

By Demetrius Dillard

Jayfus Doswell, one of Baltimore's brightest and accomplished scholars, is leading the charge in addressing a national crisis through technology.

Police brutality, particularly against Black males, has been an ongoing problem in the U.S. The issue has emerged to the point of being considered an epidemic by many political and social leaders.

Juxtopia, a Baltimore-based biomedical and information technology company, has joined the fight against police brutality through the development of an artificial intelligence-enabled product designed to address "the public health disparity of police violence and murders against Black males."

The effort seeks to investigate improved police training with what is called the "Juxtopia CAMMRAD Police training intervention."

The Context Aware Mobile Mixed Reality Assisted Device (CAMMRAD) Police Trainer or is an AI-powered, wearable augmented reality e-training and evaluation system formed to train police officers on de-escalation and non-lethal use of force. The product also aims to evaluate police on cultural competency, empathy and ethical metrics.

Among the nation's innovative leaders in human performance product development, Juxtopia was founded by Doswell in 2001. He is also the company's president and CEO.

The police artificial intelligence trainer is called "Bes," bearing the namesake of an ancient Egyptian deity of domestic protection, consistent with a foundational obligation of law enforcement to "protect and serve."

Doswell, an esteemed scholar and

Baltimore native, was solely responsible for the development of the artificial intelligence police trainer concept. His company, Juxtopia, will create the product.

Here is how the law enforcement AI product will function, according to Doswell:

- Police officers will wear Juxtopia augmented reality head-mounted displays that will apply the use of optimal see-through displays to project digital information in his or her point of view.

- Upon arrival at the scene – or in the vicinity – of possible criminal activity, augmented reality goggles can detect firearms and other weapons, subsequently notifying the officer whether those weapons are a threat or are held by a human.

- This AI-powered product will send audio cues to an officer on how to apprehend. The officer can speak into a microphone for guidance on how to properly apprehend in accordance with state and federal laws.

- As an officer is speaking with an assailant, crime perpetrator or potential perpetrator, the camera-equipped goggles will use AI speech recognition to facilitate speech-to-text translation. After being encoded into different lexicons, the text will be interpreted by natural language processing algorithms to identify whether certain words being used comply with protocol and professional standards.

- This would all be done in real time and could eventually replace or supplement body cameras.

Doswell said Juxtopia plans to initially introduce the product in a training facility for law enforcement. The company hopes to make this product available on a national and international scale, beginning with

Baltimore and the Mid-Atlantic region.

"That's who our target market is first – for training officers," he said. "So the training facility may have scenarios for administering a warrant, domestic violence, active shooter and person in crisis."

The meticulously thought-out AI police trainer was originally conceptualized following the George Floyd incident in 2020 that sparked an international racial reckoning. It was around that time that Doswell and his team wrote and submitted a proposal to the National Institutes of Health.

Consequently, NIH awarded Juxtopia a grant totaling \$254,250 that will enable the company to successfully carry out its innovative CAMMRAD police training intervention project.

"We were motivated by George Floyd's killing... the team and I, we had to do something," Doswell said. "We really decided to address this type of disparity with technology."

Juxtopia plans to officially launch the product in the last quarter of 2025, Doswell said. To test the product, Juxtopia will partner with the Baltimore Police Department, other law enforcement agencies and Morgan State University's Center for Equitable Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning Systems.

All artificial intelligence algorithms are being done within Juxtopia solely by "Black and Brown people," Doswell said, pointing out the company's targeted mission and commitment to cultivating a diverse workforce.

The company's engineers developed its own hardware and augmented reality head-mounted displays for the CAMMRAD police training product.

Juxtopia used standard programming languages to develop software while creating its own AI model and language model, focusing



Dr. Jayfus T. Doswell, a Baltimore native, is the founder, president and CEO of Juxtopia.

Photo courtesy of Jayfus Doswell

on police cases. Individuals working on the CAMMRAD project programmed and trained the model to be intelligent enough to train police officers through augmented reality, Doswell highlighted.

This product is particularly unique, considering it will be the first of its kind with regard to the intersection of augmented reality and law enforcement training. This product simply aims to break down a barrier that adversely affects Black Americans.

"I'm a Black man. Black men are being killed. We need to be able to protect ourselves," said Doswell, a respected STEM leader and researcher.

"This epidemic that's been going on since we've been here in America as Black men – somebody or something has to eradicate this disparity. If this disparity is not eradicated, then Juxtopia will eradicate this disparity. If anybody gets in our way, then we'll address that too. That's the Juxtopia type of energy."



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Using Apple's Screen Time, Google's Family Link, and Microsoft's Family Safety to Monitor Children's Digital Device Use

By Karen Clay

Clay Technology and Multimedia, L.L.C.

The Washington Post published an article this past Sunday about the adequacy of Instagram's "Teen Account" (owned by Meta), which is designed to filter out inappropriate content to teens. A high school student and a youth organization independently conducted tests to see how well it shielded teens from harmful content by default. The results were scary, in that it appeared to fail miserably. The two groups found that even with the teen account, they were shown inappropriate material that included explicit sex acts, glorification of eating disorders, promotion of alcohol/drug use, hate speech, and more.

From my perspective, this means that, as parents and concerned adults, we have a tall order to fulfill. We must continue to be proactive in having conversations with our children and striking that balance between our children's use of portable digital devices and our oversight of such use. While each responsible adult or family has to make their own decision, monitoring a child's Internet use is an option. The purpose of such monitoring is not to "catch them doing wrong" but to use it as a tool to have conversations and build skills toward self-protection and self-regulation when children are using their devices.

While there are many options available to parents, the first place to look is at what your family is already using in terms of the devices in your home. Through their established tech ecosystems, the big THREE tech providers, Apple, Google, and Microsoft, offer parental control

solutions. Each platform provides key features to help you limit usage, approve downloads, and ensure safer Internet experiences for your children.

Apple Screen Time (<https://support.apple.com/en-us/105121>)

Apple's Screen Time is integrated into iOS, iPadOS, and macOS. When configured, it gives parents detailed oversight and control over how their children use Apple devices. Once Family Sharing is enabled, parents can remotely manage their child's device usage from their own iPhone, iPad, or Mac. It provides daily and weekly activity reports, showing how much time is spent on specific apps and websites. Parents can set app limits to restrict usage of specific categories, such as games or social media, and enforce a "Downtime" schedule to block all non-essential apps during designated hours (e.g., bedtime or homework time). Another key feature is content and privacy restrictions, which let parents filter web content, block explicit material, and manage permissions like location sharing and in-app purchases.

Google Family Link (<https://families.google/familylink/>)

Google Family Link is a free app available on Android and iOS that gives parents visibility into their child's activity on Android devices and Chromebooks. After creating a Google account for the child, Family Link allows parents to set daily screen time limits, schedule device "bedtimes," and view app activity. One standout feature of Family Link is the download management option. Parents can block



Parental controls may provide a safer online experience for your children.

Graphic Design by Karen Clay

or require approval for app downloads from the Google Play Store, thereby helping prevent access to inappropriate or unwanted apps. Location tracking is also built-in, enabling parents to see their child's device location on a map. Additionally, Family Link supports web filtering when used with Google Chrome, which allows for safer browsing options.

Microsoft Family Safety (<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/family>)

Microsoft's Family Safety solution works across Windows PCs, Xbox consoles, and Android devices. After setting up a Microsoft family group, parents can monitor screen time, enforce age-appropriate content limits, and manage app downloads through the Microsoft Store. Parents can receive weekly email reports detailing how much time their child spends on different apps, websites, and devices. Screen time can be limited per device



Karen Clay,
Clay Technology and Multimedia
Courtesy, Karen Clay

or per app, and restrictions can be synced across multiple devices. For web safety, Family Safety enforces SafeSearch and blocks adult content in Microsoft Edge. Additionally, the app offers real-time location sharing for Android users, a valuable tool for families on the go.

As you can see, each platform offers strong parental control tools tailored to its respective ecosystems. While their features vary, they all provide essential functions like screen time tracking, content filtering, and download approval. Parents can help their children create healthier digital habits and better protect them from the inherent risks of online use by leveraging these tools as part of an overall family responsible use strategy. This, paired with ongoing conversation, can give parents greater peace of mind in an increasingly connected world.

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New Legislation

Governor Wes Moore Makes Major Legislative Changes in the State of Maryland

By Stacy M. Brown
BlackPressUSA.com
Senior National Correspondent

Maryland Gov. Wes Moore signed 170 bills into law Tuesday, May 13, 2025, marking one of his term's most expansive legislative actions. The bills cover a range of issues, from reproductive rights and reckless driving to environmental protections and access to public services. According to the governor's office, among the most closely watched measures is the "Sergeant Patrick Kepp Act," which increases penalties for reckless and aggressive driving. Named after a Montgomery County police sergeant who was critically injured during a traffic stop, the law aims to deter dangerous behavior behind the wheel. Moore will also enact legislation that establishes the Public Health Abortion Grant Program. The new law sets up funding to help providers expand access to abortion care, a move that lawmakers say reaffirms Maryland's commitment to reproductive freedom.

Another bill, "Eric's ID Law," will allow driver's licenses and identification cards to include a notation for nonapparent disabilities. Supporters say the change will help prevent misunderstandings with police or emergency personnel during traffic stops or other encounters. The Chesapeake Bay Legacy Act will provide long-term funding to preserve one of the state's most vital natural resources.

Lawmakers also approved a bill requiring packaging producers to take greater responsibility for reducing waste and a measure demanding increased transparency from utility



Governor Moore meets with the Chesapeake Executive Council at the Governor's Reception Room, 100 State Circle, Annapolis, Maryland 21401
Photo: (Wikimedia Commons/Photo by Maryland Gov Pics) Joe Andrucyk

companies. The legislative package also includes the "See Someone, Save Someone Act," which requires human trafficking training for Department of Transportation employees. Matthew's Law, which mandates carbon monoxide warning labels on boats, is also among the bills set to be signed.

The governor will enact several local measures affecting speed monitoring systems, rental housing protections, and road safety across jurisdictions, including Baltimore City, Prince George's County, and Montgomery County. The bill-signing event comes after a legislative session during which lawmakers passed a wide array of policy changes focused on health, safety, and environmental justice.

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Zane Gives Candid Advice During Author Talk, Signs Books for Devoted Fans

By Andrea Blackstone

Kristina LaFerne “Zane” Roberts, a New York Times Bestselling author of more than three dozen titles, was hosted by Main Street Library in Newport News, Virginia on Saturday, May 17, 2025.

Zane’s other accolades include serving as the publisher of Strebor Books. Over 900 titles penned by 120 other authors were published by the Simon and Schuster imprint. Zane’s film based on her book “Addicted,” was theatrically released by Lionsgate in 2014.

She relocated to Atlanta 10 years ago from the Washington, D.C. area to take advantage of “The Hollywood of the South.” Zane’s fans welcomed her enthusiastically in Newport News, many of whom toted previously released titles that they were eager to get signed by “the Queen of Erotica.”

“People often ask me, ‘When did you become a writer?’ And my answer is always this. The moment I started paying attention, because that’s what writing really is —seeing, not skimming, not scrolling—but truly seeing the world around you. Listening closely, noticing the quiet things like how a child clings to a parent’s coat, or how a goodbye lingers in the air. Writers are observers, reflectors, translators of the world’s small and sacred moments. You don’t need a fancy desk or a degree. You need curiosity,” Zane said.

During her author talk, Zane provided valuable morsels of wisdom and advice for writers and aspiring authors.

Zane stated that writers need a deep commitment to showing up, even on the days when the words will not come.

“Before diving into a draft, try mapping out the bones of your story. Knowing your beginning, middle and end gives you direction. And remember a well-practiced story persuades, informs and entertains,” Zane said. “Let your readers escape their world while opening their hearts to yours.”

She stated that if readers do not care about a writer’s characters, they will not care what happens to them.

“Characters are everything. They should leap off the page and live in the minds of your readers long after the book is closed,” Zane shared.

Zane candidly discussed additional snippets of her experience as a philanthropist, literary agent, executive producer, director, scriptwriter, instructor, and seasoned erotic fiction novelist. She recalled that the late Eric Jerome Dickey was a friend who taught her about keeping character files to track details and their backstory to remain consistent. For example, characters should not go from being 5’10 in one chapter to being 6’3 in another.

Zane asserted that too many writers skip the revision stage of writing.

“Great books aren’t written; they’re rewritten. The truth is, almost every story has already been told. What makes yours stand out is your twist, that unexpected spark, that fresh angle, that voice only you have. Then, you have to grab your reader quickly. We



An enthusiastic crowd proceeds up the steps to get their books signed after Zane’s author talk.

Photos: Andrea Blackstone

live in a world of endless distractions. If the first chapter doesn’t hit, the reader may not stick around. That’s why many publishers won’t even look at a manuscript unless it includes the first three chapters in order. Never try to trick an editor with your best chapters from the middle. They’ll see right through it,” Zane divulged.

“Writing is hard. It’s not all lightning bolts and late-night inspiration. Most books are written one sentence at a time, during early mornings, lunch breaks, quiet nights or even moments in the car. It’s not glamorous, but it’s sacred. Talent helps but persistence matters more,” the literary icon explained.

She suggested that authors should make their greatest weaknesses their greatest strengths.

“Read as much as possible, because it sounds silly when a writer proclaims that they rarely read or don’t have any time to read,” Zane added.

Writing for the screen is collaborative, according to Zane.

“You’ll work with directors, actors, producers, and you’ll write visually.



Kristina LaFerne “Zane” Roberts speaks at Main Street Library, located at 110 Main Street in Newport News, Virginia on Saturday, May 17, 2025.

That means showing, not telling through dialogue, pacing and action,” she said.

Zane told attendees that with the rise of streaming platforms, the demand for fresh, diverse stories is booming.

“If screenwriting intrigues you start by reading scripts, write a sketch script, apply to fellowships, take a course, adapt your novel, or create something brand new.”

Zane said that her upcoming novel, “Nasty Work,” is about the compromises we make in the name of love, and the grace we must give ourselves when we realize we’ve made the wrong ones.

“Whether your story lives on the page, on the screen, your voice can make a difference. So, write with passion, revise your purpose, and publish with confidence,” Zane affirmed.

Follow Zane on Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/planetzane> or Facebook.



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COLAB Exhibit Debuts with Immersive Sound and Vision at the Eubie Blake Center

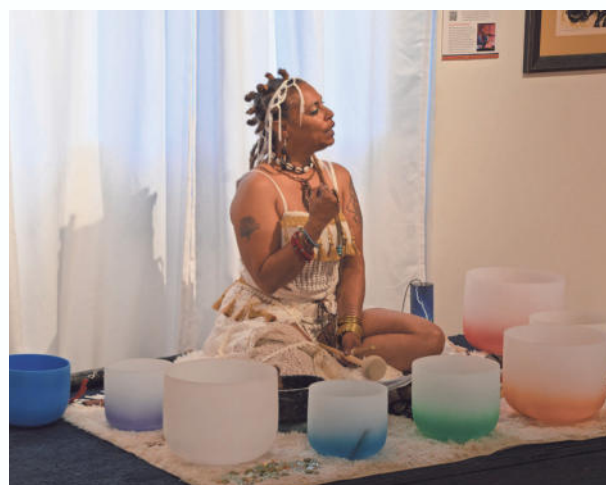
By Adrian Harpool

Special to the Baltimore Times
Nearly 200 art enthusiasts, cultural leaders, and artists gathered at the Eubie Blake National Jazz Institute and Cultural Center on Saturday, May 17, 2025, for the invitation-only opening reception of COLAB: Art and Music from Baltimore and Beyond. The multisensory exhibition—co-curated by Derek Price, Executive Director of the Eubie Blake Center, and guest curator Hilary Pierce—transformed the historic venue into a dynamic space where art meets music in a celebration of Black cultural creativity.

The COLAB exhibition is unlike any other in Baltimore. With over 40 visual artists and more than 20 music collaborators participating, the show invites audiences to experience visual art through sound. Each piece is paired with a QR code that links to music curated by an impressive lineup of musical performing artists, DJ's, and producers. Visitors can bring their own Bluetooth devices or borrow gallery equipment to fully immerse themselves in this audible art experience.

"This exhibit is about more than seeing—it's about feeling the soul of each work through sound," Derek Price said during his welcoming remarks. "Baltimore is a city of deep artistic heritage, and COLAB represents the best of our local and global voices coming together."

The evening opened with a buzz of anticipation as attendees mingled among the featured works. A ceremonial "Pouring of Libations" in tribute to African American Ancestors was officiated by Kibibi Ajanku, a noted multimedia and textile artist.



Performance artist and COLAB contributor Michelle Blu debuts an original composition for the COLAB opening.



(L-r): Eubie Blake Executive Director Derek Price; Paris Brown, Baltimore Times Publisher; and William Sylvester, art collector. Photos: Steward Beckam, Jr.

Guests were encouraged to join in by calling out the names of dearly departed family members as well as the names of icons of African American culture. Also known as Baltimore's High Priestess of Indigo, Ajanku also has work featured in the exhibit.

To the surprise of the audience, the evening was followed by rousing renditions of jazz standards by celebrated visual artist and McArthur Fellow Joyce Scott and award-winning vocalist and activist Lea Gilmore. Accompanying Scott and Gilmore, classical and jazz pianist Aaron Hill is one of the dozens of musicians who curated music for COLAB.

Attending the event were many of the exhibition's visual and performing artists, including Baltimore-based contributors like Megan Lewis, Yemonja Smalls, Gregory Banister, and Philadelphia's Richard Watson. Artists from as far away as Philadelphia and Chicago were on hand to add even



COLAB Co-Curator Hilary Pierce and COLAB contributing artist, Yemonja Small.

more color to an evening that at times resembled a family reunion.

Co-curator Hilary Pierce, President of the Art Collector's Athenaeum, envisioned the exhibit as a dialogue between generations, genres, and geographies. "COLAB showcases the evolution of African American art over more than 50 years," Pierce explained. "We feature everyone from mid-century icons like Jacob Lawrence, David Driskell and Sam Gilliam to rising local talents like Morehead, creating a powerful intergenerational conversation."

Pierce added: "The auditory element of the show is no less remarkable. Music collaborators include jazz legends like Terri-Lyne Carrington; Dianne Reeves; Marcus Miller; Marin Alsop; Wynton Marsalis; and Darin Atwater; genre-bending performers such as Thomas Dolby; Michele Blu, and Terrace Martin; and celebrated DJs and composers like Neci Williams; Dmitre Powell; and Wendel Patrick. Sean Jones, professor of Jazz at the Peabody Institute and COLAB's music curator, emphasized the project's innovation: "The music doesn't just accompany the visuals—it interprets them, expands them, gives them voice."

Several of the musical pieces were debuted during the reception, with live sets that brought the exhibit's themes to life. From soulful improvisation to electronic beats layered over spoken word, the performances added dimension and intimacy to the experience.

Many of the visual works are on loan from prestigious private collections, including those of the Petrucci Family Foundation, George Ciscle, and Galerie Myrtis. The exhibition is also supported by contributions from Hotel Revival; Schmitz Press; Shine Creative; Maryland Arts Council; Bromo Arts District; Adrian Harpool Associates; Trinacria Baltimore; Nancy by SNAC; Art Collector's Athenaeum; and other



Baltimore native artist, Gregory Bannister, with his work entitled "Row Houses" which serves as the Icon for the COLAB Exhibit.

Photos: Steward Beckam, Jr.

community partners. The assembly of so many talented individuals filled the center with a creative spirit that perhaps actually brought forth the spirit of Eubie Blake and his old COLAB Buddy, Noble Sissle.

COLAB will remain on view at the Eubie Blake Center through August 16, 2025, with public gallery hours from Wednesday to Friday, 1–6 p.m., and Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. The Center is located at 847 North Howard Street, in the heart of Baltimore's historic arts district.

Whether you are a seasoned art lover or a newcomer to creative culture, COLAB promises an unforgettable journey through sound and sight—a tribute to the enduring power of collaboration. To get a jump start on the experience: Access the COLAB Playlist FREE on Spotify at Colab Art and Music From Baltimore and Beyond at EBCC.

For more information, visit www.eubieblake.org or email press@eubieblake.org.



(L-r): COLAB contributors Aaron Hill, jazz artist/producer; Yemonja Smalls, abstract artist; and Sean Jones, COLAB music curator and Peabody Conservatory professor.



COLAB contributing artist Richard Watson connects with the COLAB Playlist via Spotify.

Chip Away at Mental Health Stigma: Understand Anxiety and Anxiety Disorders

By Andrea Blackstone

Dr. La Keita D. Carter, owner and CEO of Owings Mills, Maryland-based Institute for HEALing, LLC discussed anxiety and anxiety disorders to raise awareness about them. Anxiety is a feeling of tension, stress, or worry (<https://www.apa.org/topics/anxiety>) according to the American Psychological Association.

Dr. Carter noted that anxiety disorders are the most common mental health disorders in the U.S. More than 30% of adults experience it at some point during their lifetime.

“To put that in perspective, that’s roughly 78 million U.S. Americans,” the licensed psychologist further stated.

Dr. Carter added that anxiety is still under-recognized, misunderstood, and stigmatized in the Black community, although perception about the topic is improving.

“We often hear others saying, ‘pray it away,’ which we don’t hear when it comes to cancer, diabetes, or asthma.”

Understanding Differences Between Anxiety and Anxiety Disorders

“Anxiety and anxiety disorders are two different things. Everyone has anxiety, but not everyone has an anxiety disorder. If your anxiety exceeds your coping skills and it is causing distress at work, home, school, and socially, then it becomes a mental health disorder,” said Dr. Carter.

Anxiety is a chronic feeling of uneasiness or worry that is present, even when there is no external event or activator.

Signs of anxiety include excessive worry or fear, restlessness or feeling edgy, difficulty concentrating/focusing, irritability, muscle tension, panic attacks and sleep problems.

Dr. Carter added, “The term anxiety disorder is an umbrella term used to refer to the disorders that involve intense, excessive, chronic, and persistent worry about a diversity of concerns.”

She identified generalized anxiety disorder; panic disorder; social anxiety disorder; specific phobia; agoraphobia; selective mutism; and separation anxiety disorder as common types of anxiety disorders. Treatment is often necessary to help patients manage their symptoms and improve their quality of life.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and medication are the most common treatment protocols for anxiety. Research shows that when they are combined, they are more effective.

Do you need help with anxiety?

If anxiety interferes with your daily functioning, be mindful of this observation. It should not get in the way of your work, school, relationships, and social activities. Additionally, if you start avoiding people, places, and things that make you anxious, these are signs that help is needed.

“For example, you may avoid going into work, driving, or being around your mother-in-law,” Dr. Carter added.

If your sleeping and eating is off; you are under- or over-sleeping, or under- or overeating; you are having panic attacks or suicidal thoughts; you experience intense physical symptoms like chest pain

and shortness of breath, these are more signs that you should seek out the services of a licensed mental health professional. They are equipped to diagnose anxiety disorder and create a treatment plan to help clients feel better.

What triggers anxiety?

Dr. Carter mentioned that anything can activate an anxiety response. It does not have to be a major life event such as marriage, divorce, pregnancy, retirement, job loss or grief. Even health problems; interpersonal conflicts with family members, friends or co-workers; financial difficulties; traumatic experiences; or substance use/abuse can trigger anxiety.

Consuming too much negative news during these political times can trigger anxiety in people who do not necessarily have anxiety disorder and in those who do.

“Constant exposure to distressing news, political polarization, and social unrest can be hard to manage. It can worsen anxiety for people who are already living with an anxiety disorder,” said Dr. Carter.

Engage in mindfulness techniques; limit news consumption; exercise; journal; color; or listen to music to better manage feelings of anxiety. Dr. Carter added that using meditation can be tricky because it can be hard to focus your attention on the present without your mind wandering.

“It’s best if you start out small and



Dr. La Keita D. Carter, licensed psychologist, owner and CEO of Owings Mills, Maryland-based Institute for HEALing, LLC.

Courtesy photo

only meditate for one minute and then keep increasing the time,” she explained. “There are many meditation apps that are helpful, including Exhale. You can also use guided meditations on YouTube.”

Know the difference between anxiety and stress.

Although anxiety and stress are typically used interchangeably, there is a technical difference.

“Stress is a response to an external event or circumstance. For example, you can feel stressed because you have an exam coming up or because you are awaiting test results from your doctor. Stress is typically short-term and dissipates when the stressor is gone,” Dr. Carter explained.

Visit www.LaKeitaDCarter.com to learn more about Dr. Carter. Follow her on Instagram: @DrLaKeita (IG).



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² Tori Finch, MS, M Cabell Jonas, PhD, Kevin Rubenstein, Eric Watson, BA, Sundee Basra, MPH, Jose Martinez, BS, & Michael Horberg, MD, MAS, FACP (2021). Life Expectancy Trends Among Integrated Health Care System Enrollees, 2014-2017. *The Permanente Journal*, 25(4), 10-17. thepermanentejournal.org/doi/10.7812/TPP/20.286.

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Mary Fields: America's First Black Woman Mail Carrier

By Andrea Blackstone

It is of great priority to keep history alive throughout the year amid questions about reports of the removal of artifacts from the National Museum of African American History and Culture. Courageous women such as Mary Fields (“Stagecoach Mary Fields”), the first African American woman star route mail carrier in the United States, should be recognized as a trailblazer in American history. Fields was equally known for her hot temper, bickering, toting and shooting guns, smoking and wearing men’s clothing.

Born enslaved around 1832 in Tennessee, she later traveled North after the Civil War, acting as a servant and laundress for families along the way. Fields settled in Ohio, living in a convent, according to History.com. At that time, she worked as a groundskeeper at the Ursuline Convent of the Sacred Heart.

National Parks Service (<https://www.nps.gov/people/mary-fields.htm>) disclosed that “according to Sister Kathleen Padden, archivist for Toledo’s Ursuline Convent, Mary arrived in Toledo by train in 1870 and worked for the nuns at the convent, washing laundry, managing the kitchen, and maintaining the convent garden and grounds.”

She found her way to another convent in Montana, but Fields’ style and personality became problematic.

“Kicked out of the convent, Fields was on her own—and she set about living a life that was shocking by 19th-century standards. She took in laundry and did odd jobs, started businesses and became known for liking hard liquor and gunfights,” History.com reported (<https://www.history.com/articles/>

meet-stagecoach-mary-the-daring-black-pioneer-who-protected-wild-west-stagecoaches).

“In 1895, she got a contract from the postal service to become a star route carrier—an independent contractor who carried mail using a stagecoach donated by Mother Amadeus. It suited Fields to a tee. As a star carrier, her job was to protect the mail on her route from thieves and bandits and to deliver mail. She was only the second woman in the United States (and the first African American woman) to serve in that role.”

The Smithsonian National Postal Museum further explained that a “Star Route Carrier was an independent contractor who used a stagecoach to deliver the mail in the harsh weather of northern Montana. Mary was the first African American woman and the second woman to receive a Star Route contract from the United States Post Office Department.”

Ursuline nuns helped six-foot tall, 200-pound Fields to secure the contract. Fields serviced the route between St. Peter’s Mission and the town of Cascade, Montana. Fields reportedly delivered the mail for eight years without missing a day of work, and she traveled 34 miles round trip to deliver it. She endured harsh weather, bandits, and wolves of northern Montana.

“When the snow was too deep to drive the stagecoach, Mary trekked the route with snowshoes, delivering the mail on foot. Even though she was well into her 60s, Mary never let the hardships of the job prevent her from completing her route,” according to the National Park Service.

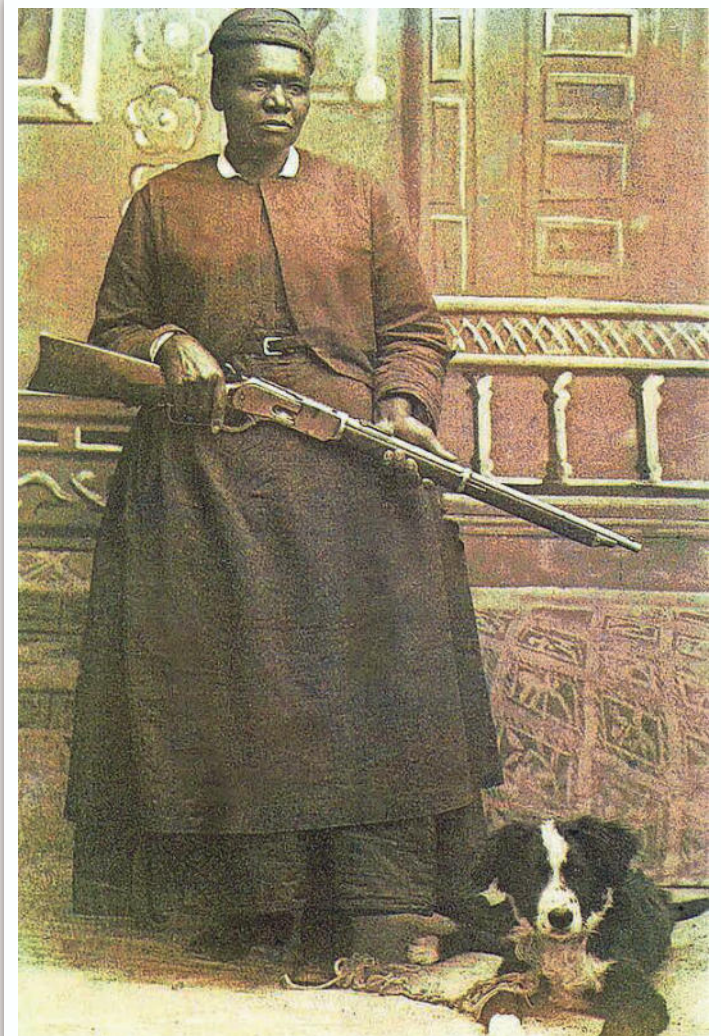
“Mary spent eight years delivering the mail as a Star Route Carrier,” when the West was a predominantly

white society.

“During this time, Mary became beloved by the locals of Cascade, Montana for her fearlessness and generosity, as well as for her kindness to children. Mary retired from service as a Star Route Carrier in the early 20th century. After her retirement, she settled into life in Cascade, Montana,” the Smithsonian National Postal Museum (<https://postalmuseum.si.edu/stagecoach-mary-fields>) reported.

It was further stated that Fields started a laundry business in town, opened an eatery and babysat the local children.

Montana Women’s History (<https://montanawomenshistory.org/the-life-and-legend-of-mary-fields/>) mentioned that although “people of Cascade accepted Fields while she was alive and celebrated her after death, but historian Dee Garceau-Hagen points to nicknames like “Black Mary,” “Colored Mary,” and “Nigger Mary”



Mary Fields was known to carry both a rifle and a revolver while delivering mail eight years as a Star Route Carrier when the West was predominantly white. Photo: Public domain

and argues that Cascade residents “affirmed a caste system based on race, even as they celebrated Fields’ notoriety.”

Fields died on December 5, 1914. After her death, the townspeople raised money to have her buried in a cemetery on a road where she frequently drove. Field’s funeral was said to be one of the largest in the town’s history.



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NMLS #2453988

CLLCTIVLY Announces “We Give Black”: A Three-Day Celebration of Black-Led Social Change in Baltimore

BALTIMORE, MD, UNITED STATES, April 17, 2025 / EINPresswire.com/—

CLLCTIVLY, the Baltimore-based organization dedicated to supporting Black-led social change, is proud to announce We Give Black—a multi-day experience dedicated to fueling social change through storytelling, strategic investment, and collective care. Taking place May 29-31, 2025 at cultural landmarks and community spaces throughout Baltimore City, this event will unite changemakers, entrepreneurs, philanthropists, creatives, investors and community members.

We Give Black continues CLLCTIVLY’s ongoing commitment to building Black futures through community-rooted solutions. The three-day event serves as a platform to redistribute resources, shift narratives, and strengthen the ecosystem of Black-led organizations working toward systemic change. Programming is anchored in three core themes: Remembering, Restorying, and Reimagining, which will guide participants through collective reflection, healing, and vision-building.

“We Give Black is more than a moment—it’s a movement that affirms the power we’ve always possessed,” says Jamye Wooten, Founder/ CEO of CLLCTIVLY. “When we understand that our culture itself is capital—that our stories, our healing traditions, and the wisdom passed down through generations represent true abundance—we’re not just organizing an event, we’re revitalizing a legacy of communal power.”

Remembering honors the longstanding traditions of communal giving, mutual aid, and cultural inheritance that have sustained Black communities for generations. Through

workshops and guided practices, participants will reconnect with ancestral wisdom and explore the ways in which legacy informs today’s strategies for impact and well-being.

Restorying centers the transformative power of reclaiming and reshaping Black narratives. Through storytelling, artistic expression, and dialogue, this theme emphasizes the importance of affirming the fullness of Black life—including joy, innovation, and everyday abundance—and shifting from deficit-based framing to asset-based truth-telling.

Reimagining challenges extractive funding models and expands the understanding of community wealth. Participants will engage in capacity-building experiences that elevate Black leadership and support the design of regenerative systems rooted in solidarity, ownership, and cultural capital.

Over the course of three days, We Give Black invites attendees to explore these themes through various experiences including:

- **Imagine Stages:** A curated session of keynote speakers and artists taking part in moderated conversations, inspiring talks and live artistic performances.

- **Discovery Rooms:** A series of intimate breakout sessions crowdsourced from a national call for proposals and featuring workshops, short talks, and conversations led by thought leaders in various topics aligned with the core themes of We Give Black.

- **Storytelling Sessions:** Citywide immersive experiences through the lens of the people, places, and spaces that make Baltimore thrive. Each experience will be crafted by some of the city’s

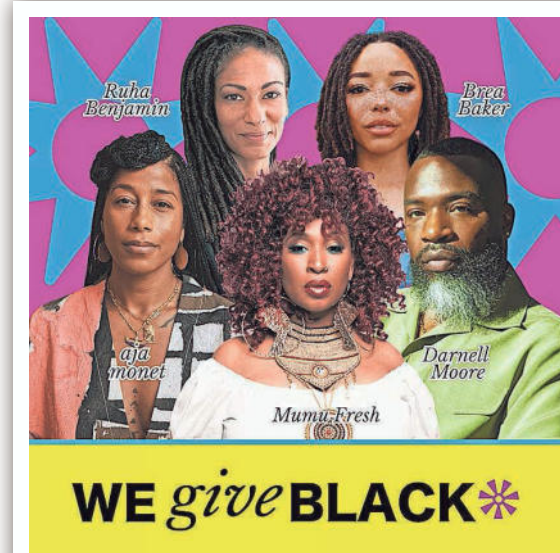
leading organizations, changemakers, creatives, and entrepreneurs.

- **Community Celebration:** A community gathering designed to bring folks together to celebrate Black joy while showcasing the finest local food, artists, vendors, performers, and a surprise headlining act.

Whether you’re a donor, community leader, creative, or simply someone who believes in the power of Black-led change, We Give Black is your invitation to invest in a liberated future. Visit wegiveblack.com for more information and to purchase tickets.

About CLLCTIVLY

Founded in 2019 by Jamye Wooten, a longtime advocate for racial and economic justice, CLLCTIVLY is a community-driven ecosystem dedicated to amplifying and sustaining Black-led organizations in Baltimore. Through grantmaking, storytelling, and strategic partnerships, CLLCTIVLY envisions a future where Black social change efforts are fully resourced and celebrated.



Ravens Derrick Henry Bucks Trend of Not Paying RBs

By Tyler Hamilton

At 31 years old, Baltimore Ravens running back Derrick Henry turned in one of the best rushing performances ever. Henry's 1,921 rushing yards in 2024 were the 11th most in NFL history and the most by a running back who was 30 years old or more since Tiki Barber rushed for 1,860 yards in 2005.

Henry joined the Ravens and instantly added balance to the offense. Henry's five carries of 40 yards or more were second in the league last year. Philadelphia Eagles running back Saquon Barkley led the league with seven.

Ravens general manager Eric DeCosta and the front office rewarded Henry for his successful season with a new deal one year after signing a two-year, \$16 million deal in 2024. Henry's extension is worth \$30 million over two more seasons.

"I'm just very grateful for this organization. Just like last year, coming off the season I had [in Tennessee], I wasn't really happy, and I wanted to prove myself and just get an opportunity, and they gave me the opportunity," Henry said. "I'm very appreciative of how much they value me, to give me an extension, and I just want to show them how much it means to me, how much this organization means to me by the way I work and what I do on the field."

After spending eight seasons with the Tennessee Titans, Henry said the Ravens were a whole new experience. But it didn't take long before he fell in love with the brotherhood and work ethic that permeates throughout the Ravens' facility. Quarterback Lamar Jackson is part of that brotherhood and played a huge factor in Henry's decision to come to Baltimore.



Derrick Henry

Photo: Rob Carr/Getty Images

"Being able to play alongside a player like Lamar [Jackson], the best player in the league, it was just dynamic and a lot of fun," Henry said. "Lamar is just so dynamic. You have to account for him every single play, and eyes are going to be on him, just by the player he is with his arm and with his legs."

Running backs coach/assistant head coach Willie Taggart mentioned how Henry is still getting stronger this late in his career. Last season was the second-highest rushing total over Henry's career. His 5.9 yards per carry were a career high. Taggart takes pride

in Henry's approach.

"[Derrick Henry] fits our identity as an organization, and I think he fits Baltimore as a city and what the city stands for," Taggart said. "When you watch him play, and you watch the Ravens play ... When you always watched the Ravens play, it was always dominating and physical, and when you watch Derrick run, it's dominating and physical. You think about our city; we're dominating and physical, so I think he just fit everything about Baltimore and the Ravens organization."

True to form, Henry arrived at the

facility to get an early workout in on Monday. That's after flight issues delayed his arrival to Baltimore that morning, causing him to get home around 4:45 a.m. Henry didn't go to sleep and got to the facility at 6 a.m. It's just the way Henry is wired and it's what caused him to get back to work much earlier than most players.

"I think I waited like a week after we played Buffalo, and my mind was going crazy," Henry said. "I was like, 'I've got to go work out,' so I just came back here and started working out. I couldn't wait anymore. I couldn't hold off."



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