

# The Sojourner's Truth

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“And Ye Shall Know The Truth...”

November 6, 2019

## L.I.F.T. 2019 Midwest Conference



Jason Daniels, Angel Harris, Kelli Daniels, Marc Folk

Photo by Albert Earl

### *In This Issue...*



A Senate Tribute to  
Toni Morrison  
Page 2

Tolliver  
Page 3

Conyers Remembered  
Page 4

Minority Business  
Conference  
Page 5

Diabetes Issues  
Page 7

A Mental Health Moment  
Page 8

Asking Ryan  
Page 10

Dr. Demicha Rankin, MD  
Page 11

Classifieds  
Page 15

Cover Story: L.I.F.T. 2019  
Page 16

# Brown, Portman Resolution Honoring the Life, Work and Legacy of Toni Morrison Passes Senate

*Morrison, a Lorain, Ohio Native, Passed away in August*

*Special to The Truth*

Last week, just ahead of National Author's Day, the Senate passed a resolution U.S. Senators Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and Rob Portman (R-OH) introduced to honor the life, work and legacy of Toni Morrison, one of America's most formidable scholars, educators and authors.

For more than five decades, Morrison, a Lorain, OH native, captivated audiences, sharing stories through the African-American lens with her command of language and intellectual prowess. The passage of this resolution was made possible with the support and involvement of Toni Morrison's family and loved ones.

As an African-American author, Morrison blazed the trail for many, authoring 11 novels as well several children's books and collections of essays. In 1988, she was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for *Beloved* and the 1993 Nobel Prize in Literature, which recognizes her as an author "who in novels characterized by visionary force and poetic import, gives life to an essential aspect of American reality."

Morrison was also honored with the 1996 National Book Foundation's Medal of Distinguished Contribution to American Letters, and in 2012, President Barack Obama presented her with the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

"Toni Morrison's body of work changed America. She illustrated palpable narrations of the depth and meaning of the lived experiences of the oppressed," Brown said. "Morrison stood firm in the power of language, and her work continues to be a source of empowerment to this day. As eloquently stated by Morrison herself, 'We die. That may be the meaning of life. But we do language. That may be the measure of our own lives.'"

"Toni Morrison was a literary giant and a daughter of Lorain, Ohio, but as the first African-American woman to win the Nobel Prize in Literature, she was also a trailblazer who left an indelible mark on American history. I'm proud that the Senate has passed this bipartisan resolution honoring her contributions to America's rich literary tradition," Portman said.

"We are humbled that the Senate has taken this tribute to honor our mother, grandmother and aunt. While we miss her terribly, we are awed and grateful for this truly extraordinary appreciation for her life and work," Said Ford Morrison, son of Toni Morrison.

"As the American author society whose mission has been to support the study and appreciation of Toni Morrison's life and works for the last 26 years and as one of the institutional stewards of her remarkable literary legacy for future generations of scholars and readers, the Toni Morrison Society wholeheartedly endorses this Resolution. This recognition acknowledges the profound contribution that Toni Morrison, the 1993 Nobel Laureate in Literature, has made to the state of Ohio, to American Letters, and to arts and culture



*Toni Morrison*

throughout the world," said Carolyn Denard, PhD, founder and board chair of The Toni Morrison Society

"On behalf of the Howard University family, I thank the Ohio delegation for recognizing the life of our mother, sister, friend in belles-lettres, and distinguished alumna, Toni Morrison, with this fitting tribute. Morrison discovered her life's mission early as an English major at Howard. The words she penned masterfully and creatively seek the truth, explore the African American journey, challenge our consciousness and shatter the barriers of institutional racism. It is fitting that Morrison was the first African American woman to earn the Nobel Prize in literature and later became the recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom-the country's highest honor. Morrison's literary works are her gifts to society today, tomorrow and for generations to come, as her words will live on to inspire us all. She is our beloved," said Dr. Wayne A. I. Frederick, M.D.,MBA, president of Howard University

"Toni Morrison's brilliant vision, inspired creativity, and unique voice reshaped American culture and the world's literary tradition. Her mark on our University and the nation is impossible to measure, and Princeton would like to thank the Senate for honoring the memory of this incredible American. Though she is no longer with us, we are confident that her magnificent works will continue to light a path forward for generations of readers and authors. To us she was not only a groundbreaking writer, but a teacher, mentor, scholar, colleague, and neighbor, and we miss her dearly," said Christopher L. Eisgruber, president of Princeton University.

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## **Community Calendar**

### **November 9**

Annual Kwanzaa Celebration Sign Up: Volunteers, Food Vendors, Singers, Spoken Word, Vendors; Mott Branch Library 11:00 a.m – noon: toledodonald@aol.com or diagordon216@gmail.com

### **November 16**

The Junction Coalition 7th Annual Health and Wellness: 10 am to 3 pm; Frederick Douglass Center; Massage therapy, financial advice, healthy food options, medical screenings, stress tests and evaluations, disaster preparedness and water democracy: 567-255-4601 or 419-408-0998

### **November 30**

2019 Christmas Bazaar: 10 am to 4 pm; Indiana Avenue MBC; Holiday gift vendors

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# IN MEMORIAM: John Conyers Dies at 90

By Stacy M. Brown, NNPA Newswire Senior Correspondent

@StacyBrownMedia

Former U.S. Congressman John Conyers, whose 15-year fight to pass legislation that would make Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday a federal holiday, has died. He was 90.

The longtime Michigan Democrat represented what is now the state's 13th Congressional District (which includes parts of western Detroit) for more than 50 years. Conyers resigned in 2017.

Conyers was born in Detroit in 1929. He was elected to Congress in 1965 and immediately became a forceful voice in the Civil Rights Movement, co-sponsoring the Voting Rights Act of that same year.

Conyers was the first African American to chair the powerful House Judiciary Committee and helped spearhead the 1994 Violence against Women Act.

Conyers and 12 other African American members of the House of Representatives founded the Congressional Black Caucus in 1971.

"We always knew where he stood on issues of equality and civil rights in the fight for the people," Rep. Rashida Tlaib, who now represents Conyers' district, tweeted.

"Sad to hear of the passing of former Congressman John Conyers," the Rev. Al Sharpton stated. "He worked with us on many civil rights cases as Chair of the House Judiciary Committee and helped lead the fight for the Martin Luther King [Jr.] Holiday."

"Most of us from Michigan loved our congressman. He was idolized and was absolutely an icon. Not only was he an icon of the civil rights movement but we looked to him for leadership. This is a massive loss. All of us in business, the clergy, the community, respected, admired and aspired to be like John Conyers," said Hiram Jackson, president and CEO of Real Times Media.

"Congressman John Conyers decades ago held the first U.S. Congressional Hearings on Racially-Motivated Police Brutality; led the House Judiciary Hearings on Criminal Justice and Prison Reform in America; was co-founder of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC); and was a leading congressional advocate for the freedom of Angela Davis, the Wilmington Ten, and all po-



Former U.S. Congressman John Conyers

litical prisoners in the United States," remarked Benjamin F. Chavis Jr., the president and CEO of the National Newspaper Publishers Association.

"Conyers was a constitutional scholar and political visionary whose long-standing vision for freedom, justice and equality was unparalleled in the Congress of the United States," Chavis continued. "May God bless the freedom-fighting memory and legacy of The Honorable John Conyers." Chavis stated.

## Leader Emilia Sykes Statement on \$105 Million State Investment in Public Transit

*Says Democrats played key role in historic funding for Ohio communities*

Ohio House Democratic Leader Emilia Strong Sykes (D-Akron) issued a statement today following the announcement of nearly \$105 million in funds for public transportation agencies:

"I'm proud of the work Democrats did to ensure this historic investment in public transportation in our state. We cannot live up to Ohio's promise of better lives, better jobs and brighter futures if everyday Ohioans don't have the means to get there. With this funding, our state will be able to grow and build more opportunity for working people and families to share the road ahead toward a brighter future and greater opportunity for all."

Leader Sykes also announced more than \$2 million in state funds to the METRO RTA, which serves communities in Akron and Summit County.

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# Minority Business Panel Addresses Relevant Concerns

By *Tricia Hall*  
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

Dozens of local business owners and entrepreneurs attended the Ohio Minority Business Panel on Friday, November 1, 2019 at Mott Branch Library. The panel was co-hosted by Ohio Secretary of State Frank LaRose and the Toledo Lucas County Library.

The panel included Linda Fayerweather, Toledo Lucas County Public Library specialist librarian of Business and Workforce Department; Olivia Holden, executive director of ASSETS Toledo; Lisa Washington, Northwest Ohio Regional Outreach Manager of Ohio Department of Transportation; Lenora McIntyre, operations manager of Ohio Minority Business Assistance Centers; Frank LaRose, Ohio Secretary of State and facilitator Monique Cox-Moore, director of Community Engagement and Initiatives for Ohio Secretary of State.

Attendees were encouraged to submit questions to the panel directly or ask questions during the two networking sessions. LaRose explained the rationale for organizing these panels in Ohio. "At these roundtables, connections can be made in the room. There are community leaders doing the work here. Our office now has a list that we provide to those who want to start businesses. I also encourage you to get to know your state representatives, they should be accessible because they represent you."

There was a question submitted that focused on nonprofits and available resources. "LISC and Northwest Ohio Regional Economic Development are just two agencies that come to mind. These agencies support nonprofits. I encourage you to research opportunity zones, upcoming trends, and compose ideas that agencies are interested in developing," said Washington.

Current business owners asked questions about cross certification across multiple government offices, re-certification requirements, and minority business enterprise certification.

"You are correct cross re-certification does not exist, because these programs



Linda Fayerweather, Lisa Washington, Leona McIntyre, Frank LaRose, Olivia Holden



Business Panel

and departments may operate in silos. You shouldn't have to waste time on bureaucracy, instead of growing your business. Unfortunately, government does not communicate well, and I understand your frustration with filling out form after form that's requesting the same information. We must fix this, which is why we're convening these panels. This is a complex issue, but we must do it. Our website has improved over the past few years and there is a customer service hotline. The talented individuals that answer the phones are great at answering questions quickly. The purpose of the Ohio's Minority Business Enterprise program is to uplift our minority business owners and address challenges like preventing fraud," said LaRose.

The Minority Business panel has completed three additional panels in Columbus, Cleveland and Cincinnati before Toledo. There are additional panels planned in other cities. "I want to thank the library for their partnership. My goal following this panel is to make sure that we're busy, and that interested minority businesses complete their applications. We can't solve every problem today, but we know there is work to do. I am here to learn and admire the entrepreneur spirit," explained LaRose during closing remarks.

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## Brown, Burr, Stabenow, Ernst Introduce Bipartisan Legislation to Renew Healthy Start Program, Reduce Infant Mortality Rate

*Program Works to Reduce Racial Disparities in Birth Outcomes, Has Helped Reduce Infant Mortality Rate for Participants*

U.S. Senators Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Richard Burr (R-NC), Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) and Joni Ernst (R-IA) introduced bipartisan legislation to reauthorize the Healthy Start program. Healthy Start aims to reduce the national infant mortality rate by identifying and supporting communities with infant mortality rates that are at least one and a half times the U.S. national average or increasing above the national average. Companion legislation is also being introduced in the House by U.S. Reps. Tim Ryan (D-OH-13), Anthony Gonzalez (R-OH-16), Lauren Underwood (D-IL-14) and Steve Stivers (R-OH-15).

"Despite having some of the finest doctors and best children's hospitals in the country, Ohio still falls far short when it comes to infant mortality, ranking an abysmal 41st in the country. And we have a serious problem with racial disparities in birth outcomes - black infants die at three times the rate of white infants in Ohio, and we rank near the bottom in deaths of African-American infants. We need to support our communities with the

tools and resources they need to empower moms and their families," said Senator Brown.

"North Carolina historically has one of the highest infant mortality rates in the nation," said Senator Burr. "The Healthy Start program plays an important role in removing barriers to health care and education resources for mothers and babies in need. I am proud to work with Senators Brown, Stabenow, and Ernst on this important reauthorization to keep our children healthy, and look forward to working with my colleagues to move this important legislation through the Senate."

"Every family deserves the care and resources they need to take care of their children, regardless of their zip code. However, infant mortality rates are too high in our country and worse for low-income areas and communities of color. The Healthy Start program offers the education, health care, and resources we need to save lives and make our communities stronger," said Senator Stabenow.

"Having access to health care services is something that weighs on the minds of families across Iowa, especially those expecting a little one," said Senator Ernst. "Prenatal and post-partum care, as well as nutrition support for moms and children, are an important part of reducing infant mortality, and programs like Healthy Start are giving states like Iowa the resources needed to reduce barriers and increase access to care."

The Healthy Start Program serves communities with high rates of poverty, low education, and limited access to care, in addition to other socioeconomic conditions. Racial and ethnic minorities experience disproportionately high rates of pre-term birth and infant death. Nationally, African-American mothers die at three-to-four times the rate of white mothers, and black babies are twice as likely to die as white babies. By improving access to quality health care and services, the Healthy Start program has helped to address these disparities and reduce infant mortality rates among its program participants to 5.2 infant deaths per 1,000 live births, which is lower than the national average.


The Healthy Start program aims to reduce the infant mortality rate by providing federal grant funding to sites providing services that focus on empowering women and their families and reducing negative birth outcomes.

The Senators' bill, the Healthy Start Reauthorization Act, would:

- Reauthorize the Healthy Start Program for five years (FY2020 through FY2024);
- Encourage coordination with the community in which grantees are located and expand the criteria used to evaluate Healthy Start projects, including how projects have impacted infant mortality rates and perinatal and infant health outcomes;
- Instruct the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to issue a report detailing the allocation of the Healthy Start grants, progress in meeting the evaluation criteria, and improvements in health outcomes for program participants.

Women and their families may be enrolled into a Healthy Start program at any stage of pregnancy - pre-conception, inter-conception, and post-conception. Each enrolled family completes a comprehensive assessment that

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# National Diabetes Month – What Does It Mean to You?

By Patrice Powers-Barker, OSU Extension, Lucas County

The Truth Contributor

November is National Diabetes Month, a time to raise awareness about diabetes risk factors and encourage people to make healthy changes. The National Institutes of Health explains diabetes as a disease that occurs when your blood glucose, also called blood sugar, is too high. The three main types of diabetes are type 1, type 2 and gestational diabetes. People can develop diabetes at any age. Both women and men can develop diabetes. Over time, having too much glucose in your blood can cause serious health problems.

- Diabetes is one of the leading causes of disability and death in the United States. It can cause blindness, nerve damage, kidney disease, and other health problems if it's not controlled.

- One in 10 Americans have diabetes — that's more than 30 million people. And another 84 million adults in the United States are at high risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

The **good news** is that we can take steps to prevent diabetes or manage it. People who are at high risk for type 2 diabetes can lower their risk if they make healthy changes like eating healthy, getting more physical activity, and losing weight.

In 2019, in partnership with the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI) the focus this November is on the link between diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Adults with diabetes are nearly twice as likely to die from heart disease or stroke as people without diabetes. As mentioned at the beginning, high blood glucose from diabetes can damage your blood vessels and the nerves that control your heart. The good news is that the steps you take to manage your diabetes can also help lower your chances of having heart disease or a stroke:

- Stop smoking or using other tobacco products.
- Manage your A1C, blood pressure, and cholesterol levels.
- Develop or maintain healthy lifestyle habits - be more physically active and learn ways to manage stress.
- Take medicines as prescribed by your doctor.

For those with diabetes, check with your doctor, nurse or registered dietitian to see if there are classes available to learn more about diabetes. Not only is important for those with a diabetes diagnosis to learn more but it is also important for family members, community members and other supportive individuals to encourage their loved ones who are living with diabetes.

For those who prefer learning at their own pace, on their own time, Ohio State University Extension health professionals offer a free online course titled, Dining With Diabetes: Beyond the Kitchen. This online class focuses on carbohydrates, fats, sodium, vitamins, minerals, and fiber. The easy to follow three-module course includes interactive presentations, videos, activities, and access to trusted resources and apps. The course is designed for those with a diabetes diagnoses as well as those who have a loved one

living with diabetes. Sign up is easy and free. Participants will be asked to create an account with Ohio State CFAES Canvas where they can take advantage of all the course materials. For more details and link to sign up please visit <https://fcs.osu.edu/BTK>

**Bonus!** After completion of the online Dining With Diabetes: Beyond the Kitchen course, participants receive a printable certificate. They are also automatically entered in a quarterly drawing for a \$100 Amazon.com gift card.

One additional opportunity for learning, support and online encouragement for healthy living is the annual six-week email challenge. Not only is November the awareness month for diabetes, it is also the start of a busy time of year for many people. Does the holiday season find you rushing around trying to accomplish too much? Do you feel overwhelmed with your tasks? Can you use some encouragement and guidance but don't have time to attend classes? Join us for this Get Your Elves in a Row! Email Challenge. This six-week challenge will help you learn ways to simplify your life in a healthy way. You will explore topics such as gratitude, mindfulness, positivity, movement and humor.

How does it work? Adults with an email address can sign up to participate in the program. Once registered for the program, participants will receive two free weekly e-communications, containing wellness tips. Sign up today by following this link to enroll: <http://go.osu.edu/ElvesLucas19>. It starts the week of November 25.

Information from American Diabetes Association, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), [www.ohioline.osu.edu](http://www.ohioline.osu.edu), [www.healthfinder.gov](http://www.healthfinder.gov)



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## A Mental Health Moment

# Change your mind, Change your LIFE!

By Bernadette Joy Graham, MA, LPC, NCC, Licensed Mental Health Therapist

The Truth Contributor

Have you ever been or felt lost? It can be a scary and an uncomfortable feeling. Not knowing where you are or where you are going. Many of us now have the capability to utilize a GPS to get directions to a place we want to go when traveling. We are okay with moving around when we are familiar with our surroundings as we have memorized how to get from place to place. What happens when say you have a doctor's appointment and the address is one in which you are unfamiliar? We ask for directions.

In life, we are guided in our younger years by our parents or guardians. They take us to school, to appointments or to the store. As we grow older, we learn how to walk, ride our bikes or even catch a bus to where we need to go if not too far away from home.

As we grow into adults, our responsibilities grow and we begin to have to make choices and that can bring us to unfamiliar territory not just in surroundings but how we think and feel. It can also become uncomfortable because we have to make some changes. Change is inevitable. Some find it exciting and others find it sometimes impossible. Our journey in life includes a destination. We all have a purpose in life. All of us not just some of us.

We can either make life happen or life is just going to happen but when we allow it to just happen, we have no sense of direction and no control over what happens. Courage is said to be the key to life itself. It takes courage to choose a destination then take the necessary steps on our journey to get there. We don't



always know how we will get somewhere but as long as we know where we would like to go, we have many options on how.

Envision your life as a big beautiful ship that can do and go anywhere but no captain to navigate the journey. If we just float around and meander through life, we will either run out of fuel or get tired of going nowhere. I often hear from client's that they hate their jobs, they are unhappy with their life but often afraid to pursue what really makes them happy. They are afraid of change. The solution is to change how you feel and how you think. If you think negatively you will feel negative. If you think positively you will feel positive. Many talents are wasted by fear of change and will rob you of your purpose in life. Whatever it is you want in life is going to cost you in either dollars or time. Both are very precious things to us.

Take a mental health moment and ask yourself what is my purpose? What changes do I need to make to take back control of my ship? The GPS lies within. I'm not saying it's going to be easy but it will definitely be worth it. The waters will be rough at times and you will want to turn back or give up. Grow through it, just don't go through it because when you come out of the storm a great and wonderful destiny awaits you.

Bernadette Graham is a Licensed Professional Counselor, National Certified Counselor and Certified Grief Recovery Specialist. She is in private practice serving as a mental health counselor and available for presentations and speaking engagements on mental health topics. For appointments or to provide feedback you may contact her at [graham.bernadette@gmail.com](mailto:graham.bernadette@gmail.com) or 419.409.4929.



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## Is Your Child's Physical Development on Track?

All children develop at their own pace. Sometimes however, a child may not do certain activities that other children the same age are doing -- like sitting without support, rolling over, walking or other physical skills. Parents may question whether their child has a physical developmental delay.

How can you tell if your child's physical development is on track?

Free online tools and guides can be a good start. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) offers an interactive tool called "Physical Developmental Delays: What to Look For," available at [healthychildren.org/motordelay](http://healthychildren.org/motordelay). Available in English and Spanish, this interactive tool helps parents learn more about their child's physical development, and how to talk to their child's pediatrician about their concerns.

A physical developmental delay can be a sign of a serious health condition, so it's important to discuss your concerns with your child's pediatrician and get help as needed.

*Courtesy StatePoint*

### Infant Mortality Rate... continued from page 6

captures multiple demographics such as physical and behavioral health, housing, employment and domestic violence risks. Healthy Start families are able to receive varying health care, and public health services, including prenatal and postpartum care, parenting skill-building, case management and job training.

The program has grown from 15 sites providing services in 1991 to 100 sites across 37 states in 2016. The Healthy Start Reauthorization Act is supported by the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine.

The Healthy Start Program was established as a pilot program by President George H.W. Bush in 1991 as a program of the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Healthy Start is the federal government's primary program to reduce infant mortality.





## WINNING TAKES CENTER STAGE

**What a show!** Ohio Lottery players took home more than \$2 billion\* in prizes last year! And that was just the opening act. Thanks to the Ohio Lottery, more than \$1.2 billion\* in funds went to Ohio education. Plus, retailers across the state earned hundreds of millions in bonuses and commissions, too. That's a whole lotto winning!

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\*Rounded averages from FY19.



## Dear Ryan

Hi Ryan,

My name is Sandra and I have been reading your articles for years and I find the information in them very interesting. On the other hand, I have not implemented one single thing. I am very overweight, out of shape and embarrassed to even attempt the things I read in your articles. I fear that if I don't do something my health is going to diminish quicker and I'll be more embarrassed and miserable than I already am. I want to get going but I just don't think I can find a starting point. I'm hoping that if I read something directly for me, it will help me to get in gear. I really want to make changes but I'm ashamed of how I look and I can't do too much without resting. I feel hopeless.

Dear Sandra,

It's great that you realize you have an issue with your health and that you want to make changes. Here's the thing: it's about you, your health, self-esteem and quality of life! Who cares what anyone else thinks as long as you are doing things to improve YOU! You are not doing this for others approval you are doing this to improve you and that's all it's about...YOU!

Be selfish with it, you need to realize it's a personal commitment to yourself not to spectators and people who have no bearing on your life. Second of all, it's about your family, you have loved ones who want to spend time with you, do things with you, and have you in good health so you'll be around for a long time.

Start out slow, Sandra. Set aside 10 minutes a day for the first week then increase it five to 10 minutes each week until you reach 30 minutes.

Begin with walking, if you can't walk too far, don't walk far, but try to go farther every time you walk. Go five minutes out then walk back to your starting point.

Without knowing of any health conditions or limitations you may have, I can't really be too specific on how you should proceed. I can make a few "suggestions" though:

Chair squats, stand over a sturdy kitchen chair with your feet shoulder width apart or wider (adjust according to your flexibility and range of motion) and just simply sit down and stand back up trying not to use your arms to push off or your legs. Begin with five reps and progress to 12.

Push-ups, start on your knees keeping your hands even, a little wider than your shoulders but in line with them. Lower yourself with control and if you can't push yourself back up then just return to the starting position and repeat. You will eventually be able to push yourself back up. Again, start with five

reps and increase.

Shoulder presses, you won't even need weight to start out with these just do them until you feel your muscles start to burn. Stand with your feet shoulders width apart, raise your hands straight up as if you were touching the ceiling then lower your hands just to the outside of your shoulders like your trying to touch your elbows to the ground, then repeat until you feel like your mildly fatiguing. Lastly just do a simple high knee march for 30 seconds. Pump your arms and land your feet softly on the ground, don't stomp. This will help get a little more cardio in, work on your flexibility and range of motion in your knees and hips as well.

I will be more than happy to have you come in and I will show you a few more things you could do at no cost to you.

Good Luck, Sandra!

\* Dream Bodies Fit Camps will in progress at American Academy of Martial Arts/ Judan Judo on Laskey

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## Study Finds Racial Disparities in Culturally Competent Cancer Care

- Non-white minority survivors are less likely than non-Hispanic whites to be seen by cancer specialists who share or understand their culture.
- The disparity is likely due in part to a low representation of minority physicians in cancer subspecialties.

Many non-white minority cancer survivors place importance on seeing doctors who share or understand their culture, but are less likely than non-Hispanic whites to be able to see such physicians, according to a new study from Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and University of Texas Southwestern. The study, which is one of the first nationally-representative studies to examine patient-reported preference for, access to, and quality of provider cultural competency among cancer survivors, published in JAMA Oncology.

Almost half of non-white minorities – 49.6 percent said it was somewhat or very important to be treated by doctors who understand their culture. However, these patients were less likely than non-Hispanic whites to receive treatment from these providers, by a difference of 65.3 percent to 79.9 percent. And 12.6 percent of the minority patients said they were

... continued on page 11



Health Section • Health Section • Health Section • Health Section • Health Section • Health Section • Health Section • Health Section

# Dr. Demicha Rankin Is Enhancing Medical Student Diversity at OSU

*Special to The Truth*

Dr. Demicha Rankin, MD, is an associate professor in the Department of Anesthesiology at The Ohio State University and was the first African-American female to serve as program director for the department.

Dr. Rankin was born and reared in Toledo with her sister and brothers. Her mother is Debra (Crosby) Scott. Dr. Rankin graduated from Woodward High School in 1996 and attended OSU as a recipient of the OSU Young Scholars Scholarship and earned an undergraduate degree in micro-biology in 2000. She also earned her medical degree from OSU and completed a post graduate Anesthesiology Residency at OSU before completing a fellowship in neuroanesthesiology there as well.

She became a faculty member, has been an advocate for resident education and took on the role of associate program director serving in that role for nearly three years before becoming residency program director. Within her institution she has demonstrated great reliability and enthusiasm for teaching and has been active in both resident and faculty recruitment. She has also committed efforts to medical education research, for instance, she has been a co-investigator in a multi-institutional study which examines a flipped classroom model of learning for resident education.

On a national level, she currently serves as a member on national anesthesiology committees and has served as a consultant anesthesiologist for a board review courses and presented scholarly activity at national conferences.

In 2016, she led a major initiative to enhance the diversity of anesthesiology residents by standardizing interview questions and training committee members to use additional factors to foster equity in the interview process.

As a result, the Anesthesiology Residency Program has grown in diversity and is now the third most diverse training program at OSU. Firmly committed to recruiting the best and brightest medical students, Dr. Rankin joined the College of Medicine Admissions Committee in 2013 to screen applications and contribute to the interview and deliberation process. Today she is an active faculty recruiter and interviewer for MEDPATH applicants.

This year, she co-hosted a roundtable discussion for underrepresented women in medical school. In September 2019, Dr. Rankin was announced as associate dean for Admissions for the OSU College of Medicine. Dr. Rankin is committed to advancing the reputation of OSU and to recruiting and educating top-notch students.



Dr. Demicha Rankin, MD

## Racial Disparities... continued from page 10

never able to see physicians who shared or understood their culture – compared with four percent of non-Hispanic whites, according to the study.

This shortfall may be especially stark in cancer care, said the researchers. “There are data to show that oncology subspecialties, compared with other specialties in medicine, are comprised of the lowest representation of under-represented minority physicians,” said Brandon A. Mahal, MD, of Dana-Farber, co-senior author of the report. He added that the oncology workforce is currently made up of just 5.3 percent black/African American and Hispanic/Latino physicians.

Despite these disparities, minority and non-Hispanic white cancer survivors were equally positive about their encounters, both groups reporting high rates of frequently being treated with respect by physicians, receiving easily understand health information, from their physicians, and being asked by physicians for their opinions or beliefs regarding care.

The researchers based their findings on a national survey that included 2,244 adult cancer survivors, of whom 1,866 were non-Hispanic white, who responded to a set of questions regarding physician cultural competency. Culturally competent providers must navigate patient preferences surrounding values, beliefs, fears, religious views, disclosure of information, goals of care, end-of-life choices, and other issues.

For example, different racial or ethnic cultures may have different forms and norms of communication and varying levels of trust in the healthcare system. Prior research has shown that oncologists’ implicit racial bias (among racially discordant oncologist-patient relationships) is associated with poorer measures of patient confidence in treatment, patient recollection of information, length of visit, and provider supportiveness and patient-centeredness.

While the very limited diversity of the oncology workforce is one likely explanation for the mismatch between patients’ preferences and their experiences, the researchers said other factors could be involved. These include insufficient training in cultural competency, geographic variations in physician availability, insurance plan coverage networks, and the possibility that some patients may value other physician characteristics than cultural competency.

“Our findings highlight a persistent shortcoming of longitudinal can-

cer care for minority patients and the critical need for culturally competent providers,” said Santino S. Butler, BA, of Dana-Farber/Brigham and Women’s Cancer Center. He added that the results of the survey reinforce policy initiatives set forth by major cancer organizations, including the American Society of Clinical Oncology, which recently highlighted the association between racial/ethnic disparities in cancer outcomes and a “lack of access to high-quality care that is understanding and representative of diverse traditions and cultures.”

The investigators added that “institutions should emphasize the need for, and offer opportunities for, their workforce to pursue continuing medical education in cultural competency in order to improve care for their diverse patient populations.”

First author of the report is Santino S. Butler, BA, of Dana-Farber/Brigham and Women’s Cancer Center. Co-senior author with Mahal is Nina N. Sanford, MD, of the University of Texas Southwestern.

Mahal reports funding from the American Society of Radiation Oncology and the Prostate Cancer Foundation.



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L.I.F.T... continued from page 16

The second session of the first morning was a discussion about "allyship" titled "It's Going to Take All of Us: Parked at the Intersection of Allyship." This topic brought together a panel of Angel Harris, executive director, Dress for Success, Columbus, OH; Marc Folk, executive director, The Arts Commission; Jane Rosser, director of Service Learning, BGSU.

"Allyship" has been defined by Forbes as "a lifelong process of building relationships based on trust, consistency and accountability with marginalized individuals and/or groups of people ..." Allyship is, according to a recent Forbes article - "the key to unlocking the power of diversity."

In the afternoon, Rev. April Carsperon, director of Diversity and Inclusion for the West Ohio Conference of the United Methodist Church spoke as did Lawrence James, Jr., partner, RHR International LLLC, Chicago, on "Developing African American Executives and Building a Diverse Talent Pipeline."

"My favorite session at L.I.F.T. was given by Rev. April Carsperon," said Rhonda Sewell, Toledo Lucas Public Library manager of External and Governmental Affairs. "Not only did she blow me away with her presentation and knowledge of her subject matter, but she provided succinct information on how professionals can impact work culture on difficult subjects such as implicit bias, diversity and inclusion, and matters of race, gender, sexual orientation and physician and mental challenges ... what I really loved about her was her methodology of being unapologetic about impacting and even influencing the thumbprint of the culture on everyone's brain - she was on fire with her words."

The day's formal sessions ended with a Leadership Café - a facilitated conversation among speakers and conference participants to promote leadership, influence, focus, talent and allies.

Day Two - Wednesday, October 30 - opened with a panel discussion entitled "L.I.F.T.ing Your Career: How to Grow Your Professionalism Through Leadership, Influence, Focus and Talent." The



Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz



panelists were: Dawn Tyler Lee, deputy chief of staff, City of Columbus; Micah Lamb, senior HR Client Relations Consultant, DTE Energy, Detroit, MI; Valerie Simmons Walston, associate VP for Student Affairs and director of Residence Life, UT.

The opening panel was followed by

Lolita Davis, Outreach and Training Coordinator, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission who spoke on "Professional and Respectful Behavior in the Workplace."

Also in the morning, Zach Reed, Statewide Minority Affairs Coordinator in the Office of Secretary of State Frank LaRose, addressed determination with his talk: "The Focused Leader: Pursuing Career Goals with Perseverance and Purpose" and Eugenio Mollo, Jr. managing attorney with Advocates for a Basic Legal Equality (ABLE) spoke on "Managing an Immigration Law Practice in Current Times."

During the second day's afternoon, Darlene Slaughter, Chief People Officer with March of Dimes in Washington, DC, told her audience how to "Develop Your Executive Presence - A Leadership Fundamental."

The L.I.F.T. co-founders and hosts Jason and Kelli Daniels closed out the afternoon with an "allyship" call to action

"Since Kelli and Jason Daniels started their L.I.F.T. conference three years ago I've not missed it! Every year attendees walk away with so much knowledge, new partnerships and friends and the tools to become better leaders and allies. But, this year, they dialed it up several notches and I got to bear witness to real and meaningful breakthroughs happen." said Sewell. "This year's conference provided the spark that people needed to take that next step, to become more intentional along their journey, to do the right thing even when it's unpopular, and to walk into their grace boldly! If you missed it, well, you missed a lot. Plan never to miss this conference in the future."

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# Atlas Obscura: The Second Edition by Joshua Foer, Dylan Thuras & Ella Morton

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

The Truth Contributor

It's never a bad time to take a vacation.

You never want a bad destination, though: no places that are disagreeably seasonal. No locales that are too people-y, too remote, too kiddish, or too 1950s. It's never a bad time to take a vacation but there are better places to visit than the same-old, same-old, so grab *Atlas Obscura: The Second Edition* by **Joshua Foer, Dylan Thuras & Ella Morton**, and get packing.

In 2020, you're gonna cross a few things off your bucket list.

You're going to travel, see the world, meet new people – or at least you'll read about them, anyhow, which is where this book comes in. Starting with the British Isles and moving about, *Atlas Obscura* offers unique and hidden places to visit and things you won't normally see. It'll make your wanderlust, lust.

If you're heading for London, for example, stop and see Jeremy Bentham's headless body. Being mummified was what Bentham wanted when he died but alas, his noggin was stolen too many times by mischief-makers, and it's under lock and key.

Collectors will understand the Hill of Crosses in Lithuania, where more than 100,000 crucifix and cross statues stand. *Atlas Obscura* says that the Soviets tried to do away with this field of Christian symbols by bulldozing it thrice, but it was rebuilt each time. Conversely, if you're in La Paz, Bolivia, look for the Witches' Market, or the Devil's Swimming Pool in Zambia.

Visit a tannery in Morocco (but be prepared: urine and fecal matter are prime ingredients there). See a cave in Guam that was home to "holdouts" from World War II for nearly 30 years. Spend a night in a hanging sphere on Vancouver Island.

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Or maybe you'd rather stick closer to home: Visit the Museum of Death in Hollywood. See the world's largest organism in Utah; tour a paper house in New England. Visit Spirit Houses in Alaska, hike inside a mountain in South Dakota to see a waterfall, and gaze upon the Loretto Chapel Stairs in New Mexico.

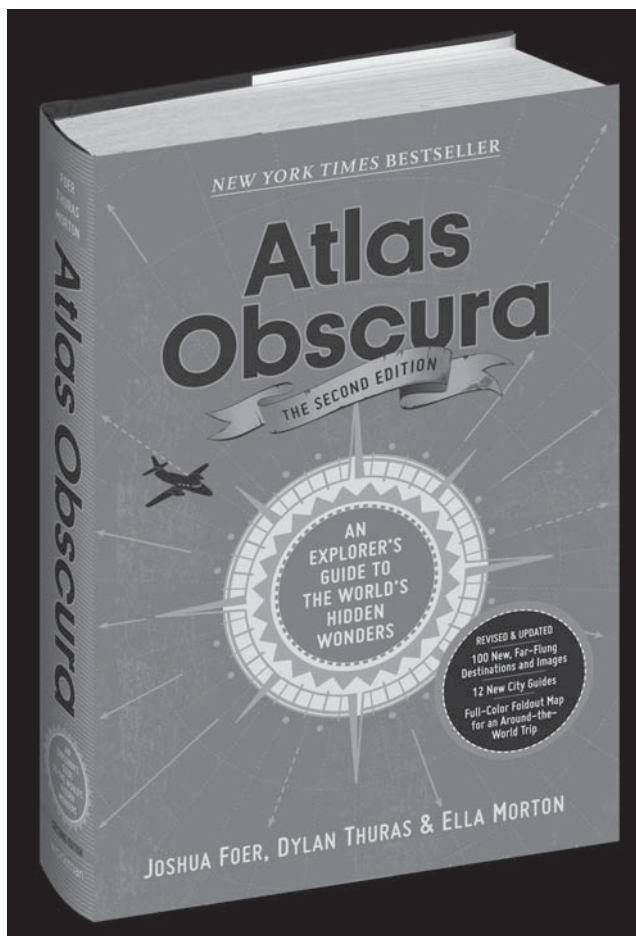
Are you packed yet?

For sure, a few dozen words don't do *Atlas Obscura: The Second Edition* justice. Revised, updated, with new information and more destinations to see, this is the kind of book you really need to put in your hands to fully appreciate.

In a way, it does double-service.

For anyone with means and a way, it's like throwing a dart at a map to determine your next vacation site, only in book form. Authors Foer, Thuras, and Morton offer up the kind of locales that you've either never heard of, or just don't think about – and they make these places easy to visit by including travel information as well as phone numbers, fax numbers, and other tips for a good visit.

For the reader who's not going anywhere for now, well, you will – in your mind – with *Atlas Obscura: The Second Edition*. It's browse-able fun. It's useful and interesting, full-color, wide-scoped, and if you're tossing things in a suitcase, leave room. Pack this.



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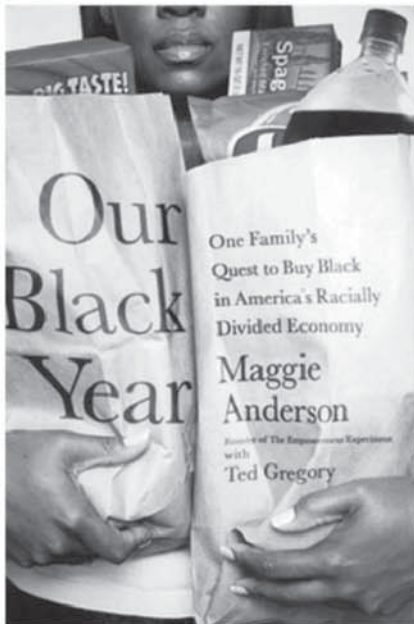
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# CLASSIFIEDS

November 6, 2019

Page 15

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- Grant Writing and reporting experience
- Valid driver's license, reliable transportation
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### Responsibilities:

- Maintains current knowledge and understanding of issues concerning cultural competency/health equity in healthcare and their potential impact on health disparities. Works to develop health-marketing plans that address each of the priority disease states and/or health conditions.
- Serves as a liaison by establishing, promoting, and maintaining a collaborative long-term partnerships with various community agencies and groups and governmental entities in the implementation of and operations of the coalition in the establishment of a local office of minority health targeting health disparities in the communities. Develops policies and strategies to support health efforts and advocates for the implementation of strategies and policies to reduce health disparities within the community.
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# L.I.F.T. 2019 Midwest Conference Stresses the Imperative of Diversity

Sojourner's Truth Staff

Fittingly, L.I.F.T. 2019 opened with a diversity roundtable discussion featuring regional and national chief diversity officers to "help participants gain insights on the business imperative for diversity, inclusion and equity and help uncover new trends and best practices," said Jason Daniels, co-founder and -host of the annual conference for African-American professionals and their allies.

The two-day affair at the University of Toledo's Nitschke Hall and Auditorium also offered attendees an opportunity to glean information about politics at work, transitioning from a manager to an executive position, building and leveraging workplace and community influence, bold leadership, effective partnerships at work and allyship.

The opening session – "Best and Next Practices in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion" – introduced the attendees to a panel consisting of Jennifer McCary, chief diversity and belonging officer at Bowling Green State University; Jaime de la Cruz, director of Organizational Capability, Marathon Petroleum Company; Matthew Boaz, director of Diversity and Inclusion, City of Toledo; Robert Braylock, Pharm.D, director, Intercultural Student Services, University of Findlay.

The Daniels' question for the panel that really jumpstarted the discussion, and the two-day conference for that matter, was: "How do people go back to their organizations and begin to implement what we are talking about with diversity, equity and inclusion if it's not happening there or if it's not happening and the organization insists that it is happening – but it really isn't?"

... continued on page 12



Jason Daniels, Valerie Walston, Kelli Daniels, Jordan Valdiviez



Tejiri Igben, U of Findlay; Romont Johnson and Rodney Eason, Principle Bus. Enterprises; Robert Braylock; Greg Braylock



Lolita Davis



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