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"And Ye Shall Know The Truth..."

December 8, 2021



Deltas' Joy of Giving Toy Drive

Second VP Ambershaun Byrd, Chapter President Rochelle Hall-Rollins, Asst Fin. Secretary Aleshia Furr

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Misguided Assumptions

By Rev. Donald L. Perryman, Ph.D.

The Truth Contributor

How poor they are that have not patience! What wound did ever heal, but by degrees?

- William Shakespeare



Last week's Blade editorial chided Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz for "silencing" JoJuan Armour, the city's Gun Violence program manager. Unfortunately, The Blade's assertion is based on the faulty premise that because Armour hadn't spoken with the powerful media entity, he was prohibited from speaking without a "filter" to anyone or speaking at all.

On the contrary, Armour has been meeting regularly with the affected groups, garnering community involvement to educate and develop solutions from those most directly impacted by the problem of gun violence.

Another misguided assumption is that violence reduction can occur quickly. However, there is no such thing as "overnight success" when addressing the broad social, cultural, and political factors shaping and reflecting gun violence. For example, the U.S. is one of the few more economically developed countries that loosens rather than strengthens access to guns. Additionally, a culture of violence in America has helped reinforce toxic masculinity as an acceptable way of life for many. Finally, the influence of the powerful gun lobby has made firearm control a nearly legislative impossibility.

Armour's patience may give him a bum rap. Yet, he continues to actively put in the work as he "plays the long game" required to bring change to the community he loves and cherishes.

I spoke with Armour, "unfiltered," to set the record straight about understanding and addressing Toledo's pandemic of urban street violence.

Perryman: Let's talk about your work. Addressing street violence is a collaboration, wouldn't you say, between your office, the community, faith-based organizations, and law enforcement?

Armour: I do agree with that, but I will also have to include human service agencies that work with individuals from the community, including schools. To provide a holistic approach, we track everything attached to the individual, so it's a village effort.

Perryman: How has the collaboration been working? What can be improved?

Armour: We're working on improving relationships with Toledo Public Schools, and I think it's a process thing. Individual principals have autonomy over their schools. We're very active in Robinson Junior High, King Junior High. I am the Men of Excellence facilitator at Rogers with Keith Dawson. TPS has been very welcoming. Still, I'm hoping to build a better relationship with TPS Security. Making sure that we can build those bridges is the ultimate goal.

Perryman: Do police lead the city's violence initiative, or is it community-led?

Armour: Community-led.

Perryman: How does that differ from an initiative led by police?

Armour: With it being community-led, it allows our response to be more



JoJuan Armour

preventative. It will enable us to address issues before they escalate to violence or homicide. Police have a hand in that as well. Still, the individuals in the community see the problems leading to violence first. So, addressing street violence from a lens of preventative measures is more beneficial and sustainable.

Perryman: Both contextual and institutional factors shape choice and behavior in gun violence. What factors comprise high-risk designation for the people that you serve?

Armour: It depends on the particular demographics you're talking about. For young people under 18, school attendance is a huge factor. We also look at previous encounters with law enforcement, prior histories of violence, and the disintegration of the family. So, several social factors identify someone as high risk.

Perryman: Do you have a process for identifying them?

Armour: Yes, that's a great question. How we identify them, and we have to remember - this is probably the most important thing that I need to be echoed throughout the community - we're only in one community. We're only in the Junction-Englewood neighborhood. That is the priority.

The initial target areas that we identified were Junction-Englewood, the Lagrange Corridor, and the Garfield/Starr area. Those three areas have the highest rate of violence. So, they are our highest priorities, but we are only in the Junction-Englewood neighborhood so far.

Perryman: So, I think the public assumed you were citywide. I can see how that could lead to misconceptions about your progress. Are there any other mistaken beliefs about the initiative?

Armour: We also have to be conscious that the program has been active for less than three months. We've been able to achieve 59 consecutive days without a homicide in that short period. This is the largest decrease of homicides since 2017 in our Junction-Englewood area.

In 2018, homicides increased 100 percent to four; There were six homicides in 2019 and nine in 2020. We're currently at three, so that means we've decreased homicides in Junction-Englewood by 66 percent. That's huge.

Perryman: So, are you out to change the prevalent toxic masculinity culture or the mindset that glorifies guns?

Armour: The two primary goals are to stop the spread of violence and change the norm. In our community, language impacts our community the most. We are a community that has been disconnected from the process, so there's a lot of mistrust. Many things we see nationally might not necessarily be true in Toledo, Ohio. However, we all can refer back to the Tuskegee experiments. Medicine has not always been honest with us. There is a lack of trust in law enforcement because law enforcement has not always been honest with us in the past. The government has not always been honest with us, so we don't vote. We need that participation more than any other group. Still, we don't believe in the process because we have been discon-

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The Sojourner's Truth

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Watch, For You Know not the Hour

By Lafe Tolliver, Esq

Guest Column

It is said that if you place a lobster in a cold bucket of water and turn on the gas jets, little by little, mind you...the lobster will remain in the pot not knowing that it's about to become dinner.

And, as the heat intensifies, the lobster remains in the pot, slowly being cooked from the inside out.

If you apply that analogy to the current vitriolic interchanges taking place between those being wrongfully dubbed the Jihad Squad and GOP representatives Marjorie T. Greene and Lauren Boebert, the woeful lack of a moral response and stance by GOP leadership to their invectives indicates that it (the GOP) is the lobster.

Those who see evil being done and turn their heads away, are the next in line when persecution comes, and, in time, it will come for them.

For the GOP and credible mass media outlets and institutions (particularly the churches) to sit on their hands while this acerbic dialogue continues is to give direct and indirect aid and comfort to those ideologies which minimizes those who are being tagged as, "not one of us or not like us."

Anytime a society wants to extirpate or demonize those that they have been told to fear or mistrust, that society falls three rungs on the scale that judges the fair play and integrity of a democracy.

The former president, Donald Trump, encouraged a cottage industry of venial hatred and mockery of all things Muslim and a vocal cabal of his mindless minions followed suit and aped his baseless antics.

No, Donald Trump did not initiate this latent and now open hostility towards Islam or Muslims, but he coddled and coaxed it to the point that his base took their marching orders from his retched statements and they amplified the hate and fear factor.

For so many Americans to applaud, support, encourage or promote the terrible incendiary blather coming from the mouths of Paul Gosar, Marjorie T. Greene, Lauren Boebert, and others, is incomprehensible, reprehensible and a stain upon a country that professes to be a nation under God.

Rep. Lauren Boebert has the unmitigated gall to publicly call herself, "a strong Christian woman." For the love of me, I do not know what chapter and scriptures of the Bible that she is aligning herself with, but it is surely not with the Christ of the Beatitudes or numerous quotations one can find in the Book of the Ephesians or John 1,2 or 3 (located before you get to the Book of Revelation).

But, this is what happens when people lose their moral compass and substitute it for a cult leader who by his acts and words, despises Holy Writ.

Such a mass desertion of the tenets of the Word of God by so many purported god loving Republicans is appalling but seen in the light of unregenerated human nature, it is to be expected.

If the visible church of Christ that is localized in the US of A. cannot even minimally confront such bigotry emanating from the Halls of Congress, we need to ask ourselves, has the salt lost its saltiness?

For the several members of the currently constituted House of Representatives to be allowed to spew forth such venom and there is no sound and swift accountability, that only energizes certain people to fabricate even bolder and greater lies about Islam and Muslims.

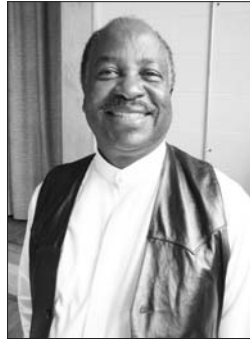
What makes this even more egregious is that those identified GOP members are feeding off the fears of their base that somehow a Muslim invasion is over the next hill, and they will then rampage through your neighborhoods and impose Sharia Law!

Meanwhile, the former President is stoking these biases by his own gibberish of lies and religious bigotry, and yet he is not soundly rebuked.

Most Americans who abhor this base treatment of fellow elected Congresspeople need to be strident in their denunciation of this hate and write, email and use all means of social media to inform their representatives to take to task the offending members of the GOP.

Note: If Democrats engage in such abusive behavior, they should also be taken to the woodshed.

Otherwise, in a vacuum, darkness and evil will slide in like a smiling slithering snake and take residence in the hearts and minds of unsuspecting people who were lazy in monitoring and denouncing such hate speech.



Lafe Tolliver

Let it be said here and said very clearly, Donald Trump is an avatar who merely represents the worse racial and religious fears of some Americans; and by no means or measure is he a Christian. The adage of, "In God We Trust", which we place on our nickel coin is wearing mighty thin.

If the Jesus of the Bible were to meet Trump, he would plainly say to him, "Depart from me, I do not know you!"

You may say, "Am I judging?" Yes, but with righteous judgment.

Contact Lafe Tolliver at tolliver@juno.com

Perryman... continued from page 2

nected, and we suffer disproportionately from it as a community.

So, our work provides an opportunity to build relationships here where mistrust has existed.

Perryman: So how will you change the norms, one person at a time? How do you get the message to penetrate the entire community?

Armour: The same way violence spreads is how positivity spreads. When kids see other kids living life, enjoying life, being happy, they want that same experience. They want to know how that individual obtained that. We're not going to be able to save everybody, that's not realistic, but if we can wrap our arms around and save one, that individual will bring two or three with them.

Perryman: How many conflict mediations have you performed so far in the Junction-Englewood area?

Armour: Thus far, I would say we performed three or four.

Perryman: How many conflict mediations do you think it will take to reach a critical mass?

Armour: I don't have a specific number, but it will reach the community in general. There are also individuals in the community who are already doing this work even before the violence interrupters came on. So, having these relationships builds and spreads that message and creates change.

Perryman: Young black men are disproportionately overrepresented as homicide victims. However, in the Junction-Englewood, the victims included two females and one male. Do you have any idea why that's atypical?

Armour: What's not atypical is the perpetrators of the violence. The other thing is that it's a dangerous time right now. So, the promotion of awareness is huge. It's not a good time to be at a party. It's not a good time to surround yourself with individuals that can potentially cost you your life. It's not a good time to be out at an after-hours club or at Smith Park at midnight. We have to make conscious decisions to prevent violence from occurring. And, we have to make positive lifestyle choices and decisions that are in the best interest of our health. However, without promoting that awareness information, a person might not know how dangerous it is out there.

Also, being visible so that individuals know that they are loved and cared for is critical. So, the promotion of awareness is also the promotion of posi-

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Avoiding the Holiday Blues

By Alphonso Gibbs, Jr., LCSW-C, LICSW, Advisory Board Member

Men's Health Network

Guest Column

Well, here we are again, the last few weeks of the year. Those weeks that include Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's—collectively called the holidays." If you're reading this article, it means that you have survived the last two years - which have included an election, social unrest, and oh that darned pandemic! Instead of enjoying time with family and friends, we have been "socially distancing" to the point of watching commercials that feature an electronic wrap that can give a person a virtual hug, and wondering "Where can I get one of those?"

This year has been spent listening to reports of labor and product shortages, higher gas prices, and uncertainty on every corner.

Is it any wonder that you or someone you know is struggling to find that "joy to the world"?

The fact is, instead of seeing visions of dancing sugar plums, we're questioning who we will really see and spend time with during "the most wonderful time of the year." Issues to consider include questioning who has been vaccinated, who chooses not to, risks of getting the virus, or do you use extra caution, do you travel, or have guests over, are just a few of them.

Holiday depression—also called the "holiday blues"—is a real thing, and it can last long after the holidays. Sometimes this can lead to suicide. The Veterans Health Administration (VA) stated that in 2019 the Veteran suicide rate in Nevada was higher than the National suicide rate, and higher than the National suicide rate among non-Veterans. The VA's state-level data can be found here: <https://cts.vresp.com/c/?MensHealthNetwork/c84f5868e9/bab110333e/8f2740f99d>

To that end, the VA has identified three priority areas across Community Based Interventions that have proven effective in reducing, and preventing suicide.

The first is to identify Veterans, service members, and their families, and screen for suicide risk. That can be as simple as having a conversation with someone that you have observed to have a recent major shift in their mood or behavior, and merely asking them if they have thought about hurting themselves.

The second is to promote Connectedness and Improve Care Transitions. We

all can attest to how being connected has been adversely impacted the past couple of years, and how we have had to adjust how we make it happen. Some are still struggling with finding new ways.

The last area is to increase Lethal Means Training, and Safety Planning. An example is increasing gun safety measures such as putting time between emotional outbursts or reactions, and access to lethal weapons.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention. National Suicide Prevention Annual Report: - [https://cts.vresp.com/c/?MensHealthNetwork/c84f5868e9/bab110333e/bff321014a2021NationalVeteranSuicidePreventionAnnualReport\(va.gov\)](https://cts.vresp.com/c/?MensHealthNetwork/c84f5868e9/bab110333e/bff321014a2021NationalVeteranSuicidePreventionAnnualReport(va.gov))

Holiday depression affects one million people every year. Men and women, young and old, all fall victim to feelings of sadness, loneliness, anxiety, guilt, and fatigue during this emotionally charged season.

Men's Health Network offers the following 11 suggestions to help you identify and ward off—or at least better cope with—potential sources of holiday depression.

1. Acknowledge that you're hurting – Others may expect certain attitudes and behaviors from you that you may not feel. The retail industry's "holiday hype" presents an overly sentimental, nostalgic, and even imaginary notion of the holidays (usually to try to sell you something). Still, feelings of sadness, loneliness, or depression don't automatically vanish just because it's the holidays. Acknowledge your pain, be open and honest with others, refuse to feel guilty, and get help if necessary. It's ok to laugh! Don't be afraid! You won't be struck by a bolt of lightning for laughing! Remember, a closed mouth won't get fed!!

2. Have a plan to deal with your feelings – Try to surround yourself with people who care about and support you—family, friends, or church members. Invest yourself in an exercise program (aerobic activities such as walking, running, cycling, etc., are recommended because of their mood-elevating ability). If necessary, see your doctor or therapist. And learn to say "no." Others' expectations are not a reason for your own mental health to suffer. Set realistic expectations – Keep your expectations realistic rather than perfectionistic. Prioritize and reduce self-imposed holiday preparations. Delegate responsibilities. Realistically plan your budget, spending, and shopping. Do less and enjoy more. Obsessing over endless details is bound to change this long-awaited, once-a-year season from a time of exuberance to one of exhaustion.

Make it a point to be honest with yourself, and if necessary and possible, limit the time and situations/people you want to be around. When you've had enough of either, make sure that you have a way to leave or step away.

3. Take time for yourself – Why is it called holiday depression? Because, for most people, these feelings don't occur at other times of the year. Remind yourself of what you enjoyed during the previous months, then continue them during the holidays. Make yourself a priority! Instead of a "Discount Double Check," give yourself an "Emotional Double Check". Give yourself permission to feel what you feel. Just don't stay there too long! Getting enough rest, eating and drinking in moderation, exercising, and continuing other favorite activities can maintain normalcy, routine, control, and predictability.

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NeighborWorks' Weatherization Program Brings Much Needed Relief to So Many Area Residents

By Fletcher Word

Sojourner's Truth Editor

For Penny Peace and her family, the NeighborWorks Weatherization Program is a Christmas present of immeasurable value. The Peace family home on north Ontario Street received a heater and boiler about six months ago and, this past week, workers completed the project by insulating the two-story house to prevent the winter's cold drafts from spoiling yet another holiday season.

NeighborWorks' Home Weatherization Assistance Program (HWAP) enables residents to use less energy while improving the comfort of their homes. The program, which is available to both homeowners and renters, is offered in the Toledo area by the non-profit agency to residents who earn about 61 to 62 percent of the area's median income.

The program began in 1983 and about 36,000 homes in the area have benefited from the home improvements of weatherization including: an increased level of comfort, an increase in the value of the homes, a decrease in the demand on energy supplies and a decrease in the emissions of harmful chemicals created while producing power by reducing the amount of energy generated.

In a house whose residents qualify for the program, an inspection is conducted with a blower door to determine the air infiltration issues that the house is subject to. The home inspection determines the types of improvements necessary such as: health and safety measures; repair or replacement of heating units; insulation of walls, floors and attics; insulation of heating ducts and water tanks; air sealing or ventilation.

Once the inspection is complete and the plan for weatherization improvement is finalized, the process starts. In the case of the Peace family's residence, for example, the heating equipment was replaced then, last week, insulation in walls, floors and attic was installed by a NeighborWorks' team – Tim Morehead and Race Bisson. Hector Herrera, production manager and quality control inspector, was also on the site from time to time to oversee the crew's progress.

The Peace home was critically in need of such a program. The family has lived there for 10 years – mother, father and three daughters. They had been renting for all those years and the landlord had neglected to maintain the condition of the residence. Finally, this year, facing foreclosure, he turned over ownership of the house to the Peace family.

When the family qualified for the program and an inspection was conducted, it was discovered that the house had no insulation at all. It's a house without a basement, just a crawl space, meaning that not only were the walls and attic allowing the chill to enter (and the heat during the summer), but also the floor. In all, an extremely vulnerable situation – lots of cool air drafts, lots of expense to maintain a comfortable level of warmth in the coldest of months.

While it may be hard to imagine that houses in Toledo could be totally without insulation, according to crew members Morehead and Bisson, they encounter such situations frequently. That crew, and three others, will weatherize



Race Bisson



Hector Herrera, Quality Assurance Inspector and Crew Supervisor



Tim Morehead

about 300 in a typical year and insulating such houses is a routine part of the procedure.

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tivity, and it spreads just as fast and forcefully as negative things do.

Perryman: Do you think that COVID has affected the escalating violence?

Armour: Absolutely. The numbers will suggest that. From 2019 to 2020, just the homicide totals of the city would bear that out. I think it increased over 20+ homicides in one year during that particular time. What has also had an effect is the availability of firearms. There are so many guns, and everybody that has a gun is not responsible or concerned about innocence and life.

So, COVID and the availability of firearms have affected homicides. Individuals not being able to go to school and truancy have also affected homicide rates, absolutely, yes.

Perryman: What can we do? You talked about prevention, which is stopping gun violence before it begins. You also spoke about education and awareness. How about political policies? Is there anything that the mayor or legislative bodies can do?

Armour: I'm currently working with the group Moms Demand Action. Their primary goal is to change legislation as it regards firearms. The group has been very supportive, having attended every meeting, and I appreciate that. But, as you are aware, there is so much lobby money behind firearms and the "right" to bear arms, but we have to try. We have to try.

Perryman: Let me close with this. When we look at firearm homicide death rates by race, let me just tell you that there are 1.83 deaths per 100,000 for white persons in Ohio and 37.15 for blacks. So, that's an enormous 35.3 difference between black and white homicide deaths. What do you say to that?

Armour: It's tremendously sad. Again, there are so many firearms on the street. They are so easily accessible, and individuals committing homicides are a lot younger, so they're not emotionally intelligent or cognitively developed.

Perryman: But why the difference between blacks and white homicide victimization?



Armour: Those other socioeconomic factors contribute to the disparities: the contrasting environments we live in; the disparate health, social, and educational policies; the deprivation of resources and negative societal experiences of the African American population. Our experience is entirely different from others. The most significant contributing factor to any social determinant is economic viability. The financial capacity to survive or be sustained contributes to kids not going to school, not participating in extracurricular activities, or choosing illicit behaviors. The primary contributing factor across the board is economic deprivation.

Perryman: Thank you. I certainly appreciate your time and availability.

Contact Rev. Donald Perryman, PhD at drdlperryman@centerofhopebaptist.org

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Local Alzheimer's Caregiver Mission is to Let Other Caregivers Know They are Not Alone

Pamela Anderson has been a caregiver for a large part of her life. Her primary mission is to keep her mother, who is in the final stages of Alzheimer's, healthy, happy and safe. Another mission is to spread awareness and understanding of Alzheimer's disease and let other caregivers know they are not alone.

Anderson's program, *You are Not Alone-Dementia Talk with Pamela*, can be viewed Thursdays at 7 p.m. EST on The Queen Silvy Now You Know Show on Facebook and YouTube, as well as on Anderson's Facebook group page.

Anderson shares her own caregiving journey through her recorded videos that began more than a decade ago when her father had a stroke. "My mom, who is a retired nurse, became his caregiver," said Anderson. "I would stop by for visits and began to notice changes in my mom's behavior."

Anderson said her mother would call and ask her to come by, then be out shopping and not remember calling her or even that she was supposed to be home caring for her husband. Her mother began to display agitation and defensiveness, something common among those living with Alzheimer's.

Eventually, Anderson's mother was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease in 2012. As things progressed, and her mother needed full-time care. Anderson said, "that's when I retired after 35 years in sales and promotion in radio and print to become a full-time caregiver for my parents."

Anderson has an extensive family history with Alzheimer's. "There are several members in my mom's family who had/ have Alzheimer's, including my aunt, my great-aunt and her two daughters," Anderson said. "Now my mom and brother have this horrible disease. My brother is in a nursing home and my mom is progressing to the final stages, and I recently arranged home hospice care for her."

"I strive to stay aware, informed and encouraged," said Anderson. "That's why I do *You are Not Alone-Dementia Talk with Pamela*, to help others, to share the things I've learned and to spread awareness and knowledge. I want other caregivers to understand they are not alone in facing Alzheimer's."

Criticism from family and friends can be a challenge and discouraging to caregivers said Anderson. "Being a caregiver can be one of the most difficult roles you have in life, and it can be even more difficult when you are faced with caregiver criticism. You get all kinds of opinions and suggestions from all directions, but mostly from family and friends."

"You must learn to manage criticism and set some boundaries for yourself," she continued. "You don't have to act on every suggestion. Just do what you know is right for your loved one and keep them healthy, happy and safe."

A support system for practical tips, resources and education is important for all caregivers. "The Alzheimer's Association has been the best support

system through my caregiving journey," stated Anderson. "They provide excellent resources and important information to caregivers, and continue to be one of my most valuable support systems."

"Locally, the Alzheimer's Association provides care and support services, as well as education programs, absolutely free of charge," said Julia Pechlivanos, Executive Director of the Alzheimer's Association Northwest Ohio Chapter.

"We have early-stage groups for individuals recently diagnosed, as well as support groups for caregivers, plus care consultations. Dementia touches the entire family as well as friends, and the Alzheimer's Association is here to help everyone impacted."

November is National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month and National Family Caregivers Month. In Ohio, there are 220,000 individuals living with the disease and 442,000 unpaid caregivers.

Support for caregivers includes in-person and virtual support groups, virtual and in-person education programs, family care consultations and a 24/7 Helpline that is staffed by trained clinicians to offer confidential support and information to people living with dementia, caregivers, families and the public. Call the 24/7 Helpline 800.272.3900, or visit www.alz.org/nw Ohio to locate community programs and services.

The Alzheimer's Association is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support and research. Our mission is to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer's®. Visit www.alz.org or call our 24/7 Helpline at 800.272.3900.



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Ella P. Stewart Academy for Girls, November 2021 Student of the Month: Amya Roberson

By Diana Patton, Social Justice Advocate

The Truth Contributor

The sixth-grade students at the Ella P. Student Academy ("Ella") were asked "Which Wolf They Are Feeding?" and they were read this poem:

A Cherokee elder was teaching his children about life. He said to them, "A terrible fight is going on inside me. It's a fight between two wolves. One is the wolf of joy, love, hope, kindness, and compassion. The other is the wolf of fear, anger, cynicism, indifference, and greed. The same fight is going on inside of you, and every other person, too." The children thought about it for a moment, and then one child asked, "Which wolf will win?" The elder replied, "Which-ever one you feed."

I, Diana Patton, founder of the Head Full of Dreams (HFOD) program and the University of Toledo's Talented Aspiring Women Leaders (TAWL) mentors, introduced this poem, asked a set of questions and issued a challenge to the students, and their parents, during a HFOD teaching topic.

The students were asked to identify the fight, the struggle, that is going on inside of them.

This fight isn't just going on inside students, it's going on inside of all of us - it's in the teachers, parents, social workers, school counselors, principals, and even in superintendents, to name a few. It doesn't even matter if you're an author, lawyer, doctor, janitor, administrator, or even the mayor - this fight is happening in all of us.

The key is to identify this fight, it in everyday life.

Over the next two weeks, each Ella student has been asked to intentionally CHOOSE which wolf they will feed, each day, inside of the classroom. They have also been asked to share this with their parents!

Then, when I and the TAWL ladies reconvene on December 14, for another teaching session, we will discuss the choices the girls have made, which will

also determine who will be allowed to continue to participate in the HFOD's program. After all, we all know that our choices, and decisions, have conse-

... continued on page 9



Amya and Diana



Amya Roberson



Diana Patton and Principal Rhonda Kimmons with students

WHAT WE'RE READING NOW



Will
by Will Smith



Skin of the Sea
by Natasha Bowen



As the Wicked Watch
by Tamron Hall



When We Make It
by Elisabet Velasquez

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NeighborWorks... continued from page 5

NeighborWorks Toledo was formed in 1977 by residents of the Old West End who were concerned about the future of that neighborhood. The original name of the group was Neighborhood Housing Services of Toledo (NHST). The agency acquired capital to engage in infrastructure and lending improvements.

Over the years the agency expanded to include East Toledo and South Toledo and in 1993 became a member of NeighborWorks America®.

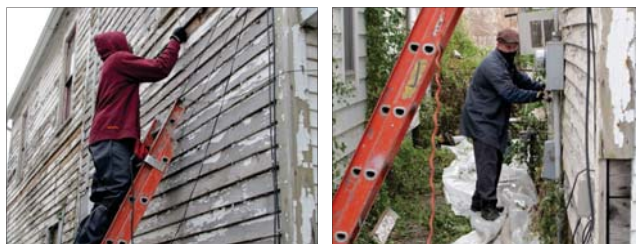
NeighborWorks America is a national leader in developing affordable housing and community development. According to its mission statement, NeighborWorks Toledo strives to revive and restore neighborhoods for the benefit of residents by providing services and programs which renew pride, stimulate reinvestment and restore confidence and trust.

In addition to its Weatherization Program, the agency hosts a range of other programs designed to fulfill its mission stimulating neighborhood reinvestment such as: financial coaching, credit coaching, job coaching, homebuyer counseling and pre-purchase education, foreclosure prevention, re-entry counseling and employer sponsored small dollar loans program.

"Our goal is to increase homeownership," says Bill Farnsel, NeighborWorks

Toledo CEO. "Homeownership is the fastest way to build wealth and to create generational wealth."

NeighborWorks is currently hiring staff for its Weatherization Program.

*Ella P. Stewart... continued from page 8*

quences.

It's a wonderful way to understand how we decide which behavior we choose, and what the impact of our choices are.

However, the students know, that if they are having difficulty, or chronically struggle to choose the wolf of kindness, joy, peace and contentment, they can talk to a counselor.

One student that is choosing the wolf of kindness, despite what is going on, is our November 2021 Student of the month, Amya Roberson.

Amya is new to Ella, and it was SO BEAUTIFUL to hear her fellow classmates stand up and share why they felt like Amya deserved to win.

Each month, a sixth grade Ella student is chosen as the HFOD student of the month for displaying good character, having a great attitude, attending school, and doing well and making great efforts with their grades. The Ella teachers select each student of the month.

Next, as part of the HFOD program, November student of the month, Amya; Ella P. Stewart Principal, Rhonda Kimmons; HFOD Founder, Diana Patton and TAWL Student Director, Kyndra Gaines, will take Amya out to dinner at a restaurant of her choice.

...continued on page 11



Homeowner Penny Peace (left) confers with NeighborWorks Nekiesha Taylor, Director of Marketing and Outreach



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Collect family history and build your family tree while visiting with family during this holiday season. Stop by the Local History and Genealogy Department at Main Library to pick up a Family Tree Workbook or download a copy at toledolibrary.org/localhistory. Here's a card to get you started!

Start by cutting out this form and interview family members:

What's your full name?

When and where were you born?

When and where were you married?

Whom did you marry? (their name, date, and place of birth)

How many children did you have? (their names)

What are your parents' full names?

When and where were they born?

When and where were they married?

Any details you know about your grandparents.

Do you have any family holy texts, papers, or family photographs?

For more information visit the Local History Department at Main Library or call 419.259.5233.

Join the Toledo Library StoryWalk Challenge!

Build a love of reading, enjoy a walk, and earn free gloves or mittens for chillier days ahead – participate in the Toledo Lucas County Public Library (TLCPL) StoryWalk® Challenge (<https://www.toledolibrary.org/storywalk>).

There are StoryWalks at all 19 Library locations where you stroll along a pathway and follow signs to the next page in the story. There is a different story at each location with bright pictures and suggestions for hopping, skipping, and exploring to make reading fun for young readers of all skill levels.

* Pick up a tracker card at any Library location (<http://toledolibrary.org/locations>) or download at toledolibrary.org/storywalk (<https://www.toledolibrary.org/storywalk>).

* Visit 5 Library StoryWalks and check your visits.

* Bring the card to any location by Dec. 30 for a prize. Gloves for big kids and adults, mittens for little ones. (While supplies last.)

Talking, singing, reading, writing, and playing with children every day is essential for growing strong readers and successful students. The Library makes it easy with StoryWalks, Storytimes, learning kits, and more. Visit toledolibrary.org/prek12 for more ideas and resources.

The Library StoryWalk installation was made possible in part with support from the Library Legacy Foundation and a Family Engagement Grant from the Toledo Community Foundation.

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Wilberforce University Connects with Penn National Gaming

Students from the nation's first, private historically Black university college (HBCU) will soon benefit from a new science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) program sponsored by Penn National Gaming, Inc.

The casino company announced that it has launched a new scholarship with HBCUs in states in which it operates and Ohio is one.

Over the next five years, Penn National will dedicate more than \$4 million to fund STEM scholarships and an internship opportunity, and Wilberforce University (Wilberforce, Ohio) students will be a part of that agreement. The university will receive \$100,000 each year to support students in STEM programs and to enhance STEM academic programs on campus. The company is also offering an internship for a Wilberforce student through its "Leadership Excellence At Penn" (LEAP) program.

"We are elated to have served as a thought partner for Penn National Gaming as they launch their HBCU initiatives," said Wilberforce University VP Natalie Coles. "Our students and faculty will see the benefit of their investment firsthand, which will increase our workforce ready graduates and prepare our students for thriving careers with Penn National Gaming and beyond. We are so grateful!"

The launch of this initiative stemmed from the Penn Diversity Committee's support of diversity and inclusion, leading the company to create a scholarship program for children of Penn employees. From there, Penn moved forward to expand opportunities for other students of diverse backgrounds. The new initiatives include STEM scholarships and internships for HBCU students.

"Increasing access to STEM opportunities for HBCU students is another important step to promote social and economic equity, as well as diversity, inclusion, and belonging," said Jay Snowden, President, and CEO of Penn National. "Penn National is well positioned to be North America's leading digital, entertainment, sports content, gaming, and technology company, and we look forward to supplementing these scholarships with real life technical skills development for the STEM internship recipients."

Penn National's commitment to fund STEM scholarships and internship opportunities is an extension of the Company's established partnerships with 33 HBCUs across the country. The ongoing collaboration with HBCUs facilitates career opportunities at Penn National's properties and increases participation in its Leadership Excellence at Penn National Gaming ("LEAP") Program, which provides hands-on training, mentoring, and real world experience to new or recent college graduates who are interested in building a long term career in the gaming industry.

"We are incredibly proud of our partnerships with HBCUs across the country," said Justin Carter, Senior Vice President of Regional Operations for

Penn National and Chairman of the Company's Diversity Committee. "The STEM Scholarship Program is another important step in narrowing the representation gap in STEM fields among certain underrepresented communities."

Founded in 1856, Wilberforce University is the nation's first, private historically Black college/university (HBCU). It is a member of the United Negro College Fund (UNCF), the NAIA, and the Ohio Link Library Consortium. According to HBCU.com, Wilberforce is one of the top five HBCUs in the midwest.



Wilberforce University VP
Natalie Coles



WU campus aerial

Ella P. Stewart... continued from page 9

Stay tuned for our December student of the month, and learn more about the teaching topic by tuning in to a January article.

Until then, perhaps you can ask yourself "Which Wolf Am I Feeding?"

Every single day, decide which wolf you'll choose to feed. Is it the wolf of anger, fear, doubt, frustration, worry, greed or jealousy? Or, the wolf of kindness, joy, love, compassion, hope, and humility.

It's yours to choose.

Let's do this together.

Congratulations to Amya!

If you'd like to learn more about the Ella P. Stewart Head Full of Dreams Program, or find out how you can participate or donate to this amazing program, reach out to Diana Patton by sending her an email at diana@dianarpatton.com

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New Efforts Are Helping Close the Eye Care Gap for Children

Special to The Truth

Healthy eyesight is critical for educational success. Studies show that children with vision impairment can experience lower educational achievement and self-esteem levels than their normally-sighted peers. This is why it's important for all children to receive an annual eye exam.

However, due to a range of factors, including lack of insurance coverage and access to health services, not all kids are able to receive an eye exam. The global program Sight For Kids, co-founded by Johnson & Johnson Vision and Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF), is now aiming to eliminate these barriers in the United States.

"The ability to see is not a privilege. It is a right owed to every single kid in our community and beyond," says, Shlomi Nachman, company group chairman, Cardiovascular & Specialty Solutions Group and Johnson & Johnson Vision.

As it turns out, teachers are frequently the first to notice a child needs vision correction. Teachers have a unique ability to identify behavioral changes and notice when children suffer socially and academically, which may be attributed to poor vision. According to a recent study in the Journal of the American Medical Association Ophthalmology, students in grades 3 to 7 who received vision correction through a school-based vision program achieved better reading scores. This is why Sight For Kids provides teachers with training to deliver eye health education and mobilizes local Lions Clubs to screen for common eye conditions. Students identified with potential vision impairment or eye ailments are then referred to healthcare providers for a comprehensive evaluation. In an effort to reduce vision care inequities, the program also provides students with no-cost eye health education, screening, eye exams, glasses and special follow-up treatment and care, if necessary.

"As teachers, if we notice the signs of vision problems, we can refer students and their families to the proper health care provider," says Edna Johnson, a grade school teacher at St. Lucie County Schools.



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In the South Florida area, Johnson & Johnson Vision and LCIF are collaborating with the Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired through its Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program to help 20,000 students facing inequities get

tially prevent serious eye health conditions before they cause permanent damage," says Virginia A. Jacko, president and CEO, Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired and Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program.

Nearly 2,000 kids in South Florida have received an eye exam since September 2021 alone, thanks to Sight For Kids and 4 million have globally in the past year. Among those who've benefitted from the program is Rajiv who was prescribed his first pair of glasses. His mom knew his interaction in class was being affected due to poor vision, but she was unable to take time off work to get him an eye exam. Yensi's parents don't have insurance and couldn't afford eye care, but through the program, Yensi received a referral for a free exam. Kimberly's parents, who recently immigrated to the United States, didn't feel safe seeking eye care for their second grader. Thanks to Sight For Kids, Kimberly was prescribed her first pair of glasses in an environment where her family could feel safe and educated in their native language. Ruth's family also recently immigrated. Diagnosed by the optometrist at the Sight for Kids screening, Ruth is back in class wearing glasses and keeping up with her classmates.

"Many times, immigrant students do not have the access, ability, or insurance to cover vision exams and they struggle in school or socially," says Ruth's mother.

One clear way to help children thrive in school is to make sure they get an eye exam. Are you a parent or a caregiver? Schedule an eye exam for your little one today. To find an eye doctor near you, visit prioritizeyour-eyes.com/eyeexam.

Healthy vision is fundamental to overall health and educational success. Reducing inequities in eye care makes a huge impact for individuals, families and communities.

Courtesy StatePoint

Avoiding Holiday Blues... continued from page 4

4. Consider that your depression may actually be caused by this time of year – Seasonal Affective Disorder, or SAD, occurs because of reduced exposure to sunlight—which is just what happens during the holiday season when daylight hours are shorter. Check with your doctor to see if light therapy might be beneficial for you.


5. Help others – Soup kitchens, homeless shelters, nursing homes, churches, and scores of other organizations can always use volunteers, especially at critical times of the year. Additionally, you'll benefit from the company of other people around you rather than being alone. And, help others help you! Tell those who care about you what you do or don't need from them. They often don't know how to help, or what to say, but want to.

6. Bury the hatchet – Perfect families don't magically appear during the holidays, but family conflicts can. "Letting go" and forgiving can help heal past wounds. Additionally, family feuds can even be deliberately set aside until after the high-tension holidays in order to facilitate the peace and enjoyment of everyone at this special time.

7. Start your own traditions – Both families and traditions change with time. (Every tradition had to start somewhere!) Rather than reminiscing over the "good old days," accept the fact that change may be necessary, grasp the season as it is now, look forward to the future, and create your own family traditions that can be enjoyed and even preserved for future generations. This is the year of "Zoom" meetings, parties, and other gatherings. They are much cheaper, safer, and easier to organize than traveling. All you need is a webcam and internet access.

8. Keep your alcohol intake low – Don't pour gasoline on a fire. Remember, alcohol has a depressive effect on your nervous system, so if you're experiencing the holiday blues, drinking too much alcohol will only worsen

... continued on page 13



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Prince: A Portrait of the Artist in Memories & Memorabilia by Paul Sexton, foreword by Susan Rogers

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

The Truth Contributor

The cover promised greatness.

Just a whisper over 12 inches square, you knew there was magic inside; even its title and artwork were enticing. Oh, the anticipation, as you flipped it over to read the contents before carefully running a fingernail along one side to slice the clear wrapping and finally touch the vinyl. There was something truly delicious about the first minutes with an old-school record album, but in Prince by Paul Sexton, it was nothing compared to the music.

André Anderson didn't know a soul.

He was a teenager then, and his mother had just moved him to a different Minneapolis school and a "new situation." When an adult told him to "go stand against a wall," Anderson decided to stand next to a kid who looked friendly; remembering that day, he recalled that that boy, Prince Rogers Nelson, was a kindred spirit who lived for music.

Even then, young Prince was restless; he ran away from home many times, bouncing between his father's apartment and the Anderson home. Prince's dad, John, was "his best friend" and was arguably the root of his son's talent; as an adult, Prince remembered being three years old and itching to play music his father's piano.

By 16, he was proficient with several musical instruments, and was a member of a band. At 18, he wanted to record his own single; two years later, he was recording for a major label. He was laser-focused on his career, then and for the rest of his life, to the point that he rarely slept. His entourage is said to have made it a game to see who could stay awake longer than Prince.

Nobody could.

He had a legendary work ethic and was generous, but fools weren't welcome in his circle. He was a prankster who loved to laugh, a perfectionist and a visionary. Once, he called himself "TAFKAP," which stood for The Artist Formerly Known as Prince.

Says Sexton, "But now he is The Artist Forever Known as Prince."

So you think you know everything there is to know about The Purple One. Or maybe not: Prince could still hold a few surprises, even for the most ardent fan.

c.2021
Welbeck Publishing
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143 pages

But which will be your favorite part?

Author Paul Sexton tells Prince's story from his youth to his death, through the eyes of those who worked with Prince, on-stage and off, in stories that are both personal and of the kind you might hear in a business meeting. While Sexton delightfully dives into a mischievous side of the singer, readers can rest assured that there's nothing scandalous here – that wasn't Prince's way – but those who know his lyrics know that the edge is close.

Or will you prefer the pages of photographs? Pictures of Prince as a boy, a creator, a performer? Still-photos, posters, concert shots, pictures of his costumes? Photos that might be new to you? Why even try to decide about this book made especially for fans: pick both, and Prince promises a great read.

Avoiding Holiday Blues... continued from page 12

your depression.

9. Rededicate yourself to your spirituality – The "reason for the season" is often swallowed up by maddening materialism that can distract from the history, meaning, and significance of holiday celebrations. Step back, slow down, and refocus on transcendent, eternal matters. Rededicate yourself to spiritual pursuits, such as church attendance, church work, prayer life, and other disciplines. Regain the focus originally intended by this time of year.

10. Every day, Veterans who served in the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard connect with proven resources and effective treatments for depression and find solutions that improve their lives. It can be difficult to handle depression on your own, so talking to your family and friends can be a first step. You can also consider connecting with:

- Your doctor. Ask if your doctor has experience treating Veterans or can refer you to someone who does. If you feel comfortable enough with your physician, he or she may be able to help you find tools to manage loss of interest or pleasure even without direct experience with Veterans.
- A mental health professional, such as a therapist
- Your local VA Medical Center or Vet Center. VA specializes in the care and treatment of Veterans.
- A spiritual or religious adviser

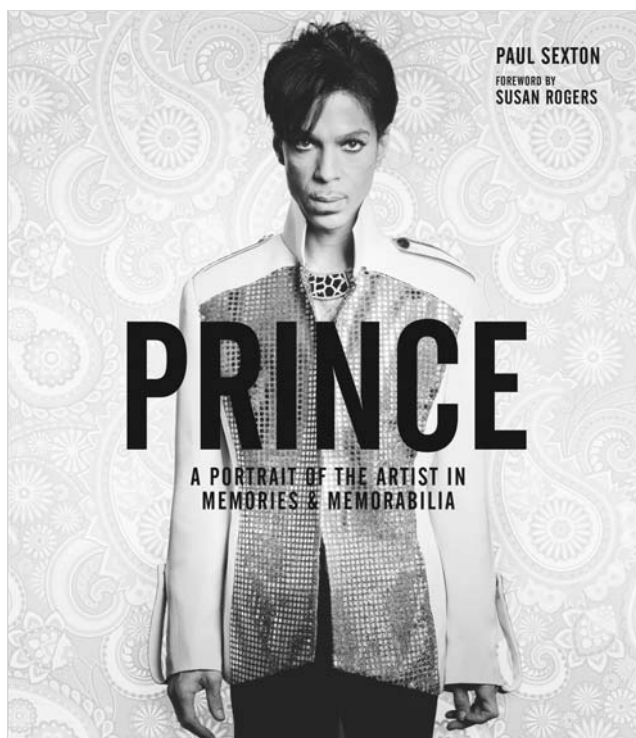
Helplines

SAMHSA - Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration
800-662-HELP (4357) www.samhsa.gov

Veterans Crisis Line 1-800-273-8255 then press 1 www.VeteransCrisisLine.net

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www.SuicidePreventionLifeline.org



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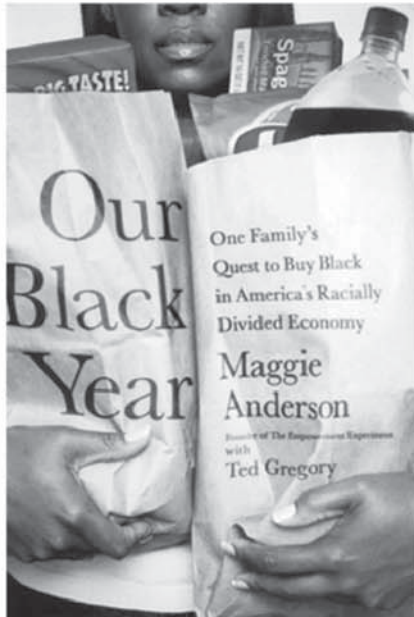
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When: Every 4th Sunday
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- Coordinator Information Technology
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LCCS offers an excellent salary and benefit package. EOE Valuing Diversity.

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Community Engagement Facilitator

BETHANY HOUSE Bethany House provides long-term safe transitional shelter and advocacy to survivors of domestic violence and their children. This part-time position will work 20-25 hours weekly to support the mission and values of Bethany House, as well as the values of the Sisters of St. Francis.

RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

1. Assisting in specialized outreach activities and volunteer engagement.
2. Facilitating volunteer recruitment, screening, orientation, training, and supervision
3. Facilitating in-kind gifts and volunteers to ensure the needs of program participants are met, including holiday programs
4. Coordinating volunteer opportunities (individuals and groups) activities to create clean welcoming shelter spaces for survivors and their children and overall care for the facility
5. Facilitating outreach opportunities on behalf of Bethany House
6. Assisting in agency communications including social media, marketing, newsletters, donor and volunteer acknowledgments
7. Engaging with community agencies serving marginalized and under-served populations

Requirements

- Be able to lift 40 pounds and ability to climb stairs required
- Driving is required for this position. Must have and maintain a vehicle, a valid driver's license, and proof of auto insurance
- Successful completion of background screening

Bethany House provides equal employment opportunities (EEO) to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, pregnancy, disability, genetic information, marital status, status as a covered veteran or any other factor the law protects from employment discrimination in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws. *Qualified employees are eligible for tuition assistance to Lourdes University.*

NO PHONE CALLS PLEASE. INTERESTED CANDIDATES SHOULD EMAIL A COVER LETTER AND RESUME TO EXECDIRECTOR@BETHANYHOUSETOLEDO.ORG

TARTA SEEKS FEEDBACK ON UPCOMING SERVICE CHANGES

The Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority (TARTA) will host 4 public events to gather community feedback on upcoming proposed service changes, which include:

- The introduction of Sunday service
- Expanded service on Saturday mornings
- Expanded Saturday hours for Routes 26 and 34
- Elimination of weekend Route 31C to UTM, and maintaining or expansion of service on routes 31G and 31H

The purpose of these events is to seek comment from the public and the business community of these changes. These forums will focus on the Title VI equity analyses surrounding the service changes. Public meetings are scheduled for the following dates:

- Virtual meeting, **Monday, Dec. 20, 2021**, 6-7 p.m.
- Virtual meeting, **Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021**, noon-1 p.m.
- In-person Open House at TARTA Transit Hub, 612 N. Huron Street, Toledo, **Monday, Jan. 3, 2022**, 11:30 a.m.-3 p.m.
- In-person meeting at TARPS, 130 Knapp Street, Toledo, **Wednesday, Jan. 5, 2022**, 5-6 p.m.

Registration and additional details will be available in the coming weeks at tarta.com or by calling 419-243-7433. Customers and others from the public interested in submitting questions may do so by sending them to customer-relationships@tarta.com.

MARKETING AND DIGITAL MEDIA SPECIALIST

WGTE Public Media seeks a highly organized, creative, and knowledgeable professional to execute marketing and communication tactics for digital, print, television, and radio that advance business outcomes.

Candidate must have strong written and oral communications skills, excellent team collaborating abilities, and be able to handle multiple, time-sensitive projects. Experience with creating and managing content through existing social/digital platforms and systems required. The ideal candidate should have direct experience with website content management systems, email marketing administration, and digital analytics. Knowledge of photo and video editing software, photography, lighting, audio recording, and shooting video on smartphones and video cameras are strongly preferred.

A bachelor's degree in marketing/communications, journalism, media, or related discipline is preferred or a minimum of an Associate's degree in a similar discipline or two years related experience.

WGTE Public Media is committed to attracting and retaining a diverse staff that honors your experience, perspective, and unique identity. Together, our community strives to create and maintain working and learning environments that are inclusive, equitable, and welcoming.

Send your letter and résumé to: Human Resources, P.O. Box 30, Toledo, OH, 43614 or at: employment@wgte.org. EOE/ADA

MEDIATOR POSITION AVAILABLE

The Fair Housing Center (Toledo) seeks an experienced mediator to serve as a neutral party in their Landlord-Tenant Mediation department. The successful candidate will, through education and experience:

- (1) Have a strong foundation of basic mediation skills and ethics for mediators.
- (2) Be able to explain the mediation process and confidentiality to landlords, tenants, and the general public.
- (3) Be comfortable working with a widely diverse population of people.
- (4) Have the ability to work effectively with people under stressful situations, identify problems and potential solutions, and be well-versed in conflict management and diffusion skills.
- (5) Ability to utilize Microsoft Office software applications (Word, Excel, etc.) with ability to track activities in our proprietary case management system.
- (6) Have (or learn) a working knowledge of Ohio's landlord-tenant laws, and eviction procedures.
- (7) Have knowledge about and be able to interpret Federal, State, and Local laws concerning discrimination in housing; and
- (8) Have the ability to build relationships with and educate the community through outreach, presentations, and workshops.

Qualifications:

- (1) Bachelor's degree in the social sciences (particularly fields dealing with people) or equivalent required. Some amount of relevant experience may be substituted for educational requirements;
 - (2) Solid conflict resolution skills; formal training(s) preferred.
 - (3) One or more years experience in mediation.
- This is a full-time (9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) exempt position, with some evenings or weekends as needed. Additional training will be provided. The Fair Housing Center offers competitive salary and benefits package.

How to Apply:

Please send resume and cover letter detailing qualifications to HR@toledofhc.org.

The Deltas' Joy of Giving Toy Drive

Special to The Truth

It's the most wonderful time of the year ... for many families. And the members of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. strive annually to make the season as wonderful as possible for even more families.

Annually, the local alumnae chapter sorority members host a toy drive to bring joy to the children of Lucas County Children's Services (LCCS) and recently, Family House. For more than a decade, they've collected thousands of toys to be given to children in need in our community.

"Service is what we do and we would not be able to do our duties as a sorority if we did not help our community," said Aleshia Furr, Joy of Giving committee chair.

Due to COVID-19 and the ongoing pandemic, the evening holiday celebration was cancelled for the second year in a row. However, service to the community does not cease. These times call for creativity!

"This is an opportunity for the community to say, 'hey, I can at least give something for someone else, as opposed to keeping it within themselves. We have to help others in order for us to succeed in life,'" said Hall-Rollins

This year's drive was a drive-thru at Bowsheer High School. On Saturday, December 4, Delta members collected toys to be donated to LCCS and Family House. The sorority emphasized the importance of donating African-American dolls for the Drive considering the scarcity of such items in stores.

The chapter's goal is to donate 500 toys this year to area families.



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