



THE BALTIMORE TIMES

Vol. 39 No. 43

August 15 - 21, 2025

A Baltimore Times/Times of Baltimore Publication



Take Care of Your Money: The Importance of Implementing Financial Strategy for First-generation, High-income Earners

Mark Mollon and his sister, Marcella Mollon-Williams founded Legacy Builder, a full-service financial education firm. The brother and sister team specialize in helping clients to build wealth with purpose. Legacy Builder was founded in 2007. Mollon and Mollon-Williams are children of immigrant parents who hail from Trinidad and Tobago. David and Diana Mollon immigrated to America and worked hard to build their American dream for their family. Their children, who are fourth-generation business owners, help others to create a family legacy to pass down to the next generation.

(See article on page 7)

Photo: Rodgers Polk Photography



How Special Needs Trusts and ABLE Accounts Can Help Maryland Families Plan for a Brighter Future

By Margaret Henn

Planning for the future of a loved one with a disability can feel overwhelming – especially when it comes to finances. But the good news is, Maryland families have two powerful tools that can offer peace of mind and long-term security – Special Needs Trusts (SNTs) and Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Accounts.

These options are designed to help you set aside money for a loved one with a disability without putting their public benefits – like Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Medicaid – at risk. Simply giving someone money or leaving them an inheritance can unintentionally disqualify them from programs that cover critical needs like housing, health care and daily support. That's where these financial tools step in.

What is a Special Needs Trust?

A Special Needs Trust is a legal arrangement that allows someone (called a trustee) to manage money or property on behalf of a person with a disability (the beneficiary). When set up correctly, the money in the trust doesn't count against public benefits limits. So, your loved one can still qualify for the help they need while using the trust to cover extras that improve their quality of life.

Types of Special Needs Trusts:

Third-Party SNTs: Set up and funded by someone other than the person with the disability. **First-Party SNTs:** Funded using the beneficiary's own money (like a legal settlement or inheritance). **Pooled Trusts:** Managed by nonprofits, combining resources from multiple beneficiaries' assets for greater efficiency.



Photo: FG Trade from Getty Images via Canva.Com

What is an ABLE Account?

An ABLE Account is another helpful tool. Think of this tax-advantaged savings account like a 529 college savings plan, but for people with disabilities. It's a tax-free way to save money for disability-related expenses, and the money doesn't count toward SSI or Medicaid limits, provided the funds are used for Qualified Disability Expenses.

Key Features of ABLE Accounts in Maryland

- **Who's Eligible:** Anyone who became disabled before age 26 (will increase to age 46 starting January 1, 2026).
- **Control:** Managed by the person with a disability or a legal representative.
- **Annual Contribution Limits:** \$19,000 for 2025; up to \$500,000 total in Maryland, with the first \$100,000 exempt from SSI limits.

Which One is Right for Your Family?

It's not always an either-or decision. In many cases, using both a Special Needs Trust and an ABLE account can offer the best combination of flexibility and security.

- **Use an SNT** for managing large sums – like gifts, inheritances or settlements – especially if a trustee must manage the funds.
- **Use an ABLE account** for everyday spending, especially if your loved one wants more direct control over their money.

Either way, getting legal advice is key – especially when setting up a trust. Drafting a trust incorrectly could have negative consequences for the individual

with a disability and could impact your loved one's eligibility for benefits. If you're interested in pooled trusts, one great resource is First Maryland Disability Trust. For more information on ABLE accounts, check out Maryland ABLE at marylandable.org.

Planning ahead for a loved one with a disability can be complex, but also empowering. With tools like Special Needs Trusts and ABLE Accounts, Maryland families can protect their loved one's access to essential benefits – and still ensure they live a rich and fulfilling life.

Margaret Henn is the Deputy Director of Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service.

gp² Black & African American
Connections to
Parkinson's Disease Study

For yourself. For family. For community.

The Global Parkinson's Genetics Program (GP2) is an international research program.

GP2 aims to learn more about gene changes that may cause Parkinson's in people from all backgrounds.

GP2 is seeking Black and African American people age 18 and older – both with and without Parkinson's disease – for a research study.



Participants will help advance knowledge about Parkinson's disease in Black and African American people.

To learn more, please call
1-866-274-1912 or visit
blaacpd.org

gp² Black & African American
Connections to
Parkinson's Disease Study

THE MICHAEL J. FOX FOUNDATION
FOR PARKINSON'S RESEARCH

20250718-US-ENG-PA-PAD-V2.0_Baltimore



“HOW SHOULD NEWSROOMS USE AI?”

HELP SHAPE HOW WE USE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN OUR NEWSROOM

Artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming how we live, work, and connect—and it’s also changing the way news is gathered, delivered, and experienced. From print to digital, social media to video and audio, AI is becoming a powerful tool in the world of journalism.

At The Baltimore Times, we believe in staying ahead of innovation while staying grounded in the values that have guided us since 1986: trust, transparency, and community service. As we begin exploring how AI might support our newsroom, we’re committed to using this technology responsibly, ethically, and in a way that earns—and keeps—your trust.

We know you may have questions about AI. So do we.

That’s why we’re inviting you, our readers and community members, to share your thoughts in a brief survey: **“How Should Newsrooms Use AI?”** This national survey was developed in partnership with two trusted media organizations—Local Media Association/Local Media Foundation and Trusting News—to ensure a thoughtful and inclusive approach.



Your feedback will help us shape how we integrate AI into our reporting process and ensure that our use of AI tools reflects the values of the community we serve. You may respond anonymously, and every voice counts.

Thank you for being a part of our journey—and for continuing to support local, community-driven journalism.

The Baltimore Times
Positive Stories About Positive People



Part 2 - Global Positioning Systems (GPS) Primer: Responsible Use of Location Tracking

By Karen Clay

Clay Technology and Multimedia, L.L.C.

In my last article, I talked about the benefits of using GPS devices, trackers, apps, air tags, and monitors for things such as finding “lost” items, keeping up with children, or supporting the independence of older family members. As with many advances in technology, the upside of its use, also comes with a downside. For instance, the GPS navigation in your car, if not updated, could lead you to a dead-end road, or as happened with one homeowner -- led drivers seeking the local courthouse, to their home instead. In this article, I will focus on four potential risks about which you should be mindful in your continued use of this and similar technologies, and what you can do to minimize them.

Invasion of Privacy: Potential of Being Tracked Without Consent

Even though trackers such as Apple’s AirTag and Life360’s Tile are designed to help you find misplaced items, they can also be used for unauthorized surveillance. Apple has implemented alerts such as “AirTag Found Moving with You” and “Unknown Accessory Detected Near You” to curb misuse.

What You Can Do:

Update firmware and tracking apps regularly. Inspect your belongings regularly. Use tracker detection apps and limit app permissions. For your children, control their app settings from your parent account. Restrict location sharing to trusted family and run periodic scans on school bags. Teach your children to report alerts that they hear. Additionally, consider disabling location history and opting out of the sale of your data.

Data Exploitation: Location Data Collected and Potentially Sold

According to the Electronic Frontier Foundation (eff.org) your location data isn’t just a pin on a map. It’s a powerful tool that reveals far more than most of us realize. It can expose where you work, where you pray, who you spend time with, and, sometimes where you seek healthcare. In recent years, a number of states have enacted data privacy laws and rules to give consumers better control over the collection and use of their data. These rules require companies that collect and sell user data, to inform you of this and allow you to opt out of having your data used in this way.

What You Can Do:

Consider opting out of data sharing and limit app installations to reputable sources. Periodically delete the location history on your devices. Register your children’s trackers to your parent account. Life360 has strengthened its Tile device to include user control over data sharing through built-in privacy options. An in-app toggle allows a simple way for you to opt out of data sales or sharing.

False Sense of Security: Over-Reliance Can Dull Situational Awareness

Over time, heavy use of tracking and similar devices can cause us to be too complacent. We start assuming that our items or loved ones are always locatable through technology. That is until the devices fail when they are most needed. It’s important for us to keep



Tracking devices can offer peace of mind, convenience, and safety while also posing challenges such as unauthorized tracking and privacy risks.

Graphic Design by Karen Clay

in mind that these technologies are not foolproof. They can fail due to a number of reasons, including limitations of the specific device, battery issues, tampering, or signal interference. When we overly rely on these devices, we risk diminishing our own vigilance/situational awareness in everyday scenarios such as traveling, commuting, or parenting. There really is no technology that can be a substitute for thoughtful awareness.

What You Can Do:

Maintain/practice situational awareness in daily activities and have backup location methods/strategies. Set realistic expectations for your children and encourage manual check-ins.

Stalking & Abuse: Misuse by Partners or Criminals via Hidden Trackers

Some devices have been weaponized in disturbing ways, from stalking individuals and tracking cars to more violent crimes. Victims have reported trackers found in personal belongings or on vehicles, leading to dangerous situations including, but not limited to stalking, domestic abuse, suspected sex trafficking and premeditated vehicle theft.



Karen Clay
Clay Technology and Multimedia
Courtesy, Karen Clay

What You Can Do:

Teach everyone in your circle to respond quickly to tracker alerts. Secure accounts with strong passwords and two factor authentication. Report the presence of suspicious devices to authorities. Limit who can track your child’s device and teach safety routines if trackers are found.

In Summary:

While GPS and other location-tracking technologies offer powerful benefits, they also carry risks as articulated in this article. However, with knowledgeable use, and the implementation of protective settings and safeguards, you can better balance safety with convenience. Staying alert and proactive allows you to harness these tools to your benefit while also keeping control of your personal security.

Paris Brown
Publisher

Joy Bramble
Publisher Emeritus

Dena Wane
Editor

Andrea Blackstone
Associate Editor

Eunice Moseley
Entertainment Columnist

Ida C. Neal
Administrative Assistant

Sharon Bunch
Advertising

Ursula V. Battle
Reporter

Stacy Brown
Reporter

Demetrius Dillard
Reporter

Chris Murray
Reporter

Rosa “Rambling Rose” Pryor
Columnist

Karen Clay
Technology Columnist

Tyler Stallings
Junior Reporter

The Baltimore Times (USPS 5840) is a publication of The Baltimore Times/Times of Baltimore, Inc. The Baltimore Times is published every Friday. News and advertising deadline is one week prior to publication. No part of this publication may be reproduced without the written consent of the publisher. Subscriptions by mail \$60 per year. Standard bulk postage paid at Baltimore, MD 21233. POSTMASTER send address changes to: The Baltimore Times, 2530 N. Charles Street, Suite 201, Baltimore, MD 21218

Notice

Any unsolicited manuscripts, editorial cartoons, etc., sent to The Baltimore Times becomes the property of The Baltimore Times and its Editorial Department, which reserves the right to accept or reject any or all such unsolicited material.

Mailing Address

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



Losing More Than Jobs: The Economic and Social Fallout of the Workforce Exit

The departure of 300,000 women of color from the workforce is a warning about our future

By Collette F. Colclough

Three hundred thousand women exiting the workforce is a shift that will be felt in our communities for years to come. Many have exited not by choice but because of inequity, bias, and economic pressure. Their absence is felt in our offices, our classrooms, our hospitals, and our communities.

This is more than an (un)employment story. When women of color are pushed out of jobs, the loss resonates far beyond a paycheck. It means fewer families building generational wealth, fewer mentors for the next generation, and fewer leaders shaping the policies and workplaces of tomorrow. It weakens entire communities and wears down the progress made toward equity over decades.

Unequal pay, lack of affordable childcare, burnout from carrying both professional and caregiving responsibilities, discriminatory hiring and promotion practices, and industries that shed jobs in ways that disproportionately impact women of color all play a role. The COVID-19 pandemic magnified these inequities, forcing many women of color to leave the workforce at alarming rates as they took on caregiving for children and elders, navigated remote learning, or faced job losses in vulnerable industries. The aftermath of that period continues to ripple through our economy and our communities.

While women across the board have faced challenges in recent years, women of color have carried a disproportionate share of the burden. Black women, Latina women, and Native women are concentrated in

sectors such as healthcare support, retail, education, and hospitality. These are industries hit hardest by pandemic layoffs and have been slow to recover in wages and job stability. Even as jobs return, they often come with fewer hours, reduced benefits, and lower pay. Many of these women were the frontline workers who kept the country running during the height of COVID-19, yet today find themselves treated as expendable.

In Baltimore, women of color are the backbone of the state's workforce in healthcare, education, government, hospitality, and small business ownership. When their economic footing weakens, the impact ripples through our communities, with less spending in local businesses, fewer resources for schools, and widening gaps in home ownership and wealth-building. Baltimore's economy is at its strongest when women of color are working, thriving, and leading.

The problem is big and there is no one answer. However, any solution must be targeted and intentional. Businesses must audit pay equity and promotion pathways, implement flexible work options, and address bias in recruitment and retention. Policymakers and state programs must prioritize affordable childcare, paid family leave, and workforce development programs tailored for women of color re-entering the workforce. In Maryland, this also means leveraging state programs and partnerships to ensure workforce development initiatives reach those most impacted. Most importantly, jobs must be available for those who are seeking to return to the workforce.



Collette F. Colclough

Courtesy photo

To accept this as the new normal is to quietly concede that the talents, ambitions, and leadership of women of color are expendable. They are not.

Employers, lawmakers, advocates, and community leaders must treat this as the crisis it is. It will require uncomfortable conversations about bias and inequity, bold investments in policies that work, and a willingness to dismantle systems that no longer serve. But the cost of inaction is far greater. We have a chance right now to bring these women back, to build workplaces where they can thrive, and to ensure that no one else is forced to choose between survival and a career. It is a matter of justice, equity, and national competitiveness. If we fail to address it now, we risk cementing a legacy of exclusion that will take generations to undo.

Collette F. Colclough is the Executive Director / CEO of Forward Women's Leadership Forum - <https://www.forwardwlf.org/>

Music! Music! Music!

2025 Newport Jazz Festival

Photos by Gar Roberts

By Gar Roberts

This year, the Newport Jazz Festival celebrated its 71st year in its steadfast commitment to bring many forms of music together to accomplish the true melting pot of our society. This year, they blended artists such as: The Roots; Janelle Monae; Bela Fleck; Dianne Reeves; Kenny Garrett; DELA Soul; and Stanley Jordan. The spectators were a mix of all ages and races who enjoyed themselves. In many cases, some were introduced to artists' styles of music that they had not been aware of.

The festival is always held at the end of July through the first week of August. From the DMV, it is a bit of a drive, but once you arrive in the picturesque area of New England, it's all worth it.



Bassist for Willow Mohini



Vocalist Cecile McLorin



Frontman Tariq Black Thought Trotter for the Roots



Performer Vocalist Janelle Monae



Vocalist Dianne Reeves



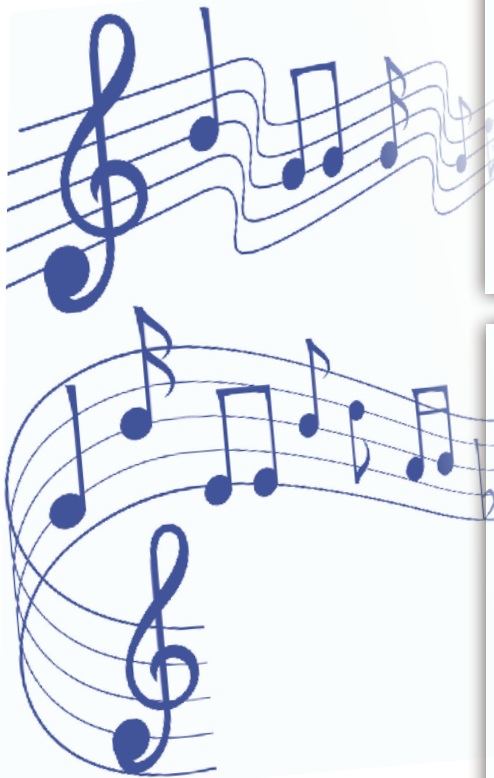
Guitairst Stanley Jordan



Tuba player Damon Bryson for the Roots



Pianist Hiromi



Take Care of Your Money: The Importance of Implementing Financial Strategy for First-generation, High-income Earners

Part 1 of a Two-Part Series

By **Andrea Blackstone**

When celebrities or public figures shatter glass ceilings and fall from grace, the public is often left to wonder how they could make missteps and destroy their financial blessing and reputation. As budding business owners and aspiring professionals strive to climb the ladder of success, it is wise to begin to master how to manage finances and exercise the emotional discipline to keep it.

A Blueprint That Should Not Be Skipped

Marcella Mollon-Williams, BFA™, a behavioral financial advisor and co-founder of Legacy Builder Group, and her brother, Mark Mollon, a Chartered Federal Employee Benefits Consultant (ChFEBCSM), investment advisor representative, and company co-founder, provide insight about moving wisely on a path to financial success.

“We provide first-generation high-income earners with the blueprint to achieve financial certainty and build multi-generational legacy wealth,” said Marcella Mollon-Williams.

The licensed behavioral financial advisor, certified cognitive behavioral coach, and certified master mindset coach noted that a typical Legacy Group Builder client is a first-generation high-income earner and someone who has broken financial ceilings in their family. They are often navigating newfound success without a blueprint.

“They may be first-time six, seven, or even eight-figure earners. These clients aren’t just looking to grow their wealth; they’re trying to build a legacy while healing from the pressure, guilt, or confusion that can come from

being the ‘first’.” Many are business owners, corporate leaders, or professionals who have out-earned their upbringing, and now they need a strategy that integrates financial literacy with emotional intelligence and legacy-minded leadership,” Mollon-Williams added.

What is a behavioral financial advisor?

As a behavioral financial advisor, the expert specializes in helping clients understand the psychological and emotional forces that influence how they manage, invest, and pass on their wealth. Mollon-Williams explained that traditional advisors focus on the “what”—budgets, investments and insurance.

“I focus on the ‘why.’ Why do you overspend? Why do you feel guilty for earning more than most of your family members? Why do you hesitate to invest in yourself?” By blending financial strategy with mindset mastery, we help clients build habits and behaviors that align their money with their mission—so they don’t just accumulate wealth, but actually feel confident, connected, and clear about what it’s for.”

What We Can Learn from Public Figures

Mollon-Williams reminds us that lessons can be learned from notables and leaders who achieve top-tier industry success, but who experience problematic legal or personal challenges.



Marcella Mollon-Williams, Behavioral Financial Advisor™ and co-founder of Legacy Builder Group, speaks to attendees of the Amazing Faith Conference in Richmond, Virginia.

Photo: RAW Cinema Productions



Mark Mollon, left, and his sister, Marcella Mollon-Williams assist a client. They co-founded Legacy Builder Group, a Washington, DC-area holistic coaching and investment firm, in 2007.

Photo: Sadrea Muhammad

“These situations are powerful reminders that success doesn’t cancel out the need for discipline, boundaries, and emotional mastery. We all carry unconscious patterns that influence our decisions. Many are rooted in our upbringing or past trauma. For first-gen high earners, these patterns often go unchecked because success came fast, and they were focused on survival, not sustainability.”

Mollon-Williams further stated that wealth amplifies who we are. Without tools to process pressure, fame, or fear, even the most accomplished people can self-sabotage.

“That’s why we teach our clients to build a behavioral legacy, not just a financial one. Your decisions today, especially personal ones, can impact your future wealth, your reputation, and your family’s future,” she added.

Mental discipline is crucial when it comes to making or keeping money.

“It’s the quiet engine behind every

wise financial decision. Without it, success becomes a cycle of earning and losing. Discipline allows you to say ‘no’ when emotions say ‘yes.’ It helps you stick to long-term plans when short-term distractions arise,” Mollon-Williams stated.

The behavioral financial advisor explained that for first-generation high-income earners, the lack of discipline often is not caused by laziness. She concluded that emotional fatigue, over-responsibility, and lack of guidance are causes.

“That’s why we teach practices that build clarity and calm before making money moves,” said Mollon-Williams.

Visit www.legacybuildergroup.com to learn more about Legacy Builder Group. Listen to The LEGACY Pregame Podcast via www.legacypregamepodcast.com.

Sister, Grief Survivor, Advocate Pays Tribute to Her Brother, a Male Domestic Violence Victim

By Andrea Blackstone

Ahead of National Grief Awareness Day on August 30, 2025, a dedicated time to raise awareness about grief and loss, and also support those who are grieving, National Grief Awareness Month sets the stage for conversations about the death of a loved one. Marcia N. Cole knows the pain of grieving because she lost a sibling to homicide. Her younger brother, Dante Eyasu, was tragically taken due to domestic violence in 2020.

How the unthinkable happened.

“He [Dante] was stabbed by his girlfriend and taken to the hospital, where he later passed away. He was only 22 years old. We waited outside of the hospital while he was in surgery because of COVID-19 restrictions. I found out through a heartbreaking phone call that he passed away, which forever changed my life,” Cole explained, speaking about her family’s harrowing experience.

When Eyasu did not survive, Cole felt devastated that her loved one had not beaten death. It was difficult for the Marylander to consider that her charismatic, protective and loving sibling who had been full of life would not be fine.

The Pain of Grief

Over time, Cole realized that God had a plan she did not yet understand.

“His loss left a hole in our family. As the oldest— I have a younger sister— I felt the weight of trying to stay strong for everyone, but we were all shattered in different ways. It forever changed the rhythm of our lives,” Cole candidly shared.

A New Chapter

Processing heartbreaking loss and experiencing a journey through grief, forgiveness, and healing led Cole to write a chapter because of Eyasu. The Marylander was inspired to pen “Shattered Yet Unbroken: Finding Strength and Purpose after Sudden Loss.” Writing the nonfiction book was a healing tool that allowed Cole to release emotions that she had been carrying inside after she lost her brother to domestic violence.

“I felt called to share my story in hopes that others walking through unimaginable pain would find strength, faith, and hope,” said Cole.

The author explained that grief stripped away illusions of control. It made her more compassionate, more aware of silent battles others are fighting, and more intentional about how she lives and loves each day.

“It reminded me that healing is not linear, and that faith is essential. Tomorrow is not promised and you may not have the time you think you do. Live your life to the fullest and don’t hold on to unforgiveness,” Cole shared.

Cole’s Journey to Advocacy

The National Domestic Violence Hotline reported that 1 in 4 women (24.3%) and 1 in 7 men (13.8%) aged 18 and older in the United States have been the victim of severe physical violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime (<https://www.thehotline.org/stakeholders/domestic-violence-statistics>).

Cole, a registered nurse; empowerment speaker; faith leader; advocate for Black men; mother; and wife, addressed the impact of loss and grief by taking action as a person



“My voice became a vessel for others who felt voiceless in their pain.” —Marcia N. Cole, author empowerment speaker and advocate for Black men. Photo: Paul Cole, ACB Precision Focus Photography



Marcia N. Cole’s brother, Dante Eyasu was fatally stabbed in 2020. Courtesy photo

who has been impacted by domestic violence and grief. She has hosted grief support talks and created safe spaces, both virtually and in-person, for others who are navigating loss.

“I also provide tools, encouragement, and resources through my book, events, and mentorship,” said Cole. “Faith, Focus, & Finish Strong” is a weekly Zoom talk and virtual community I founded to empower others through faith, prayer, and purpose-driven conversation. It has grown into a space where families, including children, come to study the Word, pray, and grow together. Information can be found on my Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/marciancole>.”

The advocate shared that she publicly speaks up about grief because too many people suffer in silence, especially in Black communities, where grief is often unspoken or rushed. Cole

wants to give people permission to feel, to heal, and to understand that they are not alone. Faith was the foundation that helped Cole to persevere through the grieving process. Prayer, therapy, community, and allowing herself to fully feel without judgment were all essential for the grief survivor.

“Forgiveness was the hardest part, but also the most freeing. I chose to forgive the young woman involved in my brother’s death, not because she deserved it, but because I couldn’t carry the weight of hate and still walk in my purpose. Forgiveness doesn’t excuse harm. It releases us from its grip,” Cole declared.

Visit <https://shatteredyetunbroken.my.canva.site> and <https://www.instagram.com/marciancole> to learn more about Cole and her upcoming events.

Trust-Based Community Health Summit: A New Framework for Equity and Heart Health in Baltimore

By Madison Lee

On July 30, 2025, Baltimore hosted a pivotal gathering—the Trust-Based Community Health Summit—at the Thurgood Marshall Amenity Center. Presented by engAGE with Heart, this full-day forum brought together leaders from government, philanthropy, healthcare, faith-based organizations, and community groups to reimagine how heart health is delivered and sustained. Its goal: to establish trust-based, community-rooted care not just across Maryland, but as a model for the nation.

The summit was a day of rich dialogue, networking, and forward-looking strategy. The organizers framed the event as a turning point in Baltimore's ongoing efforts to address health inequities, particularly those related to cardiovascular disease (CVD)—a condition that remains one of the city's leading causes of death, disproportionately affecting Black residents.

The summit convened a wide array of stakeholders—including representatives from Johns Hopkins, the University of Maryland School of Medicine, and providers like CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield—under one roof. Its central premise: that health systems are most effective when they grow from within communities—anchored by institutions of trust such as faith organizations, senior centers, and local leaders. Support for the event came from the Novartis, Global Coalition on Aging, Johns Hopkins Medicine, University of Maryland Baltimore, Mount Pleasant Development Corporation, Liberty Grace Church of God, Medicine for the Greater Good, TLC, and Baltimore City Health Department.

The event opened with a welcome from community leaders and an overview of engAGE with Heart's mission, followed by an acknowledgment of the diverse partners involved. Attendees included healthcare executives, elected officials, nonprofit directors, public health advocates, and faith leaders—all united by the shared goal of designing a care model that could break cycles of mistrust and underutilization of preventive services.

Kicking off the summit, a distinguished panel including Joshua M. Sharfstein, MD, Vice Dean for Public Health Practice and Community Engagement; Director, Bloomberg American Health Initiative; Esa M. Davis, M.D., M.P.H. FAAFP, Professor of Family and Community Medicine; Reverend Dr. Terris A. King, Pastor, Liberty Grace Church of God; and CEO, King Enterprise Group. The panel was moderated by the Honorable Ben Cardin, Former US Senator Maryland.

State Senator Cory V. McCray was among the high-profile officials lending their support, joining Baltimore City Council President Zeke Cohen, Mayor Brandon Scott, and others in affirming the summit's vision. Senator McCray remarked, "This initiative has the potential to heal our community by combining public policy and grassroots trust to deliver equitable, life-saving care."

Council President Cohen echoed those sentiments, stating, "Building care models rooted in local relationships is essential. Baltimore is a city of resilience, and when we invest



(L-R) Honorable Ben Cardin, Former US Senator, Maryland; Esa M. Davis, M.D., M.P.H. FAAFP, Professor of Family and Community Medicine; Joshua M. Sharfstein, MD, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg American Health Initiative; and Reverend Dr. Terris A. King, Pastor, Liberty Grace Church of God, and CEO, King Enterprise Group. Photo courtesy of Coalition on Aging

in trust and community capacity, we invest in better health outcomes for everyone. This summit marks a bold step toward fostering both health and hope across our neighborhoods."

Leading engAGE with Heart is Rev. Dr. Terris King, pastor of Liberty Grace Church of God, whose vision shapes the initiative's core. Describing the effort as "not just a program, but a ministry," Dr. King underscored how health, faith, and community converge in service of equity. "We're catching disease early... we're saving lives." Dr. King continued.

His leadership carries forward what began in October 2023, when Liberty Grace and four other Baltimore churches, alongside two senior centers, launched community-based screenings, healthy food access, and education—an effort designed to meet underserved populations "where they are."

One of the event's participants, CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield, has

partnered with many such efforts in the community. Lester Davis, Vice President of Community Affairs at CareFirst, underscored the company's dedication to closing gaps in care: "We believe in meeting people where they are—physically, emotionally, and culturally. Our partnership with organizations like engAGE with Heart reflects our commitment to addressing the root causes of health disparities and ensuring that prevention and early intervention become the norm, not the exception."

The discussions were moderated by a mix of academic leaders and community voices, ensuring balanced representation. This format allowed for a deep dive into topics like culturally competent care, the role of faith leaders in healthcare, and sustainable funding strategies.

A Community-Centric Model in Action

The summit spotlighted engAGE with Heart's threefold approach:

- Education: Empowering communities with prevention-focused knowledge and health literacy.
- Healthy Food Access: Hosting cooking demos, markets, and meal planning with culturally resonant, heart-healthy cuisine.
- Screenings: Offering cardiovascular and diabetes checks through Johns Hopkins and other partners, integrated with follow-up connections via trusted Community Health Ambassadors.

The Trust-Based Community Health Summit is more than an event—it's a movement. And for Baltimore, it signals a commitment to building a healthier, more equitable future from the inside out.



By Rosa Pryor

Hello everyone, how are you doing so far? Our summer vacation is almost over. So, we must take advantage of the few weeks we have left to enjoy the free concerts, family getaways, parks, beaches, and other outdoor activities. You know what I mean. Soon we'll be donning winter coats and boots.

There is still so much going on involving music that is free and being held outdoors. Enjoy and be happy! Here are some upcoming events from this week until the end of August:

Hunt Valley free concert on Friday, August 22, from 6:30-8 p.m. on the upper deck between California Pizza Kitchen and Sammy's Trattoria. For the kids, a pre-concert magic show will take place, along with complimentary balloon art.

Liberty Live Summer concerts are still going on. It too is a family-friendly free community event taking place August 15 and September 19 from 6-9 p.m. Take your folding chairs and enjoy the live music, all sorts of entertainment, food trucks and vendors, located at 8212 Liberty Road. I will see you there with my new book. Look for "Shorty" and me. We'll be close by.

"Soulful Fridays" are exciting at Next Phaze Night Club, located at 112 E. Lexington Street in Baltimore. Show time is 8-11 p.m. It is free. Soul food is on the menu. The live entertainment will include Craig Alston Syndicate.

If you are in the mood to take a little road trip to get away for a few hours, here is one for you. There will be a party in the park on Saturday, August 30. A Patty Jackson's Party at the DELL, 2400 Strawberry Mansion Dr., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Gates open at 6 p.m.

Live Summer Concerts Still Open to the Public The Circus is Coming to Town!



Universal Circus is coming to town at the Security Square Mall, located 6901 Security Blvd. August 14-29, 2025.

and show time is at 8 p.m., featuring Jeffrey Osborne, "After 7" Group and Heatwave, just to name a few.

On Saturday, August 30, the Cornerstone CARES will sponsor a "Community Cookout" with free food, free haircuts, clothes, shoes, giveaways, school supplies, games and much more at the Cornerstone Church of Christ, 4239 Park Heights Avenue, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Then there is Every Thursday, through August 28, the shops at Kenilworth Shopping Center, 800 Kenilworth Drive, Towson, Maryland is bringing in live entertainment for those dining out on the patios from 5-7 p.m.

The Pikes Studio Cinema is making Saturday mornings a fun and affordable family outing to enjoy a double feature of your favorite family movies. Saturday Mornings Kids Flicks open at 10:30 a.m. through August. Pikes is located at 921 Reisterstown Road. Call Mr. Johnson at 667-273-4808 for more information.

Also, I just received a phone call from Michael Johnson, the owner and he has set a date for yours truly, "Rambling Rose" to have a book-signing with my new book as well as with my other two Baltimore books. He has scheduled the event for Saturday, September 13, from 12:30-4 p.m., which will also



Rickey Shackleford starring in Sanford & Son Stage Play as Fred Sanford, written by comedian Howard "G" and directed by Sheila "Strawberry" Gaskins will be at the Asher Theatre Event Conference Center, 3033 Waccamaw Blvd in Myrtle Beach, SC. On Sunday August 31 and Monday, September 1. For more information, call 843-903-3100.



Todd Marcus and his quintet are playing at the P Warehouse, 33 Pearl Street in Washington, DC, on Sunday, August 31 at the DC Jazz Festival. Check it out. toddmarcusjazz.com.

include a free movie afterwards and live entertainment. I am also being honored by Michael Johnson, the owner of the Pikes Studio Cinema Theater. All radio, newspapers, magazines and TV media are invited to cover this event. You must RSVP to me at rosapryor@aol.com. or contact Mr. Johnson. Mark your calendar for this date. More information in next column.



Ursula B. Battle, presents her new Gospel Stage Play, "Desperate Housewives of the Bible: The Old, The Bold, & The Beautiful" on Saturday, Aug 23, 12 p.m. and 5 p.m. and Sunday, August 24 at 4 p.m. at Huber Community Life Center, 5700 Loch Raven Blvd. For ticket information, call 443-531-4787.



My adorable brother, international saxophonist and a Baltimorean Kim Waters and keyboardist Kevin Howard will give you an evening of incredible smooth jazz at the Gordon Center for Performing Arts located 3506 Gwynnbrook Avenue, Owings Mills, Maryland on Sunday, August 24, 7 p.m. Show starts at 7 p.m.

Okay, my dear friends, I am so excited for my special day on September 13 and I hope to see all my friends and fans there.

Well, I have to go now, but remember if you need me, call me at 410-833-9474 or email me at rosapryor@aol.com. **UNTIL THE NEXT TIME, I'M MUSICALLY YOURS.**

Battle Stage Plays Presents A New Gospel Stage Play

Ursula V. Battle's

DESPERATE HOUSEWIVES OF THE BIBLE: The OLD, The **Bold**, & The *Beautiful*



FEATURING
D'Atra Hicks

Sat. Aug. 23, 2025; 12 pm & 5 pm
Sun. Aug. 24, 2025; 4 pm

Huber Community LifeCenter

5700 Loch Raven Blvd., Balt., MD 21239
(free parking)

\$25 General Seating (\$30 after Aug. 17th)

\$50 VIP:

(\$60 after Aug. 17th)

VIPTICKET PERKS: PRIORITY ENTRY & PREFERRED SEATING, EARLY ACCESS (30 MINS. BEFORE SHOW), SKIP TICKET LINE, PHOTOS WITH HEADLINER & PLAYWRIGHT, AUTOGRAPHED SHOWBILL & GIFT BAG



Letricia Loftin

Cast also includes

For more information and to purchase tickets:
443-531-4787 | 443-531-5839

www.battlestageplays.com

This show is RATED PG-13. Parental Discretion Advised!



Randy Roberts



PLAY YOUR LUCKY NUMBERS!

Play Pick 3, Pick 4, and Pick 5 and
you could win up to \$500, \$5,000, or
even \$50,000 on a single dollar bet.



Learn how to play within your limits at mdlottery.com/playresponsibly.
For help, call 1-800-GAMBLER. Must be 18 years or older to play.