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La Vie en Clothes Part Deux: Baltimore's Designers Honor Grace Jones in an Event of Sustainable Fashion



Made in Baltimore hosted La Vie en Clothes Part Deux on May 18, 2025. The event brought together sustainable designers for a collaborative celebration of the iconic Grace Jones. (L-r, seated): Model Da'Rious Moore; Ashley Huff, multidisciplinary artist, designer, and visionary founder of Love More Bmore; and Rich Rocket, creator, Vintage Thrivals; multidisciplinary artist; and visionary designer Nate Couser, VashtiBlue Jewelry Studio. (L-r, standing): Models Tiffany Wooten, Danielle Smith, Greg DelVecc, Keith Cooper, Leon G, and Celi Mend. (See article on page 6)

Photo Credit: Mike Gentry (@daretoimagen)

A Legend of Black Politics in Harlem and Beyond, Congressman Charlie Rangel Dies at 94

By Lauren Burke

Charlie Rangel, the long-term Congressman and a heavyweight in New York politics as a member of Harlem's "Gang of Four," has died at 94. His colorful and charismatic personality, bowties, and raspy voice made him a character on Capitol Hill who was impossible to forget. Rangel was simultaneously larger than life but also approachable and engaging. Rangel was the last living member of the "Gang of Four" made up of powerful African American leaders in New York: David Dinkins (1927-2020), Basil Paterson (1946-2014), and Percy Sutton (1920-2009). The four dealmakers were powerbrokers at a time when political decisions were made in smoke-filled rooms over poker games.

In 2010, President Obama suggested that Rangel resign from Congress "with dignity" after he was targeted by an ethics investigation that would eventually mean he had to give up the Chairmanship of the Ways & Means Committee. "This guy from Lenox Avenue is retiring with dignity," Rangel would later tell reporters as he departed Congress on his terms and at the time of his choosing. Rangel ignored Obama and remained in Congress for another six years with an aura that made many forget about the ethics investigation.

Before serving Congress, Rangel did about every job in politics that existed. In 1961, Rangel was appointed by Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy to be an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Southern District of New York. Rangel was also a legal counsel for the New

York Housing and Redevelopment Board. He was born in Harlem in 1930.

Rangel would go on to represent one of the most storied parts of Manhattan for 46 years in the U.S. Congress. Along with the late John Conyers, he was also a founding member of the Congressional Black Caucus. "We all have a large stake in preserving our democracy, but I maintain that those without power in our society, the black, the brown, the poor of all colors, have the largest stake, not because we have the most to lose, but because we have worked the hardest, and given the most, for what we have achieved," Rangel once said.

Rangel was the first African American to serve as Chairman of the powerful House Ways and Means Committee. As chair and as a member of the Committee, Rangel played a central role in shaping U.S. tax legislation. He advocated for progressive tax reform, closing corporate loopholes, and increasing tax equity. Rangel was also a strong supporter of Social Security and Medicare and defended and expanded programs aimed at reducing poverty and supporting working-class families.



Congressman Charlie Rangel

Photo courtesy of nnpa.org

The legendary Harlem Congressman also championed federal investment in affordable housing and urban infrastructure, especially for Harlem and other underserved communities.

In a noteworthy policy move, Rangel also pushed to reinstate the military draft during the Iraq War—not to promote it, but to spark debate on the fairness of who bears the burden of war. Rangel earned a Purple Heart and a Bronze Star for his service in the Army during Korea. He served as a member of the New York State Assembly from 1967 to 1971 and went on to defeat another New York political legend — Adam Clayton Powell Jr. in a primary, before winning in the general election in 1970.

Rangel retired from Congress in 2016 at 86 years old. At a time when many are discussing the age of members of Congress and the many who have died in office over the past two years, Rangel was an exception who departed on his terms. Rangel's seat in Congress would go to Dominican-born Adriano Espaillat. The moment represented a shift in Harlem's demographics and the power of the Latino community in the Bronx. Rangel's wife Alma Carter, passed away last year. The two met in the 1950s at the famous Savoy Ballroom in Harlem. They married in 1964 and have two children.

THE BALTIMORE TIMES

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Black Men's Mental Health Matters: Take Steps to Make Improvements

By Andrea Blackstone

Before Mental Health Awareness Month ends this May, it is prudent to explore mental health concerns of Black males.

"Black men face unique mental health vulnerabilities shaped by systemic, cultural, and socioeconomic factors. These challenges contribute to disparities in mental health outcomes and access to care," said Paul Bashea Williams, LCSW-C, LICSW.

The Prince George County, Maryland-based founder and owner of Hearts In Mind Counseling specializes in working with Black men, women, and couples.

A Shortage of Black Therapists

"As a Black male licensed mental health therapist, I understand that I am 1% of the entire field. Black, licensed mental health therapists make up only 4% of the field. These stats tell us that Black men may not have a clinician that can relate to their experiences. That barrier alone may prevent a Black man from pursuing help," Williams stated.

"Between 56–74% of Black males exposed to traumatic events may have unmet mental health needs. Black Americans living below the poverty level are twice as likely to report serious psychological distress compared to those above the poverty level," he added, citing Motley R., Banks A. Black Males, Trauma, and Mental Health Service Use: A Systematic Review (<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30556064>)

Black men have additional unique mental health vulnerabilities including economic disparities, such as higher rates of poverty, unemployment, and limited access to quality mental health services.

Seek Therapy

Williams noted that Black men are still statistically less likely to seek mental health support compared to other demographic groups. However, he recommends taking solution-based steps to find the right therapist who will understand lived experiences when therapy is pursued. Culturally sensitive assessments and treatment can lead to better mental health outcomes for Black males.

1. Seek culturally competent care by being intentional in your search and questions.

2. Check therapists' bios that include what they specialize in and what their approach is.

3. Look for a therapist with a faith-based lens and consider the person's gender, race and ethnicity.

"Don't be afraid to interview your therapist prior to becoming their client. Ask them if they are versed in what you need support with," Williams added.

It is more than appropriate to switch therapists if you feel it is not a good fit.

"It's like dating. Continue to search until you feel like you can be open and be understood. Make sure you challenge your therapist to provide the direction you want to go. They like feedback as well. Therapy is relationship-based. Also, make sure you give yourself an opportunity to be challenged," Williams explained.

He remarked that therapy is not a cure. Williams said that it is a toolbox, process and resource that is supposed to be a safe space, but it is not a quick fix.

"Therapy is only as good as the work a client puts in," he added.

Integrate Self-Care

Williams defines self-care as "the intentional practice of nurturing your physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being."

"It's showing up for yourself consistently. Self-care is maintenance, not emergency repair. Its radical responsibility, not selfishness, and it's recharging, not escaping. It's being accountable to yourself," he noted.

Other Mental Health Support

Establishing a brotherhood and consistently checking on men are both vitally important for

mental health support, especially in a society where many men are conditioned to suppress vulnerability and emotional expression, according to Williams.

"We grow in community and struggle in isolation. Many men believe they must handle things alone and they are told or have experienced being dismissed when expressing a challenge, hurt, or need. When I think of brotherhood, I see it as a lifeline," he explained.

Williams also mentioned that creating a safe space for mental health check-ins with mates and spouses is essential for emotional intimacy, trust, and relational health.

Mental Health Maintenance

Mental health disorders such as depression can manifest differently in Black men, often in ways that are misunderstood, overlooked, or mislabeled.

"Cultural expectations, systemic pressures, and survival-based coping



Paul Bashea Williams, LCSW-C LICSW, runs his mental health practice, *Hearts In Mind Counseling*. He specializes in working with Black men, women and couples. Williams is also an author and business strategist.
Photo: Jackie Hicks

shape how symptoms show up. It can look like anger; irritability; withdrawal; overworking; overperforming; substance abuse; risky behavior, physical symptoms and aggression," according to Williams.

Black men should take proactive measures to support their mental health maintenance.

He suggested talking to someone safe; getting active; practicing self-care; setting boundaries; deconstructing the strong Black man myth; and men paying attention to their bodies, especially their jaws, stomach, and shoulders.

"My true goal is to be a difference-maker for Black people in the mental health field," said Williams.

Learn more about Williams, his services and variety of books by visiting www.BasheaWilliams.com and www.HeartsInMindCounseling.com.

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Commentary

Five Years After George Floyd, We Still Can't Breathe

By Lorece V. Edwards
DrPH, MHS
Morgan State University

Five years have passed since George Floyd was murdered in the street, gasping for air under the knee of a police officer. His final words, "I can't breathe," were captured on video by a teenager and broadcast to the world. Protesters filled the streets. Politicians made bold promises. Many believed real change was finally coming. But here we are in 2025, and it is painfully clear that the system has not changed. If anything, it has doubled down.

Police violence has not decreased. It has intensified. Black Americans remain far more likely to be stopped, searched, assaulted, or killed by police. The George Floyd Justice in Policing Act, introduced in 2021 with promises of reform, is still stalled in Congress. It has not been passed. It has not been forgotten. It has been ignored. Lawmakers have allowed the moment to fade, and with it, any meaningful federal accountability.

Even worse, the federal government is actively working against reform. On April 28, 2025 President Trump signed Executive Order 14288, instructing law enforcement to act more aggressively in the name of protecting citizens. The order uses the word "unleash." That is not accidental. Legal expert Christy Lopez, writing for Lawfare, warned that the language and the policy reflect a deliberate move toward policing that is militarized, politically driven, and unchecked by democratic standards. According to Lopez, the term "unleashing" suggests the removal of restraints, both legal and ethical, on police behavior. That is not safety. That is authoritarianism.

This approach is not neutral. It targets Black and brown communities first and hardest. Police already show

up in these neighborhoods with force, suspicion, and fear. Now, they are being told to act without limits. We know what that leads to. It leads to more deaths, more trauma, and more families destroyed by a system that sees them as threats rather than citizens.

And this is not just about race. Mental illness is another factor that turns routine encounters into fatal ones. People with untreated mental health issues are 16 times more likely to be killed during a police interaction. The system punishes vulnerability. It criminalizes survival.

As activist Shamell Bell once said, "It is impossible to be unarmed when our blackness is the weapon they fear." That fear is now codified into national policy. That fear is driving the resurgence of state violence under the banner of law and order.

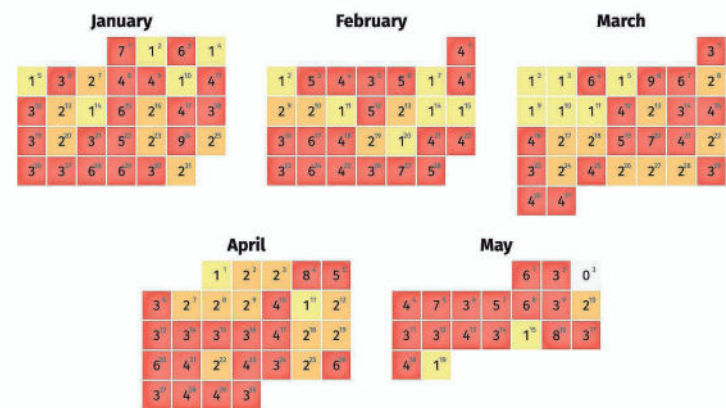


Dr. Lorece Edwards
Courtesy photo

Enough is enough and we do not need any more symbolic gestures. We need legislation that holds police accountable. We need power returned to communities. We need to stop treating public safety like a war to be won.

Until then, George Floyd's words still echo. We still can't breathe.

There has only been 1 day in 2025 where police did not kill someone



0 1 2 3+ killings by police Source: MappingPoliceViolence.us Updated: May 19, 2025

La Vie en Clothes Part Deux:

Baltimore's Designers Honor Grace Jones in an Event of Sustainable Fashion

By Paris Brown

BALTIMORE—On May 18, 2025, the creative pulse of Baltimore beat stronger than ever as Made in Baltimore hosted one of the city's innovative fashion events: La Vie en Clothes Part Deux. This electrifying event brought together three of Baltimore's most innovative sustainable designers for a collaborative celebration of the iconic Grace Jones, a living legend whose fearless style and unapologetic self-expression have inspired generations.

Set against the backdrop of Baltimore's Made in Baltimore creatively merchandised shop and creative scene, the event was more than just a fashion show; it was a creative convergence. Guests were welcomed into a space buzzing with energy, where networking and anticipation set the stage for the event.

Each designer presented exclusive pieces channeling the spirit of Grace Jones, reimagined through their sustainable lens. The result? A dazzling display of wearable art that paid homage to Jones's legendary style while championing the values of sustainability, inclusivity, and individuality.

In addition to the fashion show, patrons shopped the designers' latest collections—each a reflection of the brand's unique voice and ethos. Attendees mingled with the creators, explored individual photo sets designed for interactive experiences, and snapped photos with the designers' work and live models, making the event as immersive as it was inspiring.

Why Grace Jones?

Baltimore has always been a city that celebrates culture, diversity, and the courage to be different. Grace Jones embodies these very traits—she is a champion of expression, acceptance,



Ashley Huff, Jr.
Photo: Jill Fannon

and self-celebration. In honoring her, the event also honored Baltimore's legacy of embracing what's bold, new, and authentic.

Each designer at La Vie en Clothes Part Deux brought a distinct interpretation of Grace Jones' iconic style, blending her legendary aesthetic with their sustainable design philosophies:

Ashley Huff, Jr.
ASHLEY
@lovemorebmore

Ashley's work is rooted in inclusivity, creativity, and community, all of which echo Grace Jones' fearless self-expression and boundary-pushing persona. For this event, Ashley showcased pieces that blended bold, high-impact graphics with innovative materials like 3M reflective designs, nodding to Jones' love for striking visuals and androgynous statements. The collections were crafted for all genders and sizes, mirroring Jones' defiance of conventional norms and her celebration of individuality. Ashley's approach to storytelling and advocacy for change further reflected Jones' role as a champion of acceptance and self-celebration.



Nate Couser
Courtesy photo

Nate Couser
NATE
@vashtibluejewelrystudio
Nate's sustainable, handcrafted jewelry and wearable art are deeply personal and culturally resonant. For the Grace Jones tribute, Nate presented bold, sculptural jewelry and fashion-forward accessories that captured Jones' avant-garde spirit. Drawing from his background in performance and visual arts, Nate's designs celebrated Jones' dramatic flair—think statement pieces that command attention and honor her legacy as a style icon who blurred the lines between fashion, art, and performance. His commitment to sustainability and individuality paralleled Jones' own trailblazing approach to style and self-presentation.

Rich Rocket
RICH
@vintagethrivals

Rich's brand is defined by risk-taking, sustainability, and radical self-expression, all core elements of Grace Jones' public persona. For this exhibition, Rich transformed vintage, sustainably sourced clothing into one-of-a-kind wearable art that evoked the bold silhouettes, sharp tailoring, and androgynous looks Jones is famous for—such as the iconic wide-shouldered



Rich Rocket
Photo: Tyrone Wilkens

Armani suit from her "Nightclubbing" album cover. By celebrating all bodies and presentations, Rich's pieces embodied Jones' message of inclusivity and her status as a fashion icon who redefined gender and beauty standards.

Together, these designers honored Grace Jones by channeling her androgyny, theatricality, and unapologetic individuality through the lens of sustainability and contemporary Baltimore creativity. Each collection was not just a tribute, but a bold statement in its own right, much like Grace Jones herself.

As the evening drew to a close, La Vie en Clothes Part Deux left an indelible mark on Baltimore's creative landscape, proving that fashion can be both visionary and responsible. Through the bold ingenuity of Ashley Huff Jr., Nate Couser, and Rich Rocket, Grace Jones' legacy was not only honored but reimagined for a new era—one defined by sustainability, inclusivity, and fearless self-expression. Guests departed inspired, reminded that in Baltimore, style is more than what you wear; it's a celebration of who you are and the community you uplift. This unforgettable night affirmed that the city's spirit, much like Grace Jones herself, will always champion what is daring, different, and unapologetically authentic.

Entrepreneur, Philanthropist Finds Unique Niche in Paintless Dent Repair Trade

By Andrea Blackstone

Staying on top of car maintenance and addressing scratches and dents can be aspects of maximizing a car's value. In these times of economic uncertainty, making things last longer helps to stretch a consumer's budget. Stephen Green, sole owner and operator of Baltimore County-based Paintless Dent Doctor, keeps cars looking good.

Green found a niche in repairing cars and motorcycles in an innovative way.

"I graduated from Baltimore City College High School and then attended Geneva College for three years before doing an apprenticeship in the paintless dent repair trade," the Baltimorean said. "I founded Paintless Dent Doctor in 2005 because I always loved working with my hands. After attending college for business management, it only made sense to learn a trade and go into business for myself."

Channon Green, Stephen's brother, introduced him to the paintless dent repair trade in 2000. Exposure sparked Stephen's interest, which led to an apprenticeship and the founding of Paintless Dent Doctor.

Stephen explained, "We specialize in paintless dent repair, which is the process of repairing door dings, large dents, creases and hail damage without altering the factory finish of your vehicle. This process preserves resale value and is a convenient and environmentally friendly alternative to traditional bodywork and paint."

He added, "The paintless option often saves our clients' money versus conventional repair and can be completed in a fraction of the time, with most repairs taking hours, not days."

Paintless Dent Doctor, which is currently located in Essex, Maryland, was voted as Baltimore's Best for Auto Repair in "Baltimore Magazine"; ranked Best Bodyshop in Essex; and was selected as a Super Service Award Winner by Yelp, according to Stephen.

"We have ARC Certified Master Techs on staff and hundreds of 5-star reviews online," he also stated.

When car damage is more severe or when there's paint loss, Paintless Dent Doctor also has a body shop that repairs collision damage, deep scratching, bumper damage and more in a fraction of the time it takes most shops, because of their smart repair system. The business services motorcycles and automobiles. Clients of the family-owned and operated business often seek various repairs including hail damage.

Hail threats periodically pop up in Maryland. Stephen stated that parking under any cover that is available gives drivers the best shot at avoiding vehicle hail damage.

He added, "If you're driving, look for an underpass to stop under."

Stephen further explained that when hail damage or other car damage occurs, it is important to note that insurance companies cover damage based on how the insurance policy was structured.

"We always tell our clients to call their carrier to ask questions about what is covered to ensure accuracy," Stephen explained.

No specific preparatory work is



Front-end replacement on a Lexus SUV.

Photos courtesy of Stephen Green



Stephen Green, sole owner and operator of Baltimore County-based Paintless Dent Doctor.

mandatory, but a clean vehicle is helpful when paintless dent repair is provided by Stephen and his team.

"There are zero disadvantages of paintless dent repair if performed by an experienced and certified Master Tech, like the ones we employ at Paintless Dent Doctor," said Stephen.

The ambitious husband, father of three, and philanthropist takes time out of his busy schedule to give back to the community. Stephen cofounded Cars With Care with Damond Horne. The nonprofit gives automobiles to families in need during the holiday season.

Stephen acknowledged the value of having support at home when it comes to running a small business. He mentioned that his wife, Aja Green, has been supportive since day one.

"Balance is not easy when you're building a business and assuming full responsibility for the financial needs of the family and business. I'm grateful that my family gives me the grace to

get the job done," Stephen added.

Finding new customers and earning the confidence of repeat customers are important components to the survival of small businesses.

Fahim Kashif, located in Middle River, Maryland has been a repeat Paintless Dent Doctor customer over the last eight years.

"Paintless Dent Doctor has consistently provided excellent customer care, with a personalized approach to customer service with quick and reliable service. They provide accurate pick-up times after repairs are done; along with providing high-quality work that is very affordable for the caliber of work given."

Kashif added, "This is by far the best shop for overall customer service, quality of repairs and pricing."

Visit <https://www.paintlessdentdoctor.com> to learn more about Paintless Dent Doctor.

Is Male Menopause Real or Fictitious?

By **Andrea Blackstone**

When a woman has not had a menstrual cycle for 12 straight months, she is considered to have reached menopause. Bernadette Anderson, MD, MPH noted that this is a natural and permanent change in a woman's reproductive cycle.

Do men go through their version of menopause?

"While there isn't an exact equivalent in men, they experience a slow, steady decline in testosterone over time called andropause (or late-onset hypogonadism), which is often referred to as male menopause," said Dr. Anderson. "According to the NIH, andropause is a 'syndrome associated with a decrease in sexual satisfaction or a decline in a feeling of general well-being with low levels of testosterone in older men.'"

Physical changes can include decreased muscle mass; increased body fat around the stomach; decreased bone density resulting in increased fractures; cognitive and energy level changes linked to difficulty concentrating, forgetfulness, and low energy; psychological aspects including depression, mood swings; anxiety; decreased libido; and erectile dysfunction.

Andropause is real, but this medical issue is arguably discussed far less than menopause. Dr. Anderson pointed out differences in this lesser recognized male health issue.

Changes in Testosterone

Dr. Anderson stated that testosterone does not drop off suddenly like estrogen does in women.

"Instead, it gradually starts in middle age (around age 40), falling about 1.6% each year. That said, most men still stay within the normal range—only 10% to 25% of men will have

testosterone levels below the normal range," she added.

The exact cause of andropause is not totally clear. However, underlying medical conditions can contribute to its symptoms. These include diabetes; high blood pressure; heart disease; obesity; metabolic syndrome; anxiety or depression; and stress.

"Lifestyle factors such as smoking, lack of exercise, and alcohol use may worsen the symptoms of andropause too. The good news? While you cannot completely prevent the condition, making healthier choices can help to manage its effects and, in some cases, reverse them," said Dr. Anderson.

Andropause signs and symptoms

Unlike menopause, most men do not experience hot flashes with andropause, but common signs and symptoms are fatigue; depression; decreased sex drive; weight gain; erectile dysfunction; trouble concentrating; loss of muscle; and loss of body hair, according to Dr. Anderson.

She added, "Since these symptoms are not specific to andropause, it's important to discuss them with your healthcare provider to rule out other potential causes."

Dr. Anderson explained that in most cases, a primary care physician is the first point of contact for evaluation. They can order initial tests, including checking testosterone levels, and assessing other possible causes like thyroid disorders, diabetes, or depression.

"If the diagnosis is unclear, testosterone levels are significantly abnormal, or there are concerns about hormone-related conditions, a referral to an endocrinologist may be appropriate," she said. "Along with a physical examination, your healthcare provider will typically order blood tests to measure testosterone levels—usually

in the morning when levels are highest."

Dr. Anderson added that additional lab tests may be done to check for underlying conditions that can mimic or contribute to andropause symptoms, such as diabetes; high blood pressure; thyroid disorders; pituitary gland tumors; and heart disease.

Andropause treatment

Treatment may be considered for men who have both low testosterone levels and symptoms that are affecting their quality of life.

"In such cases, testosterone replacement therapy (TRT) may be an option. TRT can be administered through skin gels, injections, patches, oral tablets, or implanted pellets. However, it's not suitable for everyone," said Dr. Anderson.

A history of certain medical conditions—such as prostate cancer, breast cancer, or uncontrolled heart failure—may make testosterone therapy unsafe, Dr. Anderson shared. This is the reason a thorough evaluation by a man's healthcare provider is essential.

How to cope with an andropause diagnosis

Dr. Anderson noted that effective lifestyle habits can help men to feel better physically, mentally, and emotionally. She suggested that men should:

• Engage in Regular Physical Activity

Boost energy, maintain muscle mass, and support hormone balance by incorporating both strength training and cardiovascular exercise.



Dr. Bernadette Anderson shares knowledge about andropause to raise awareness about men's health. Photo: Stephanie Matthews

• Eat a Nutrient-Rich Diet

Men should fuel their bodies and stabilize their mood. Focus on consuming whole foods such as fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, healthy fats, and whole grains to accomplish these goals.

• Prioritize Sleep

Aim for seven to nine hours of quality sleep nightly.

• Practice Mental Wellness Techniques

Support emotional balance by utilizing stress-reducing strategies such as meditation, breathwork, or spending time in nature.

• Limit Alcohol and Quit Smoking

"Both can disrupt hormone levels and worsen symptoms," said Dr. Anderson.

Follow Dr. Anderson on Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/drbernadetteMD>.

Rambling Rose



By Rosa Pryor

Well, my goodness! Hello everyone, I am so excited about the events that are coming up this month, I have so much to tell you. This is my time of the year. First of all, you know my live entertainment shows at the Avenue Bakery will kick off the first Saturday of every month, starting in June through September, so I want you to mark your calendars.

Now, look my dear friends, if you missed the Juneteenth Celebrations in Annapolis last year, you don't want to miss the 2025 Juneteenth celebration in Annapolis, Md. that will include the Carr's Beach Reunion, a free event on Thursday, June 19 from 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm. This event, hosted by Annapolis Recreation and Parks, will be held at the Annapolis Maritime Museum and Park and Carr's/Elktonia Heritage Park, which are adjacent to each other.

The Carr's Beach Reunion will be bigger and better, featuring the soulful music that crowds used to hear when "The Beach" was in its heyday. I know, Honey Child, because I was there! I mean, where else can you relax on the shores of the Chesapeake Bay and listen to James Brown, Otis Redding, Motown entertainers, The Shirelles, Barry White, and so many others we enjoyed back in the day. That was back in the day when Hoppy Adams and I used to emcee the shows.



The Royal Theater and Community Heritage Corporation presents Matinee @ The Royal with Rosa "Rambling Rose" Pryor as Mistress of Ceremony and Booking Agent. Concerts with live entertainment at the Avenue Bakery, 2229 Pennsylvania Avenue, at Baker Street from 4-7 p.m. on June 7 and will feature John Lamkin & Favorite Quintet. Bring your lawn chair and enjoy. Free and open to the public. For more information, call 410-833-9474.

Bring your folding chairs; vendors and food trucks will be on site. This is a free concert with two entertainment stages featuring: Mousey Thompson's James Brown Experience with Greg Cooper; Stone Ellis & Phaze II Band; and Voices of Motown Philly. As I said before, this is a free event and is open to the public. Tarsha Fitzgerald and Buddy Davis are the emcees. We hope to see you there.

Well, my dear friends, I hope to see you at one place or another. Hopefully, when I see you, I will also have my new book with me to do a book signing. Remember, if you need me, you can call me at 410-833-9474 or email me at rosapryor@aol.com.

UNTIL THE NEXT TIME, I'M MUSICALLY YOURS.



Songbird will perform at City View, 6700 Security Blvd in Gwynn Oak, Maryland, in June, hosted by DJ Jazz from 6-10 p.m. Free admission.



The National Holiday Juneteenth Celebration Sports Reunion hosted by Cleve Brister, Warren Hayman and Willard Wright will be held Thursday, June 19 from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. on the outdoor patio at American Legion Post 122, 4424 Painters Mill Road, Owings Mills, Maryland. Food and beverages will be served. Take your folding chair and enjoy.



A Father's Day Gospel Concert will be held Sunday, June 15 at Israel Baptist Church of Baltimore City, 1200 N. Washington Street and 2000 E. Preston Street, in memory of Lonnie Parker. Featured artists: Lisa Knowles Smith and The Brown Singers; Harvey Watkins, Jr. and The Canton Spirituals; Lil' David & The Bells of Joy; Kenny Davis & The Melodyaires; Eric Waddell and The Abundant Life Singers; Bishop Ernest Santiful and many more. Reverend Robert Wilson and Ernestine Jones will be the Emcees. For more information, call 443-300-6168.

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

By Adrian Harpool

Special to The Baltimore Times

Nearly 200 art enthusiasts, cultural leaders, and artists gathered at the Eubie Blake Cultural Center on Saturday, May 17, 2025, for the opening reception of COLAB: Art and Music from Baltimore and Beyond. The multisensory exhibition curated by Hilary Pierce, President of the Art Collector's Athenaeum, 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 30 visual artists and 18 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," said Derek Price, Executive Director, 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. 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. Known as Baltimore's High Priestess of Indigo, Ajanku also has work in the exhibition.

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

Attending the event were many of the exhibition's visual and performing artists, including Baltimore-based contributors like Megan Lewis, Jeffrey Kent, Gregory Banister, and Philadelphia's Richard Watson. Artists from as far away as Philadelphia and Chicago were on hand to add even more color to an evening that at times resembled a family reunion.

Curator Hilary Pierce envisioned the exhibition as a dialogue between generations, genres, and geographies. "COLAB showcases the scope of African American art over 50 years," Pierce explained. "We feature everyone from mid-century icons like Jacob Lawrence, David Driskell and Sam Gilliam to rising local talents like Ziggy Sayeed, creating a powerful intergenerational conversation."

The auditory element of the show is no less remarkable. Music collaborators include jazz legends like Terri-Lyne Carrington; Dianne Reeves; Marcus Miller; and Marin Alsop; genre-bending performers such as Michele Blu, and celebrated DJs like Neci Williams; and Dmitre Powell. Sean Jones, Professor of Jazz at the Peabody Institute and COLAB's



COLAB Artists Robin Holder (left) from New York and Candace Hunter from Chicago.

music curator and advisor, emphasized the project's innovation: "The music doesn't just accompany the visuals—it interprets them, expands them, gives them voice," said Sean Jones.

Several of the musical pieces were debuted during the reception, with live sets that brought the exhibition 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 Collection of African American Art, George Ciscle, and Goya Contemporary; 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 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 (L-r): Sean Jones, COLAB Music Curator with Hilary Pierce, Guest Curator and Derek Price, Executive Director of the Eubie Blake Cultural Center.

COLAB buddy, Noble Sissle.

COLAB will remain on view at the Eubie Blake Cultural 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 Eubie Blake Cultural Center. For more information, visit www.eubieblake.org or email press@eubieblake.org.

Corrigendum: Some names and affiliations were misprinted in the article published in Vol 39 No 31, May 23-29, 2025. The above article is a corrected version.

What You Need to Know About Maryland's REAL ID Requirements

By Chandler Walters

On May 7, 2025, new federal rules kicked in that might impact your travel plans. To board a domestic flight or enter certain federal buildings – like courthouses, military bases or prisons – you'll need a REAL ID-compliant driver's license or ID card. This article will walk you through how to check your REAL ID status, what documents you'll need to bring if you're not REAL ID-compliant, and how Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service (MVLS) can help with your essential paperwork.

How to Check if You Must Submit Documents for REAL ID

Wondering if you're good to go with your REAL ID? Checking your status is quick and easy. Just head over to Maryland's Motor Vehicle Administration's (MVA) REAL ID website at <https://mva.maryland.gov/Pages/realid.aspx> and enter your driver's license or ID card number to find out if you're already REAL ID-compliant or if you still need to submit documents.

If you prefer to speak with someone, you can call MVA directly at 410-768-7000 for assistance.

The Maryland MVA does not have a process where customers can scan and upload REAL ID documents to its website. Therefore, you must bring your documents in person to a MVA branch.

The MVA typically reaches out via email or U.S. mail if they need something from you. But if your contact information isn't up to date, you might not hear from them until it's too late – like when you're at the airport trying to board a flight. If your ID card or driver's license doesn't show a star in the top right corner, it's not REAL ID-compliant.

Also, be aware of scams that aim to steal your personal information. The MVA will never call to ask for your Social Security number. If you're ever unsure, always confirm your REAL ID status directly through the MVA website at <https://mva.maryland.gov/Pages/realid.aspx> or by calling 410-768-7000.

What Documents Do You Need for a REAL ID?

If you find you still need to submit documents, don't worry. Just visit your local MVA branch with the following:

*One document to prove your age and identity

Examples: A valid U.S. passport or birth certificate

*One document to prove your Social Security number

Examples: Your Social Security card or a W-2 or 1099 form

*Two documents to prove you live in Maryland

Examples: Utility bills, bank statements or a lease agreement with your name and current Maryland address

A full list of acceptable documents can be found in the MVA's Online Document Guide at

<https://mymva.maryland.gov/TAP/IND/>

What If You're Missing the Required Documents?

If you've lost your birth certificate, Social Security card or other key documents, help is available. MVLS offers free legal assistance for issues like legal name changes, birth certificate corrections and other document challenges that can delay your REAL ID approval.

These situations are more common than you might think. For example, older adults sometimes arrive at the MVA with a birth registration instead of an official birth certificate, which is not an acceptable form of identification. Others who've changed their names due to marriage or divorce may need to provide additional court documents to prove these changes. It's also common for people to find mismatches between the names listed on their birth certificate, Social Security card and driver's license – which can require a legal name change through the courts to ensure that all documents match correctly.

While it can feel overwhelming, taking the first step is easier than you think. If you're unsure about your REAL ID status, start by calling the MVA at 410-768-7000. If your records don't match or you're missing documents, reach out to

MVLS to see if you qualify for free legal help. Visit mvlslaw.org or call MVLS' client intake line at 410-547-6537, Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

For full details on Maryland's REAL ID requirements, visit the MVA's official page at <https://mva.maryland.gov/Pages/realid.aspx>.

Chandler Walters is the outreach and communications manager for Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service.



Graphic: Maryland Volunteer Lawyers

Legal Notice

CITY OF BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION NOTICE OF LETTING

Sealed Bids or Proposal for the **TR25012, ADA CURB RAMP CONSTRUCTION CITY-WIDE URGENT NEED (JOC)** will be received at the Office of the Comptroller, Room 204, City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland until **JUNE 18, 2025, at 11:00 A.M.** Board of Estimates employees will be stationed at the Security Unit Counter just inside the Holliday Street entrance to City Hall from 10:45 A.M. to 11:00 A.M. every Wednesday to receive Bids. Positively no bids will be received after 11:00 A.M. The bids will be publicly opened by the Board of Estimates in Room 215, City Hall at Noon. As of **MAY 23, 2025**, the Contract Documents may be examined, without charge by contacting Brenda Simmons at brenda.simmons@baltimorecity.gov or (443) 865-4423 to arrange for a copy of the bid book labeled **"NOT FOR BIDDING PURPOSES"** to be emailed to you. Anyone who desires to purchase a bid book to be used for bidding purposes must do so in person and by contacting Brenda Simmons at the email address or phone number above. The non-refundable cost is **SEVENTY-FIVE DOLLARS AND NO CENTS (\$75.00)** to be paid at the Department of Transportation 417 E. Fayette Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21202 made payable to the Director of Finance. **Conditions and requirements of the Bid are found in the bid package.** All contractors bidding on this Contract must first be prequalified by the City of Baltimore Contractors' Qualification Committee. Interested parties should call (410) 396-6883 or contact the Committee at 4 S. Frederick Street, 4th Floor, Baltimore, Maryland 21202. **If a bid is submitted by a joint venture ("JV"), then in that event, the document that established the JV shall be submitted with the bid for verification purposes.** The Prequalification Categories required for bidding on this project are **D02620 CURBS, GUTTERS, SIDEWALKS**. Cost Qualification Range for this project will be from **\$1,000,000.01 to \$2,000,000.00**. A "Pre-Bidding Information" session will be conducted via Microsoft Teams on **JUNE 4, 2025**, 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 receive an invite to the Microsoft Team (video conference meeting). Principle Items of work for this project are: **5 INCH CONCRETE SIDEWALK - 25,000 SF; SURVEY, EVALUATION, SKETCHES, AND STAKEOUT FOR CURB RAMPS - 100 EA; and CONCRETE CURB OR COMBINATION CURB AND GUTTER, VARIABLE WIDTH AND HEIGHT - 4,000 LF. The MBE Goal is 28%; The WBE Goal is 10%.** APPROVED: Celeste Amato, Clerk, Board of Estimates



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