

The Annapolis Times

Vol. 39 No. 35

June 20 - 26, 2025

A Baltimore Times/Times of Baltimore Publication



Neptune Yacht Club marked its opening for the season on June 14, 2025, celebrating over 71 years of fellowship and ownership on the water with its Annual Flag Raising Ceremony. Princess Mia and Commodore Speed cut the ribbon. (Left to right): Vice Commodore Ian Harpool; Fleet Captain Jayrell Cephas Sr.; Sharmeil Hodge; Juwan Whitehead; Princess Mia M. Howie; Past Commodore Dr. Gary Rodwell; Commodore Brooks "Speed" Moore; Jackie Pretty; Rear Fleet Captain Damon Barnes; Donald Thigpen; and Past Commodore Jim Ford. (See article on page 8) Photo Credit: Rasheed Soumas, The Baltimore Times intern

Classically Trained Violinist Breaks Barriers, Scheduled to Perform at AFRAM

By Andrea Blackstone

Can you name a male or female Black string player off the top of your head? If you have never heard of Sanford Allen, he studied music at the Juilliard School of Music and Mannes School of Music.

“In 1959, he became the first African-American regular member of the Lewisohn Stadium Concerts Orchestra. Then, in 1962, he joined the New York Philharmonic. This made him the first full-time African-American violinist in that famous orchestra. He stayed with the Philharmonic until 1977,” according to Kiddle Encyclopedia. (https://kids.kiddle.co/Sanford_Allen)

Although Black violinists like Allen exist, awareness about their musical contributions needs greater exposure. Violinists are typically not top of mind, but in recent years, mentions of Black violinists are nestled in the cracks of the Internet.

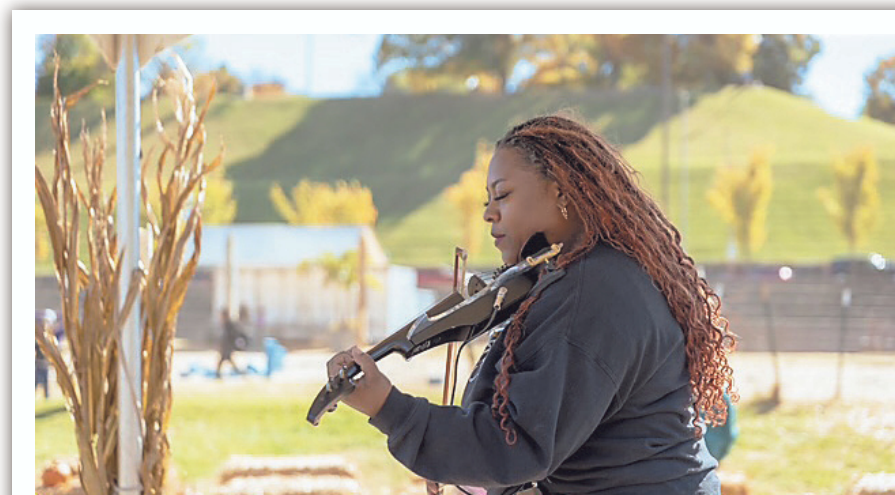
Add Baltimorean Leanne Holmes (“L-Stringz”) to the list of violinists that you should know.

According to her website, the professional classically trained violinist has recorded and performed for artists from Wale to 50 Cent and 2 Chainz. Holmes recently stated that she became interested in violin around 10 years old.

“I was transferred to another school within my district that had a gifted in art program,” Holmes said.

While being reared in Atlanta, Georgia, Holmes took private violin lessons that largely consisted of classical music. However, the violinist began teaching herself how to play different genres such as hip-hop and R&B.

“I started playing contemporary music in high school after meeting my mentor Ashanti Floyd ‘The Mad Violinist.’ Being classically trained, I am



Leanne Holmes (“L-Stringz”), a Baltimore-based professional violinist and entertainer, has been classically trained for nearly two decades. She developed a niche performing contemporary music such as hip-hop and R&B.

Photos: SW Guillermo Rambo Canner

comfortable playing all different types of genres,” said Holmes.

The Music Performance Major with a concentration in violin graduated from Hampton University in the class of 2020.

Holmes accomplished a great performance feat as a violinist.

“Honda Battle of the Bands is an annual showcase for HBCU marching bands. To date, I am still the only violinist to perform the National Anthem for, not one, but two Honda Battle of the Band showcases. I performed the National Anthem in 2019 and 2020, and this also led to me being able to perform for CIAA as well,” Holmes proudly noted.

Later relocating to Maryland required an adjustment in her personal life. Holmes made a major sacrifice to pursue her music career by moving to Baltimore from Atlanta where her family resides.

“We are very close knit so it’s hard not being close to them every day,”

she explained.

Nevertheless, positive developments emerged from taking a leap of faith. Coming to Maryland exposed the violinist to additional music genres such as Baltimore Drill (which is characterized by aggressive beats and Baltimore club music) and GoGo. Holmes broadened her performance repertoire to include them. She tailors her performances to the event and audience, allowing her to perform for anyone from youth to older generations.

“I perform both solo, in orchestras, and with my band, The Gentlemen. I am a part of a touring HipHop orchestra known as The Illharmonic Orchestra, and I’ve played with a variety of other quartets and groups,” she added.

Holmes embraces her passion as a full-time musician, despite facing barriers.

“Being a Black woman in the music industry is already a challenge as you have to balance being trendy/popular



Leanne Holmes (“L-Stringz”) performs at Harbor Harvest Festival 2024 Baltimore.

while also not forgoing your own values,” said Holmes.

She further mentioned the difficulty of being a solo artist who plays the violin, a string instrument that has not achieved full popularity. But Holmes’ goal as a performer is to provide a new music experience for an audience while crafting music specifically for them and their event.

Holmes’ ability to make a fusion of sounds relatable is a part of her gift. She enjoys having the ability to touch people through music.

“Playing the violin allows others to really interpret music their own way while still hearing songs from their favorite artist. When a person comes up to me and tells me how much fun they had listening to me, that really makes being ‘L-Stringz’ all the more worth it!”

“L-Stringz” and the Gentlemen will perform at AFRAM on June 21-22, 2025 at the Family & Roots Stage. Visit <https://lstringz.com> for more information about Holmes.

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Identity Theft. It Happens. What to Do About It.

By Karen Clay

Clay Technology and Multimedia, L.L.C.

Imagine this scenario: You're going about your business, working, shopping, visiting friends, whatever. You stop by your bank to cash a check you received in the mail. (Yes, you still make trips to the bank!) You reach for your driver's license to present to the teller, and it's missing. You realize you misplaced it, so you deposit the check instead. Later, after searching for hours, you decide to just replace your license and keep it moving. There is just one thing you're concerned about and that is whether you will become a victim of identity theft.

What is Identity Theft?

Identity theft is the use of your personal or financial information without your permission. This can include your name and address, credit card or Social Security number, bank account numbers, medical insurance account numbers, or other information that can be used to impersonate you. Your information can be obtained by a number of means, including in person, online, through social media, phishing and smishing, and/or by phone. Generally, you won't be aware of the theft until you start receiving bills or other correspondence related to accounts you didn't open, purchases you didn't make, changes in your bank statements, etc.

How to Tell If You Are a Victim

If you notice or have experienced the following:

- Unexpected charges on your bank or credit card statements,
- Unfamiliar accounts or credit inquiries on your credit report,
- Bills for purchases you didn't make,
- Debt collection calls for debts that aren't yours,
- Recent denials of credit or loans due to someone else's actions,



These days, managing your identity is wise.

Graphic Design by Karen Clay

- Receipt of unexpected credit cards or account statements, and
- Your mail is missing, you likely have experienced identity theft and should take immediate action.

Immediate Actions to Take

One of the first things to do is to immediately report the theft to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) at <https://www.identitytheft.gov/> website. They will help you through the process of developing a personal recovery plan and putting that plan into action. Other steps you should take include:

- Calling the companies where you know the fraud occurred.
- Placing freezes and fraud alerts on your accounts.
- Closing any new accounts that have been opened in your name.
- Removing any bogus charges on your accounts:
- Call the fraud department of each business.
- Explain that someone stole your identity.
- Tell them which charges are fraudulent and ask the business to remove them.
- Ask the business to send you a letter confirming the removal.
- Keep this letter to use it if this account appears on your credit report later on.

- Obtaining credit reports from all three credit bureaus (Experian, Transunion, and Equifax) and going about the process of correcting them.
- Contacting other entities such as Social Security, Motor Vehicle Administration, etc.
- Reviewing other bills, such as utilities, phones, and rentals to determine whether they have been compromised and take the appropriate action.

Preventive Actions to Consider

If you haven't experienced this kind of theft, GREAT, but don't break out the mint julep yet. Take proactive steps to reduce the probability that you become the next victim. Here are some suggestions to better protect your information:

- Consider placing credit freezes on your credit reports with the three credit bureaus mentioned earlier.
- Get your free credit reports from AnnualCreditReport.com and review the reports, to see if there are any accounts or debts you don't recognize.
- Consider freezing your credit to make it harder for someone to use your information. A credit freeze keeps people from accessing your report. While a freeze is in place,



Karen Clay,
Clay Technology and Multimedia
Courtesy, Karen Clay

nobody can open a new credit account. It's free to place the freeze, or to temporarily lift the freeze if you need to apply for new credit.

- If you're concerned about identity theft, you can also place a free, one-year fraud alert by contacting one of the three credit bureaus. A fraud alert makes it harder for someone to open a new credit account in your name because a business has to verify your identity before it opens the account.

- Accept free credit monitoring if a company offers it. Credit monitoring services scan activity that shows up on your credit reports. Depending on the service, it will usually alert you when something happens on your credit reports, like a company checking your credit, a new loan or credit card, or a company reporting a late payment.

While this may seem daunting and overwhelming, the cost/effort to recover from identity theft can be worse. The old adage, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" definitely rings true in this scenario. Taking preventative steps may be a wise choice.

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Mailing Address

The Baltimore Times
2530 N. Charles Street, Suite 201
Baltimore, MD 21218
Phone: 410-366-3900
<https://baltimoretimes-online.com/>



A Must Read for a Nation in Reflection

Juneteenth 2025: Chavis Urges America to Confront the Enduring Legacy of the Transatlantic Slave Trade

New York, NY – As the nation continues to celebrate Juneteenth—commemorating June 19, 1865, when federal troops enforced the Emancipation Proclamation in Texas—Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr. calls for a deeper reckoning with the global and generational impact of the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

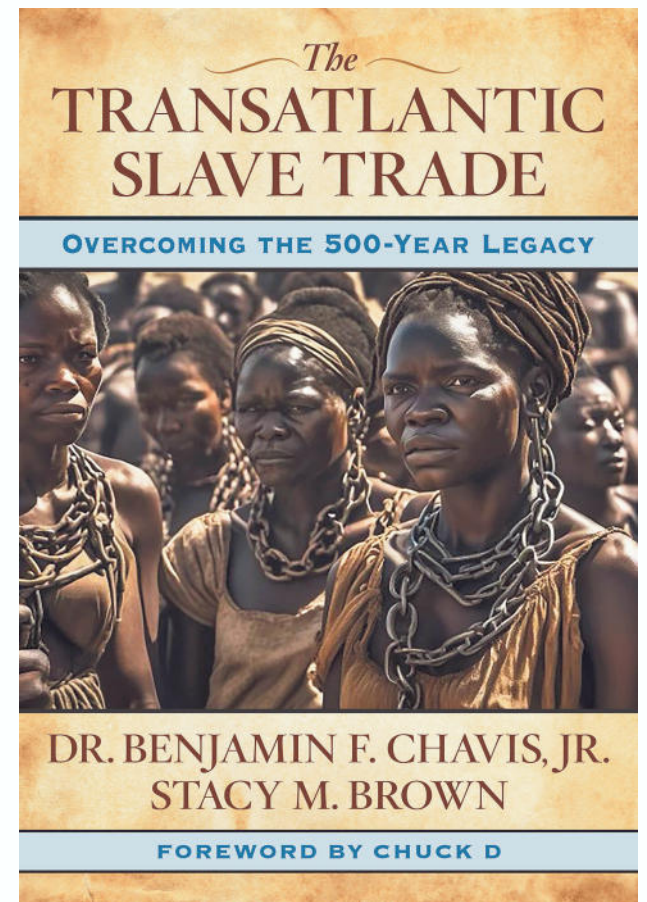
Chavis, a renowned civil rights leader, former executive director of the NAACP and President and CEO of the Black Press of America, co-authored "The Transatlantic Slave Trade: Overcoming the 500-Year Legacy," (October 8, 2024; ISBN 978-1-59079-569-9) with Stacy M. Brown, an accomplished journalist and author and senior national correspondent for Black Press USA.

The book features a powerful foreword by hip-hop legend Chuck D and is endorsed by NBA Hall of Famer Isiah Thomas.

A Legacy That Still Shapes Lives:

- **Environmental Racism:** Dr. Chavis coined the term "environmental racism" in the early 1980s. His 1986 study, *Toxic Waste and Race*, revealed how hazardous waste sites disproportionately impact communities of color, leading to widespread health disparities and environmental injustice.
- **Mass Incarceration, Inequality, and Systemic Racism:** "The chains of slavery may have been broken," Chuck D writes, "but the shackles of systemic racism are still very much intact." The book links modern injustices—from police brutality to education gaps—directly to slavery's legacy.
- **Global Repercussions:** The transatlantic slave trade left marks not only on American soil but around the globe, influencing foreign policy, economic disparity, and racial inequality from the U.S. to the Caribbean and beyond.
- **Modern-Day Consequences:** From gentrification and poverty to voter suppression and underfunded schools, Black communities continue to face barriers rooted in this centuries-old system of oppression.

"Too many still refuse to connect the dots between slavery and today's racial injustices," said Dr. Chavis. "This book is a wake-up call—a demand for awareness and a call to action."



Public Enemy's legendary leader Chuck D writes a powerful foreword in the book/wikimedia commons



A Must-Read for a Nation in Reflection:

"The Transatlantic Slave Trade: Overcoming the 500-Year Legacy" is a timely, urgent, and unapologetic look at how the horrors of the past continue to shape present-day realities. It honors the resilience of Black people while demanding America finally reckon with truth and justice.

Available at Amazon.com and wherever books and e-books are sold.

From Kitchen Karaoke to Cruise Stages, Maysa Leak Keeps Creating Black Music

By Stacy M. Brown

Black Press USA Senior National Correspondent

Grammy-nominated singer Maysa Leak, one of the most distinctive and dynamic voices in soul and jazz, joined Black Press USA's Let It Be Known during Black Music Appreciation Month for a candid and joyful conversation that traced her journey from Baltimore stages to global acclaim. Still radiating the same warmth that's made her a fan favorite for more than three decades, Maysa shared what the month means to her, her recent successes, and exciting plans for the road ahead. "I just appreciate the culture, period," Maysa said of Black Music Appreciation Month. "We created so much of the music the world listens to on a daily basis. It's very important that we celebrate it, so we won't ever forget. We have to celebrate it every day now."

With a honey-toned mezzo-soprano that helped define the sound of British jazz-funk legends Incognito and an illustrious solo career that spans fifteen albums, Maysa continues to build on her legacy. Her latest project, "Remix for Your Soul"—a companion to her 2023 release "Music for Your Soul"—features standout remixes and has already produced two No. 1 hits on Traxsource: "I Don't Mind" and "Down with Me." She released the record under her independent label, Blue Velvet Soul Records, which she founded in 2018. "It's a big deal for me to hit number one without a major machine behind me," she said. "I'm the only machine I have—well, God is the greatest machine of all. But here on Earth, I'm doing this on my own."

That independent spirit has carried Maysa through a storied career that began with background vocals for Stevie Wonder's

"Wonderlove" shortly after graduating from Morgan State University in 1991. A phone audition with Incognito's Jean-Paul "Bluey" Maunick led to her breakout as lead vocalist on hits like "Don't You Worry 'Bout a Thing." Maysa's debut solo album "Maysa" arrived in 1995 and turns 30 this August. She's preparing to mark that milestone—and many others—with a major celebration in 2026, dubbed her "35-60-10" tour: 35 years in music, turning 60 years old, and ten years of her fan-favorite "Kitchen Karaoke Sundays" livestream series. "I want to take it to another level," she said. "Big stage, big background, and a tribute album to Phyllis Hyman. Her family gave me their blessing, and I want to do it with an orchestra. It's going to be beautiful."

Maysa credited Melba Moore's performance in the Broadway musical "Purlie," as the moment she knew she wanted to sing. Chaka Khan, she said, helped shape her approach to jazz, soul, and funk. As for her current playlist? It features music by bassist Byron Miller, vocalist Kimberly Brewer, and Incognito's live album recorded in Tokyo. "I still pinch myself to this day that I was a part of that band," she said.

Fans can catch Maysa on a six-city tour this summer, including a two-week cruise engagement. But no matter the venue, her gratitude never fades. "Every time someone spends their money to come hear me sing, I don't take that for granted," she said. "It's a gift every single time." Asked what message she hopes people take from Black Music Appreciation Month; Maysa was direct: "Hold on to it. Don't let anybody erase it," she stated. "You can't change history. We brought a lot to this whole world musically. We have to preserve it and hand it down to our children and grandchildren."



Maysa Leak, Grammy-nominated singer and Morgan State University alumna.

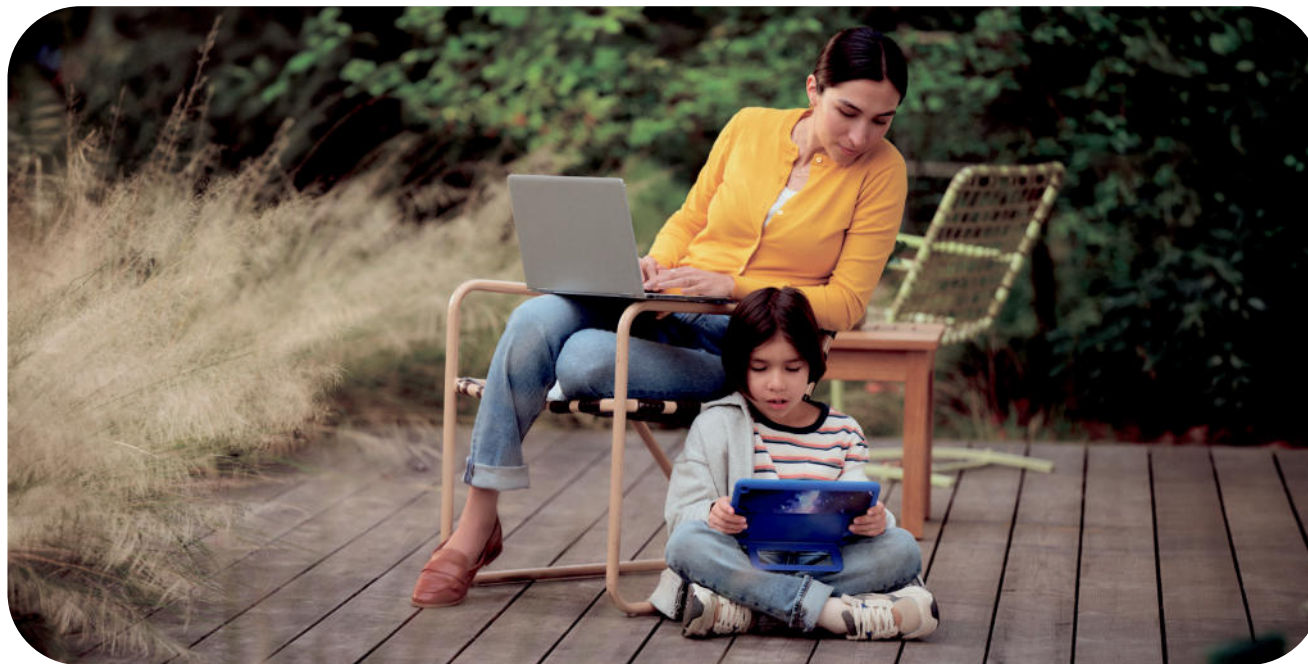
Photo credit: Ray Cox

"Every time someone spends their money to come hear me sing, I don't take that for granted. It's a gift every single time." — Maysa Leak



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Neptune Yacht Club Celebrates 71 Years of Maritime Legacy with Flag Raising Ceremony in Baltimore's Inner Harbor



L-R Vice Commodore Ian Harpool; Juwan Whitehead; Chaplain Mark A. Montgomery; Fleet Captain Jayrell Cephas Sr.; and Donald Thigpen Jr., Esq

Photo: Neptune Yacht Club Archives



Neptune Yacht Club partnered with the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary to train and certify students at Morgan State University in 2018.

Photo: Neptune Yacht Club Archives

By Ian Harpool

On Saturday, June 14, 2025, Baltimore's Inner Harbor bore witness to a powerful symbol of heritage, resilience, and Black excellence as the Neptune Yacht Club (NYC) celebrated its 71st anniversary with its Annual Flag Raising Ceremony. Held at "Creatively Black," the waterfront event honored more than seven decades of dedication to empower Black boaters on the waters of the Chesapeake Bay and beyond.

Founded in 1954, Neptune Yacht Club has stood as a beacon of inclusion and community on the water. What began as an answer to the systemic exclusion of African

Americans from white boating associations has evolved into a thriving legacy of fellowship, education, and service. The ceremony not only marked the start of the boating season but also reaffirmed the club's ongoing commitment to maritime tradition and cultural pride.

A Celebration of Leadership and Legacy

Members, supporters, and families gathered to witness the ceremonial raising of the Neptune Yacht Club burgee, a triangular pennant representing the club's unity, purpose, and enduring presence on the Chesapeake. The ceremony highlighted both history and progress, bringing together leadership across generations.

In attendance were:

- **Commodore: Joseph "Speed" Moore**
- **Vice Commodore: Ian Harpool**
- **Rear Commodore: Melissa Moore**
- **Fleet Captain: Jayrell Cephas Sr.**
- **Rear Fleet Captain: Damon Barnes**
- **Treasurer: Christina White**
- **Immediate Past Commodore: Charles White**
- **Past Commodore (2017–2018): Dr. Gary Rodwell**
- **Past Commodore (2001–2002): Jim Ford and First Lady Norma Ford**
- **Neptune Yacht Club Princess (2023–2025): Mia M. Howie**

Each officer represents a chapter in NYC's enduring story—a story that

began in the face of racial exclusion but has since blossomed into one of community strength, leadership, and unity on the water.

A Legacy Rooted in Resistance

In the 1940s through the 1960s, Black boaters in Maryland and throughout the Chesapeake region faced rampant racial discrimination. Denied dockage, fuel, and access to marinas, and excluded from white boating clubs, many were locked out of a pastime that should have been open to all.

Neptune

Continued on page 12

'Young Dylan Lands Role in New Disney Film, Movie Arrives in Theaters June 20, 2025

By Andrea Blackstone

It seems like yesterday when Dylan Gilmer ("Young Dylan") appeared on "Ellen" to showcase his skills as a personable, pint-sized child rapper with big dreams. The now 16-year-old rapper and actor who hails from Annapolis, Maryland recently completed tenth grade. He has maintained a standard of excellence and growth while adding to his resume of achieving various noteworthy accomplishments.

To date, Young Dylan has appeared on Tyler Perry's "Young Dylan" (Nickelodeon), The Kids Tonight Show (Peacock), and "NLF Slimetime" (Nickelodeon). Despite the great acting strides he has already made, the native Annapolitan continues to soar to new, higher heights on the music and entertainment scene.

"I am in the Disney Pixar movie 'Elio' and I am also filming a movie at the end of June. I am currently working on music. I just released a single called 'Mass Appeal,' and I also have another single called 'It's On Me' dropping on June 20," Young Dylan said.

A fully animated film, "Elio" marked the first time Young Dylan had been a part of a Disney project, according to the actor. His voice was used to help a character come alive on the big screen.

"My character's name is Bryce," Young Dylan said. "The movie 'Elio' is about a kid who is a space fanatic and doesn't fit in. He gets abducted by aliens who mistake him for Earth's ambassador. Later on in the movie, he finds out who he truly is."

"Elio" premieres June 20, 2025 in theaters everywhere. The premiere was held on June 10, 2025, in Los Angeles, California. Young Dylan reflected



The World Premiere of "Elio" was held on June 10, 2025 in Los Angeles, California.

Photos: Da'Mon Gilmer

on his opinion of the animated film's significance.

"I feel like the message the movie wants to represent is staying true to yourself, and learning how to adapt in new environments," Young Dylan explained.

The performer commented about Elio's potential appeal to diverse audiences.

"I can very confidently say ages from kids to adults would enjoy this movie," Young Dylan noted. "I would say this is a feel-good movie because it's a family movie, and you will not only enjoy the movie, but learn a message."

Young Dylan provided a glimpse into what he experienced during the casting process. He stated that voiceover work is not easy. Young Dylan succeeded after enduring a highly competitive process.

"Over 400 people auditioned. I was picked, then I read for the writers of

the movie. After that I was chosen for my role of 'Bryce,'" said Young Dylan.

Hard work paid off for Young Dylan. The talented and driven teenager rose to the top. "Elio" was filmed in New York from August to January 2024.

"It's truly a blessing being a part of a film like this," Young Dylan affirmed.

Da'Mon Gilmer, Young Dylan's father, remarked that the opportunities that his son has experienced make him recognize how blessed he is in life.

Young Dylan continues to work hard, have fun building his career, and polish his talents to enable himself to achieve more. Despite his mass appeal, he remains connected to the small town where his journey began. Da'Mon shared a message about how Young Dylan's hometown and home state can support the performer.

"I would like everyone to support and show up at theatres because being from Annapolis and seeing someone



Native Annapolitan Dylan Gilmer ("Young Dylan") plays Bryce in the animated film, "Elio." The Disney and Pixar science adventure arrives in theaters on Friday, June 20, 2025.

on a big screen who looks like you, and who is from the same town as you is inspiring and motivational," said Da'Mon.

Young Dylan has balanced school with workdays on sets with admirable grace and maturity. Da'Mon wants others to know and remember that achieving anything is possible. Young Dylan's inclusion in "Elio" deserves celebratory recognition.

"We will be having a watch party in my hometown movie theatre, AMC Annapolis 11. This will be a chance for my close loved ones, family and friends to come together, celebrate and watch 'Emilio' for the first time together! We will also be putting together a watch party for fans," Da'Mon stated.

"As a father, I always wanted my son to be successful, and at only 16, he has surpassed my highest expectations. Now, the sky is the limit for him," he proudly added.

Don't Believe the Hype: Care is Required for Melanated Skin

By Andrea Blackstone

Do not let the “Black don’t crack” adage steer you in the wrong direction. While many African Americans seem to age more gracefully than their counterparts, Omni McCluney, a dermatology physician assistant and founder/CEO of Resilience Skin and Beauty, provides expert food for thought. McCluney offers general dermatology services, surgical procedures, cosmetic services and more. She created Resilience Skin and Beauty, a skincare line tailored for sensitive, medically affected skin, especially for people of color.

Prevent Sunburn

McCluney explains that melanin absorbs UV rays, thereby reducing the risk of DNA damage. However, African Americans are still susceptible to sunburned skin. Prolonged exposure to sunlight, especially during peak hours (10 a.m.-4 p.m.), can overwhelm melanin’s protection and cause burns.

Sunburns in darker skin tones may appear as skin tenderness, dryness, peeling, flaking, itchiness, tightness, and darkening of the skin, instead of visible redness.

“In severe cases, there may be blistering. This damage to melanin-rich skin can increase the risk of skin cancers if these conditions are repeated. Sun exposure can also cause hyperpigmentation, uneven skin tone, dark spots, and melasma, and it can even induce skin conditions like eczema and trigger lupus flare-ups and lupus skin disorders. UV damage also contributes to premature aging,” said McCluney.

Guard Against Skin Damage

McCluney suggests that parents should make sure their children wear sunscreen daily to protect their skin from the UV rays.

“It’s also important that parents limit their child’s exposure to the sun by allowing their children outside during dusk and dawn, limiting how long the child is in the sun during peak hours, wearing protective garments, and re-applying sunscreen every two hours,” she added.

Wearing large-brimmed hats during sunny or hot weather can help limit the exposure of UV rays from the sun for people of all ages.

“It can assist in protecting the face, neck, and upper shoulders. It’s not 100% effective, and sunscreen still needs to be applied, but it does add some layer of protection if a person plans on being in the sun for a long duration of time,” said McCluney.

How to Care for Sunburned Skin

Act if your skin gets sunburned. McCluney suggests taking these measures:

1. Soothe the skin. Apply cold compresses to the affected areas for 10-15 minutes.
2. It is preferable to take cool showers.
3. Use fragrance-free moisturizers immediately after bathing.
4. Let sunburned skin heal.

“Emollients like aloe vera gel, shea butter, and ceramide creams like Eucerin will help with the healing of the skin,” McCluney stated.

She further explained that once skin is healed, to further correct the pigmentation, Vitamin C creams may be used to brighten it. Daily use of SPF



Omni McCluney, dermatology physician assistant and founder/CEO of Resilience Skin and Beauty.

Photo: Cosette Coco Agency

prevents additional skin damage.

Skin Cancer Risks

McCluney stated that African Americans are still at risk for skin cancers despite the amount of protection from the increased melanin.

“Acral lentiginous are the most common melanomas in the African-American communities. These hyper-pigmented lesions will appear mostly on the palms of the hands, soles of the feet, and in the nail bed. These lesions are not sun-related and occur in less visible areas, which often leads to late diagnosis causing higher mortality (death) rates,” McCluney mentioned.

Squamous cell carcinomas are also more common than basal cell carcinomas in African Americans.

“Because skin cancers in African Americans appear as dark patches, non-healing sores, or pigmented streaks in nails, which may be mistaken as benign conditions, the delayed diagnosis contributes to worse outcomes,” McCluney explained.

Additionally, SPF sunscreen helps to prevent non-melanoma lesions and photoaging, but it does not prevent acral lentiginous melanoma.

“Self-exams, especially of the palms of the hands, soles of the feet, nails, and scarred areas, and yearly visits with a dermatologist for skin exams are essential for early detection,” McCluney stated.

Skincare Matters

McCluney informs that men have more active oil glands, which makes them more prone to acne and clogged pores.

“Shaving is a form of daily exfoliation and irritation that may cause ingrown hairs and hyperpigmentation, especially in men of color. Skin care routines for men will help reduce inflammation and support the skin barrier recovery,” McCluney stated.

Visit McCluney’s website <https://www.resilienceskincare.com> or Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/resilienceskinandbeauty>.

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**Times
Community
Services**

Neptune

Continued from page 8

In response, four visionary Black men: Attorney William I. Gosnell; Dr. Joseph Thomas; mortician Elroy Wilson; and Navy veteran John Lockett came together to form what would become the Neptune Yacht Club. Their goals were twofold: to introduce more African Americans to the world of boating, and to create a water recreation program for the youth in their communities.

The club was officially organized on May 15, 1954—just two days before the Supreme Court handed down its landmark ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education*. That timing was more than coincidental; it symbolized a broader push toward racial equality and self-determination.

The Founding Fathers of Neptune Yacht Club

Each founder brought a legacy of leadership and service:

- **Attorney William I. Gosnell** not only drafted the club's charter but also introduced future Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall to Donald Gaines Murray. Their case, *Murray v. Pearson* (1936), forced the integration of the University of Maryland School of Law—Marshall's first major legal victory.
- **Dr. Joseph Thomas**, NYC's first commodore, was a pioneering developer of the Turner's Station community. He and his father owned significant land holdings, operated a family drug store, post office, and a state-of-the-art movie theater,

and served as community liaisons to Bethlehem Steel workers.

- **Elroy Wilson**, one of the first Black morticians licensed to offer full funeral services, also held leadership roles in the Arch Social Club, where he helped establish a burial fund for members.
- **John Lockett**, a Navy mechanic and passionate boater, helped grow the club's presence and shared his expertise with younger members. His wife, Jean Lockett, would later make history as Neptune's first female commodore—and possibly the first in the state of Maryland.

Club meetings were initially held at Wilson's funeral home and at Frederick Douglass High School in West Baltimore. There, they hosted lectures, demonstrations, and classes on boat handling for new members, most of whom were encountering boating for the first time.

A Club That Paved the Way

Over the decades, the club expanded its reach, drawing members from Baltimore, Washington D.C., and Annapolis. Their gatherings and advocacy inspired the formation of other Black-led boating organizations, including the Seafarers Yacht Clubs of Annapolis and Washington, and the Pleasant Yacht Club.

Despite being excluded from Baltimore's marinas for many years, Neptune members regularly sailed to Annapolis and other welcoming ports. In 1979, the club was listed in the North American Yacht Registry. In 1999, it joined the Chesapeake Bay Yacht Clubs Association,

and in 2011, became a member of the Yacht Clubs of Maryland.

One of NYC's proudest moments came in 2004, when the club was chosen to lead the maritime procession welcoming the historic replica of the *Amistad* into Baltimore's harbor—a fitting role for a club that has long symbolized the fight for freedom and representation.

A Vision for the Future

The 71st Annual Flag Raising was more than a ceremonial event—it was a declaration of purpose. As Neptune Yacht Club continues to grow, its leadership remains committed to honoring its past while preparing the next generation of boaters.

Among the youngest in attendance was Princess Mia M. Howie (2023-2025). Princess Mia partnered with the American Cancer Society to increase awareness around research and funding, representing youth leadership and community engagement. "For me, it's about showing up with purpose," Howie said. "Color doesn't matter—what matters is your heart, your work, and how you lead with both."

Commodore "Speed" Moore stated, "We stand here because others dared to stand before us." "This flag represents our history, our passion, and our promise," says Fleet Captain Jayrell Cephas Sr.

Neptune Yacht Club has not only endured—it has flourished. Through decades of perseverance, innovation, and community service, it has left a lasting wake across Maryland's waters. As the burgee was raised high above the harbor, it carried with it the weight of history and the promise of continued progress.



Joseph Thomas



Elroy Wilson



John Lockett

Attorney William I. Gosnell (not pictured); Dr. Joseph Thomas; mortician Elroy Wilson; and Navy veteran John Lockett came together to form what would become the Neptune Yacht Club.

Photo: Neptune Yacht Club Archives



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NMLS #2453988

NiJaree Canady Makes History with Record-Breaking \$1M NIL Deal at Texas Tech Title

By Stacy M. Brown
Black Press USA Senior
National Correspondent

NiJaree Canady, a 22-year-old African American softball phenom, has become the first college softball player to sign a Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) deal worth more than \$1 million, a historic moment in collegiate sports.

The former Stanford ace transferred to Texas Tech, where she secured a groundbreaking \$1,050,024 one-year contract through the Matador Club, an NIL collective affiliated with the university. The deal includes a \$1 million direct payment, \$50,000 for living expenses, and an additional \$24 in honor of her jersey number.

According to BlackNews.com, Canady, who was named the 2024 USA Softball Collegiate Player of the Year, entered the transfer portal shortly before Texas Tech hired Coach Gerry Glasco. He acted quickly to bring her to Lubbock—with backing from NFL quarterback and Red Raider alum Patrick Mahomes—and offered her not just a starting role but an expanded opportunity to develop her offensive skills. “The coaching staff and their vision were a major reason I made this decision,” Canady told ESPN. She described her transition from Stanford’s Palo Alto campus to West Texas as smooth, noting that the environment reminds her more of her hometown of Topeka, Kansas.

USA Today noted that Canady’s impact on the field was immediate and unmatched. Despite suffering a minor injury, she helped lead Texas



NiJaree Canady
Photo courtesy mpa.org

Tech to its first Big 12 regular-season and conference titles, finishing the season with a 26-5 record and a nation-leading ERA of 0.86. She also threw a two-hit shutout with 10 strikeouts to deliver the program’s first-ever win at the Women’s College World Series. Coach Glasco called Canady the best pitcher he’s ever coached and said he believes she can lead Texas Tech to a national championship.

Her resume is as stacked as her fastball is deadly. In addition to her 2024 USA Softball Player of the Year honor, Canady received the Honda

Sport Award, was a two-time Women’s College World Series All-Tournament Team selection and dominated at Stanford with a 41-10 record and a 0.67 ERA over two seasons. She also represented Team USA in the 2024 Japan All-Star Series.

Before college, Canady was a standout at Topeka High School, where she was a two-time Kansas Gatorade Player of the Year and led her team to back-to-back state championships. She graduated in 2022 and was ranked as the No. 11 softball recruit in the nation by Extra

Innings Softball.

Off the field, she’s equally grounded—an academic All-American who enjoys reading and spending time with her dog. She is the daughter of Bruce and Katherine Canady, and her brother, Bruce Jr. plays football at Cal. Canady’s NIL deal not only sets a new benchmark for college softball but also signals a shift in opportunities for Black female athletes in a space that other demographics have long dominated. “She’s changing the game—literally and financially,” Coach Glasco said.

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CITY OF BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION NOTICE OF LETTING

Sealed Bids or Proposal for the **TR25014, ADA CURB RAMP CONSTRUCTION SOUTH URGENT NEED (JOC)** will be received at the Office of the Comptroller, Room 204, City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland until **JULY 16, 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 **June 20, 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 **\$2,000,000.01 to \$3,000,000.00.** A “Pre-Bidding Information” session will be conducted via Microsoft Teams on **JULY 02, 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 27,500 SF SURVEY, EVALUATION, SKETCHES, AND STAKEOUT FOR CURB RAMPS 110 EA CONCRETE CURB OR COMBINATION CURB AND GUTTER, VARIABLE WIDTH AND HEIGHT 4,400 LF.** The MBE Goal is **28%;** The WBE Goal is **10%.** APPROVED: Celeste Amato, Clerk, Board of Estimates

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CITY OF BALTIMORE
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
OFFICE OF ENGINEERING AND CONSTRUCTION
NOTICE OF LETTING

CITY OF BALTIMORE
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
OFFICE OF ENGINEERING AND CONSTRUCTION
NOTICE OF LETTING

Sealed Bids or Proposals, in duplicate addressed to the Board of Estimates of the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore and marked for **SANITARY CONTRACT NO. 995W-Westport Sewerage Pumping Station Upgrades** will be received at the Office of the Comptroller, Room 204 City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland until 11:00 A.M on **August 6, 2025**. Positively no bids will be received after 11:00 A.M. Bids will be publicly opened by the Board of Estimates and can be watched live on CharmTV’s cable channel 25/1085HD; charmtvbaltimore.com/watch-live or listen in at (443) 984-1696 (ACCESS CODE: 0842939) from City Hall at Noon. The Contract Documents may be examined, without charge, at Contract Administration 4 South Frederick Street Baltimore, Maryland 21202 on the 3rd floor (410) 396-4041 as of **June 20, 2025** and copies may be purchased for a non-refundable cost of **\$50.00**. **Conditions and requirements of the Bid are found in the bid package.** All contractors bidding on this Contract must first be prequalified by the City of Baltimore Contractors Qualification Committee. Interested parties should call (410) 396-6883 or contact OBC at 4 S Frederick St., 4th Floor, Baltimore, MD 21202. **If a bid is submitted by a joint venture (“JV”), then in that event, the document that established the JV shall be submitted with the bid for verification purposes.** The Prequalification Category required for bidding on this project is **E13003 Water and/or Sewer Treatment Plants and Pumping Stations**. Cost Qualification Range for this work shall be **\$1,000,000.01 to \$2,000,000.00**.

Sealed Bids or Proposals, in duplicate addressed to the Board of Estimates of the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore and marked for **SANITARY CONTRACT NO. 985R- Rehabilitation Of The High Level Interceptor** will be received at the Office of the Comptroller, Room 204 City Hall, Baltimore, Maryland until 11:00 A.M on **August 6, 2025**. Positively no bids will be received after 11:00 A.M. Bids will be publicly opened by the Board of Estimates and can be watched live on CharmTV’s cable channel (Channel 25/1085HD); charmtvbaltimore.com/watch-live or listen in at (443) 984-1696 (ACCESS CODE: 0842939) at noon. The contract documents may be examined, without charge, at Contract Administration 4 South Frederick Street Baltimore, Maryland 21202 on the 3rd floor (410) 396-4041 as of **June 20, 2025** and copies may be purchased for a non-refundable cost of **\$100**. **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, Department of Public Works, Office of Boards and Commissions (OBC). Interested parties should call (410) 396-6883 or contact OBC at 4 S Frederick St., 4th Floor, Baltimore, MD 21202. **If a bid is submitted by a joint venture (“JV”), then in that event, the document that established the JV shall be submitted with the bid for verification purposes.** The Prequalification Category required for bidding on this project is **B02552: Sewer Construction and G90099- Lining Sewers and Drains Via Cured In-Place Pipe**. Cost Qualification Range for this work shall be **\$20,000,000.01 to \$30,000,000.00**.

A “Pre-Bidding Information” session will be conducted virtually via Microsoft Teams. Vendors can call (audio only) 1 667-228-6519 Conference ID: 622 534 796# or Meeting ID: 284 790 688 347 0 PASSCODE: wq6xd25r on **June 25, 2025 at 10:00 A.M.** A Pre-bid site visit will be conducted on **June 30, 2025, at 10:00 AM**. All questions from bidders must be submitted in writing to the Project Manager, Abdul Jafari, Abdul.jafari@baltimorecity.gov by **July 22, 2025, at 5:00 PM**.

For further inquiries about purchasing bid documents, please contact the assigned Contract Administrator Charry@baltimorecity.gov and dpwbidopportunities@baltimorecity.gov

To purchase a bid book, please make an electronic request at: [https://publicworks.baltimorecity.gov/dpw-construction-projects-notice-letting and dpwbidopportunities@baltimorecity.gov](https://publicworks.baltimorecity.gov/dpw-construction-projects-notice-letting-and-dpwbidopportunities@baltimorecity.gov). For further inquiries about purchasing bid documents, please contact the assigned Contract Administrator Latonia.Walston@baltimorecity.gov.

A “Pre-Bidding Information” session will be conducted via Microsoft Teams. Vendor can call 667-228-6519 Phone Conference ID, 624 432 295# or Meeting ID: 239 629 584 2462 PASS-CODE: Yz6ZX36S on June 26, 2025 at 10:30AM.

All bid inquiries must be emailed to: charry@baltimorecity.gov and darryn.mobley@baltimorecity.gov by the Q&A deadline of July 23,2025. Questions received in writing and by the deadline will only be considered.

Principal items of work for this contract include, but are not limited to:
Vacuum cleaning wetwells.
Replacement of the existing slide gates and provide electric actuators.
Replacement of existing swing check valves and associated piping.
Replacement of the screen container and guided track.
Replacement of the monorail and hoist in the wetwell.
Replacement of the existing HVAC equipment.
Replacement of the existing generator and provide an outdoor generator.
Replacement of the existing pumping station control panel.
Replacement of instrumentations including flowmeter, level transmitters, and pressure switches.

Principal items of work for this contract include, but are not limited to:
Sewer cleaning and closed circuit television (CCTV inspection;
Cured-in-place pipe (CIPP) lining of large diameter sanitary sewers;
Installation of new small diameter sanitary sewers;
Manhole and junction chamber rehabilitation and replacement work.

This project is a recipient of the Maryland Water Quality & Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund-Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) and U.S. EPA Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) Programs.

The MBE goal is **22%** The WBE goal is **6%**

APPROVED: APPROVED:
Clerk, Board of Estimates Khalil Zaied
Director
Department of Public Works

The MBE goal is **22%** The WBE goal is **16%**

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Clerk, Board of Estimates Khalil Zaied
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