

# The Sojourner's Truth

[www.thetruthtoledo.com](http://www.thetruthtoledo.com)

Volume 70 No. 7

*"And Ye Shall Know The Truth..."*

January 19, 2022



Brandi Hopkins, mother of slain son Jahneil Douglas, speaks of her family's pain!

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# Alpha Phi Alpha 30th Annual MLK Scholarship Breakfast

By Dawn Scotland

*Sojourner's Truth Reporter*

The Men of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. celebrated their 30th annual Martin Luther King Jr. Scholarship Breakfast in honor of Dr. King's legacy. This year's theme was "Emerging from the Darkness: Reclaiming Our Light." Six high school seniors were awarded scholarships totaling \$13,000.

The local Alpha Xi Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. held its annual scholarship breakfast at the Pinnacle in Maumee, Ohio Saturday morning January 15.

Mistress of Ceremonies Kristian Brown, 13abc News Anchor, presented the welcome to full room and livestream audience.

Brothers and Lorain, OH natives Pablo Oquendo, 18, and Celestino Oquendo, 16, led the morning with a violin rendition of 'Lift Every Voice and Sing.' The multi-instrumentalists attend Central State University and high school in Lorain, OH.

Alpha Elder David Young led the invocation, Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz provided remarks and recognition of Partners and Sponsors was given by Alpha Dr. Calvin Burney Jr.

Plated breakfast was served while guest enjoyed a video highlighting 'Jewel level' scholarship recipients (representing the highest scholarship award given) and a presentation of Dr. King's final speech. The video was produced by Creadio. The Toledo opera provided a video selection of "The Whole Word."

Richard E. Jackson received the 2022 Drum Major for Justice Award. "The Drum Major for Justice Award is the highest award given by the Alpha Xi Lambda chapter each year to a deserving community member," said Brown. "The chapter receives nominations and selects the recipient based on their

*... continued on page 8*



The Men of Alpha Phi Alpha



Brothers Pablo and Celestino Oquendo



Alpha Esquires (youth mentees)



MLK Celebration Committee



Alpha Xi Lambda Chapter 2022 Scholarship Recipients



Drum Major Award honoree Richard E. Jackson (center) with son Richard C. Jackson and wife Yolanda Jackson





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# Does This Resume Look Familiar?

By Lafe Tolliver, Esq

Guest Column

Hey, check out the below resume and see if it looks familiar and whether you qualify to present it as your qualifications to the Democratic Party which is very vocal on protecting your right to vote but, when it comes to accomplished political results in a hostile Congress, they are falling woefully short in backing up their rhetoric for their most faithful voting bloc, the black and brown voter.

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**POSITION SOUGHT:** Connection with a political party that will seriously engage and respect the Black and brown voters in this country and protect them from partisan gerrymandering and open and notorious GOP voter suppression.

**QUALIFICATIONS:** (a) longest loyalist group in the Democratic Party;

(b) marching and dying for basic civil rights since 1619; (c) being lynched and jailed for attempting to vote; (d) faithful donor and worker for the Democratic Party; (e) collectively, worn out thousands of pairs of shoes marching in Selma, Montgomery, NYC, Detroit, Nashville, Miami, Cleveland, New Orleans, Atlanta, Charleston, Louisville, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Richmond and a host of other cities for the right to vote; (f) suffered brutal mistreatment by police, cities and governments in order to stop our vote from not being counted.

**EDUCATION:** All that could be reasonably obtained under the challenging circumstances of living in America plus, an education that was based upon lessons learned in a segregated society that continuously sought to demean, and mentally and emotionally handicap the Black Experience in America.

**SALARY:** First, start with reparations since 1619 to present date.

**DESCRIBE YOUR SKILL SET:** Have strong ability to work in adverse conditions despite lack of support from superiors. Able to negotiate difficult interpersonal relationships with hostile persons while remaining focused and calm. Have proven ability to energize and organize people to support an agenda that protects their voting interests, equal employment, fair housing and access to the voting polls.

**REFERENCES:** Sojourner Truth, Denmark Vesey, Fannie Lou Hamer, Medgar Evers, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr., Reverend Shuttleworth, Roy Wilkins, Sandra Bland, Ralph Abernathy, Rosa Parks, Eric Garner, Thurgood Marshall, Maya Angelou, Barack H. Obama, Ruby Bridges, Emmitt Till, Colin Kaepernick, Adam Clayton Powell Jr., Dorothy Height, H. Rap Brown, Harriet Tubman, John Brown, Marcus Garvey, Frederick Douglass, Hon. Damon Keith and Harry Belafonte. Hundreds of other names available upon request.

Contact Lafe Tolliver at [tolliver@juno.com](mailto:tolliver@juno.com)

## The Ohio Coalition on Black Civic Participation/Ohio Unity Coalition Hails Ohio Supreme Court Decision on Redistricting

The Ohio Supreme Court sides with Ohio voters and confirms the value of the voices of Black and Brown voters in the redistricting process by rejecting maps that diluted the power of their vote.

In the 4-3 Majority vote, the court rejected the partisan and racial gerrymandering of the legislative maps adopted by the Ohio Redistricting Commission. By doing so, the Court ruled that the maps do not meet the letter or intent of Ohio voters who amended the Constitution to require fair districts.

"The maps presented not only fail to use a reasonable basis of representational fairness" stated Deidra Reese, Statewide Coordinator of the Ohio Coalition on Black Civic Participation/Ohio Unity Coalition, "but it also broke up black and brown communities in places like Hamilton, Lucas and Cuyahoga counties just to give one party an edge, which we are glad the court recognized and rejected."

The majority accepted the argument that communities of color were divided and spread into heavily republican leaning districts which had the impact of minimizing the ability of black and brown voter's ability to elect legislators of their choice, which could have a negative impact on policy decisions that affect their daily lives. The majority members on the court demand that the Redistricting Commission avoid this practice and ordered them to redraw the legislative lines.

Many Ohio citizens including OCBCP/Ohio Unity Coalition activists from across the state attended hearings, wrote letters, made calls, and offered testimony calling for fair maps as the Redistricting Commission deliberated and developed the maps. Angela Shute-Woodson, OCBCP/Ohio Unity Coalition Cleveland Coordinator, pointed out that information provided from the many hearings were included in what was considered by the Supreme Court as they made their decision concluding that the current legislative maps are unconstitutional and that fair maps are possible.

OCBCP/Ohio Unity Coalition will continue to monitor the redrawing of the maps to ensure racial representation is taken into account.

The Ohio Coalition on Black Civic Participation/Ohio Unity Coalition is the state affiliate of the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation based in Toledo, Ohio.

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# TARTA's Hub of Hope Welcomes New Partners, Announces Changes

The Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority (TARTA) is proud to announce the addition of three community partners to its Hub of Hope program.

Representatives of Cherry Street Mission's workforce development program, the Lucas County Department of Job & Family Services, and The Ohio State University Extension's Expanded Food and Nutrition Program are scheduled to visit TARTA's Transit Hub at 612 N. Huron in downtown Toledo in the coming weeks.

Through Hub of Hope, community partners can reach out to TARTA customers with information on goods or services they may need.

"There are so many wonderful organizations in our area that help put people in touch with job opportunities, meals, and other tools available to them," said Susan Gettum, TARTA's Customer Care Manager. "It's a great opportunity for us to connect our customers to those resources and give people doing some great work a platform for what they do. It's important to TARTA that our customers know we're not just here to get them from Point A to Point B. We're proud to be a part of this community

and serve this community, and we're always looking for new opportunities for outreach."

Due to concerns over rising coronavirus numbers, scheduled appearances by Food For Thought on Friday, January 14 and Cherry Street Mission on Monday, Jan. 17 have been postponed.

The schedule for live outreach at TARTA's downtown Transit Hub includes:

- Cherry Street Mission Workforce Development Program: Monday, Jan. 24, 9-11 a.m.
- Lucas County Department of Job & Family Services: Thursday, Jan. 20, 10:20 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
- Food For Thought: Friday, Jan. 21 and Friday, Jan. 28, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.
- Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program: Tuesday, Feb. 1 and Tuesday, Feb. 8, 9-11 a.m.

Community partners interested in providing information or performing outreach at the Hub should email [customer-relations@tarta.com](mailto:customer-relations@tarta.com).

## TARTA Looks To Modified Schedule In Case Of Driver Shortage

To ensure that it can deliver reliable service even in cases of driver shortages due to COVID-19, the Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority (TARTA) has announced the creation of a Code Orange schedule that may be used in the coming weeks.

Code Orange service would reduce the frequency of trips on fixed-line routes 2, 3, 5, 10L, 19, 26, 28, 31, 34, 51, and 52, in addition to Call-A-Ride vehicles. All other routes would run on a normal schedule. Code Orange service would apply only on weekdays.

While service frequency would be reduced, hours of operation would remain 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.

A Code Orange schedule would be announced the Friday or Saturday before the affected week of the run via [tarta.com](http://tarta.com), the downtown Transit Hub, and TARTA's social media channels and text message service.

"The latest surge in COVID-19 cases has caused staffing shortages for many businesses, and unfortunately TARTA is no exception," TARTA CEO Laura Koprowski said. "We join the long list of transit agencies nationwide searching for a solution that both maintain service and keep both customers and drivers safe."

"We look forward to running full service every day once our workforce is healthy and staff availability stabilizes."

TARPS paratransit service would not necessarily run on a Code Orange schedule when fixed-line routes do so. Should TARPS go to a Code Orange schedule, rides would be limited to one round-trip per day.

For more information or to find out what schedule is in effect for that week, contact TARTA information operators at (419) 243-RIDE (7433), or TARPS at (419) 382-9901, or consult [tarta.com](http://tarta.com) or TARTA's social media channels in the coming days.

### About TARTA

TARTA provides a vital link in the Toledo metro area to jobs, education, health care and other destinations. It enables everyone in our community to have access to transportation regardless of their age, race, physical ability or economic background. TARTA is underway with exploring and introducing new initiatives and service options that will enhance convenience and customer experience while moving our region into the future of public transit.

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# The Annual MLK Jr. Unity Day Celebration

By Dawn Scotland  
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

The University of Toledo, in partnership with the City of Toledo and the City of Toledo Human Relations Commission, held its 21st annual Martin Luther King Jr. Unity Day virtually on Monday, January 17. This year's theme was 'Everyday Activism' and featured Toledo native and acclaimed film producer Andre Gaines as the keynote speaker.

Alexis Means, 13abc Action News anchor, served as mistress of ceremonies for the virtual event. A welcome was presented by University of Toledo President Dr. Gregory Postel followed by Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz. The mayor honored keynote speaker Andre Gaines with a Key to the City in his remarks.

The national anthem was sung by mezzo-soprano Olivia Johnson (2019/2020 Toledo Opera resident artist) accompanied by Emily Moran of the Toledo Opera. A breathtaking rendition of 'Lift Every Voice and Sing' was performed by vocal student soprano Ivana Butler accompanied by Kevin Bylsma, also of the Toledo Opera. The Presentation of Colors was given by the Lucas County Sheriff's Department and Police Department.

Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur and U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown provided individual remarks. A moment of silence was given to those who lost their lives in 2021. Following the commemoration, a video on gun violence was presented by the City of Toledo Human Relations Commission.

The celebration featured a host of local talent including presentations from The M.A.D.D. Poets Society, the Scott High School Choir, and a dance performance by the University of Toledo F.I.R.E. Squad Dance Team.

Five University of Toledo students received \$1000 scholarship awards from the Martin Luther King Scholarship Fund sponsored by Paramount. Malaika Bell, interim executive director for the Office of Diversity and Inclusion at the University of Toledo, presented the awards.

The five scholarship recipients were:

- **Jasmine Fox (Junior)** - Major in Law & Social Thought
- **Tariq Hardiman (Senior)** – Major: Law & Social Thought, Africana Studies
- **Stephon McQueen (Senior)** – Major: Early Childhood Education
- **Nyriesha Tevis (Sophomore)** – Major: Social Work
- **Kennedy Williams (Senior)** – Major: Digital Marketing

"Each undergraduate was asked to write an essay about what they believe to be the most pressing social justice issue of our time", said Bell. The essay topics included: the public education system, fair housing practices, lack of unity in the black community, sexual violence against women and black men in the criminal justice system.

The Toledo Opera shared a preview of a documentary on their upcoming all-black opera 'Blue' that will run in August of 2022.

Erin Baker, director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at the Toledo Lucas County Public Library and chair of the Human Rights Commission introduced keynote speaker Andre Gaines.

"As a critically acclaimed producer, Andre Gaines made his directorial debut with a definitive biography of comedian and activist Dick Gregory," said Baker. "Chris Rock, Kevin Hart, Wanda Sykes, W. Kamau Bell, Lena Waithe, Myrlie Evers-Williams and Harry Belafonte star in Gaines feature film

*Honoring*

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Andre Gaines

The One and Only Dick Gregory about the life of a man who was not only a civil rights activist, social critic and comedian but also a devoted health pioneer, husband and father. Gaines is also an executive producer of HBO's critically acclaimed four-part documentary series *The Lady and the Dale*.

The keynote was a moderated interview between news anchor Brandon Tucker and the filmmaker. The two spoke in detail about Dick Gregory, the late comedian and activist who was good friends with Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King. Gaines is a graduate of the New York University Tisch School of the Arts.

He created his own film company, Cinemation Studios in 2010 and "works with up-and-coming filmmakers across media to bring their voices and perspectives to the forefront of the film industry". He along with his wife and two children currently reside in Los Angeles, California. The full interview can be viewed on the University of Toledo's YouTube page and website <https://www.utoledo.edu/mlk/>.

Special Thanks was given by Erin Baker of the Human Relations Commission. Ivana Butler of the Toledo Opera closed the event with singing "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands."

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# Minority Executive Leadership Program Designed To Support Personal and Professional Success for People of Color

## *Graduates Eight Participants from Latest Cohort*

The Center for Nonprofit Resources (The Center), a program of Greater Toledo Community Foundation, graduated the ninth cohort of its Minority Executive Leadership Program this week. Through a series of high-quality professional development workshops facilitated by both national and local speakers and mentorships with community leaders, participants receive training, networking opportunities and ongoing support for personal and professional success. This is the ninth year of the program, which has graduated 59 people since 2013. Eight participants took part in a minimum of 30 hours of professional development and mentoring between July and December.

Graduates of the 2021 Minority Executive Leadership Program include:

- Carla Benjamin, Welcome to a New Life (Findlay, OH);
- Kelly Davis, Maumee Valley Habitat for Humanity;
- Kathleen Greely, Community RE Investment Coalition - Englewood SW;
- Earl Harris, Vision Church;
- Rochelle Morrishaw, Women Helping Encouraging Women aka WHEW, Inc.;
- KaTrice Perry, Gateway Youth Development Program;
- Sierra Webb, Toledo-Lucas County Public Library; and,
- Reggie Williams, Frederick Douglass Community Association.

MEL participant Sierra Webb reflected on this opportunity saying “through this program, I have gained an unbelievable amount of support, education and mentorship in the community, and I am so thankful for the opportunity.” Like a number of other participants, she commented how all in this cohort are connected with each other. “This is an investment in myself. It was done in a fun

way and we connected with each other. There was a lot of learning done, and in a safe space that allowed for candid discussion and sharing.”

The Certificate Program was started in 2013 as a result of community leaders of color on the Sustainable Strategies Committee identifying the need for a program that supports emerging minority nonprofit leaders, current nonprofit CEOs/Executive Directors and staff interested in growing into leadership positions. The Committee, led by Doni Miller, worked with The Center to design the program, which looks to build organizational sustainability to transform our community. The goal is to help participants develop their professional skills, better serve as employees in their current positions and be effective nonprofit leaders. This program is sponsored in part by The Andersons.

The Center will begin accepting applications for the next cohort in Spring 2022.

Greater Toledo Community Foundation initiated The Center for Nonprofit Resources in 2003 to improve capacity building for area nonprofits. The work of The Center includes an information and resource center, high quality professional development with certificate programs and one-on-one short-term consulting for nonprofit agencies in our region, as well as providing assistance for grant programs around strategic alliances to support nonprofit sustainability.

For further information about the Minority Executive Leadership Program, contact Milva Valenzuela Wagner, Director, The Center for Nonprofit Resources, 300 Madison Ave., Suite 1300, Toledo, OH 43604, phone: 419.241.9513, email [Milva.Wagner@c4npr.org](mailto:Milva.Wagner@c4npr.org) or visit <https://c4npr.org/be-a-nonprofit-leader/c4npr-minority-executive-leadership-certificate-program/>

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# Morgan Harper: Dem Candidate for Senate Tours Toledo Businesses

By Fletcher Word

*Sojourner's Truth Editor*

Democratic senatorial candidate, Morgan Harper, toured Toledo small businesses on Saturday, January 8 and shared her vision about what's wrong and right in Washington and what she intends to do about it when she is elected to fill the Senate seat currently held by retiring Republican Senator Rob Portman.

Harper, however, has a formidable task ahead of her. She is facing an uphill battle against Congressman Tim Ryan who declared his candidacy months before Harper and has amassed a bunch of money and a lot of local and national endorsements including from Hillary Clinton, Senator Sherrod Brown and most of the Ohio General Assembly Democrats. Just this week, State Rep. Emilia Sykes, House Minority Leader, endorsed Ryan.

Harper, during her visit to Toledo, focused on her vision – her determination to stay independent of corporate influence.

"Yes, there is a lot of focus on Democrats and Republicans," she said in answer to a question in Steve's Sport-N-Cuts from owner Steve Foster about the inability of those in both parties in Washington, D.C. to accomplish much. "The reality is that both parties, the majority of people in those positions are about protecting people who have a lot of money – the large corporations that dominate the economy," she continued.

Harper, an attorney and community organizer, declared her candidacy in August of last year. She had previously run for the U.S. House of Representatives in 2020 against Congresswoman Joyce Beatty in Ohio's 3rd Congressional District. In the primary, she lost to the incumbent, who is now the chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus, by a 68 to 32 percent margin.

An Ohio native, Harper was adopted at the age of nine months and raised on Columbus east side. A scholarship helped her graduate from Tufts University before earning a masters degree from Princeton and a law degree from Stanford.

Harper returned to Ohio to serve as a clerk for the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Ohio, worked as a paralegal at the Federal Trade Commission and served as a senior advisor at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau during the Obama administration.

Recently she has been director of Policy & Advocacy at the American Economics Liberties Project, a non-profit group fighting to break up corporate monopolies. She is co-founder of Columbus Stand Up!, a grassroots community organization that has mobilized volunteers in central Ohio in response to the pandemic. Columbus Stand Up! Volunteers go door-to-door delivering masks, driving voters to the polls and transporting people to their COVID-19 vaccine appointments.

Harper is running for the U.S. Senate "to get political and economic power back on the side of the working people," she said.

"This current economy is one of large multi-level corporations and they are allowed to do that because policies are set up to allow it," she told her barbershop audience. "But by getting people elected, things change. People serving in Congress can change things; our leaders have failed us; our government has laid conditions for multilevel corporations to dominate."

Harper's platform includes all the elements of a progressive candidate: universal health care, universal childcare, equitable funding of public school districts, an end to inequities in the criminal justice system, pro-choice, workers' rights, LGBTQ rights, etc.

Above all, Harper touts her independence – her grassroots fundraising, her pledge to stay away from lobbyist money.

"My opponent is one of the biggest takers of lobbyist money in the Congress," she says of Congressman Tim Ryan.

Harper, a young (38 years old) candidate with no previous elective office experience on the local level is pursuing what would be her first political office on the national level. When asked why she is trying to start "at the top," she replied that she feels a certain urgency was necessary and that service in Washington matched her experience.

"I don't think that we have a lot of time to waste based on what's happening right now in our country," she said. "People are suffering. You need to have Washington-level resources in order to address it. That's the place where I have experience. I've been in and out of Washington the last 15 years and I know how the place works."



Morgan Harper



Steve Foster asks question



Morgan Harper and Steve Foster admire a fresh cut

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***Alpha Phi Alpha... continued from page 2***

commitment to social justice, service to our community and the demonstration of exemplary leadership. This year's recipient definitely epitomizes that description: Mr. Richard E. Jackson."

Jackson, a Toledo native, 1969 initiate of Alpha Phi Alpha and University of Toledo alumnus, served 38 years in Toledo Public Schools as a student teacher, full time teacher, assistant principal, building principal, school improvement leader and assistant superintendent. Jackson has been married to his wife Yolanda Jackson for almost 50 years.

"I've been blessed," said Jackson, "but I'm equally proud of the group of brothers in all three

chapters and what they've done over the last 30 years as far as to keep Dr. Martin Luther King's legacy alive."

Jackson acknowledged his former students: many of whom were in the room now as Alpha men.

"I know that today is an honor for me --and it is a big honor-- but more so than anything else, I'm honored to look out among this audience and see all the young folks that I had been involved in and had watched grow up through the years and couldn't be prouder of you and what you do and continue to do." Jackson was met with a standing ovation as he ended his remarks.

The keynote speaker for the morning was Alpha brother Jermain Pettis, a Toledo native, former



*John C. Jones, chapter president, gives remarks*

scholarship recipient and now resident of Atlanta, Georgia. He is the senior Vice President of Community Development and Lending for the Georgia Banking Company and founded the Jermain Pettis Charity Golf Classic in 2021.

He highlighted the social ills that are present today and the parallels to Dr. King's day. He emphasized the impact of one person being able to make a difference. "Every bit of progress leads to more progress," said Pettis.

"As you emerge from the darkness... when you see that light reclaim it," he said. "Without his [Dr. King's] genius, without his bravery, without his unwavering commitment, it is likely that we would be in far more darkness than the light."

The six scholarship recipients were:

**Josiah Brown** - senior at Perrysburg High School with a cumulative GPA of 3.12. He is the founder and president of the first Afro-American Club at Perrysburg High School and has also earned varsity letters in football and track and field. He plans to major in pre-law and minor in journalism and attend the University of Toledo. Josiah is the son of Dr. Tawiona Brown. He received a \$3000 scholarship.

**Donovan Eason** – senior at Anthony Wayne High School and currently holds a 3.6 GPA. He participates in track and field, Youth Leadership Toledo, YIPPIE, and Jock and Jill of America. He is also a caddie at the Inverness Club. Donovan plans on attending The Ohio State University. He is the son of Rodney Epsom, Jr. and Sheila Eason. He received a \$1500 scholarship.

**Lawrence (LJ) Hancock, Jr.** - senior at St. John's Jesuit High School and maintains a 3.2 cumulative GPA. LJ is the current student body president at St. John's and plays varsity football. He is a member of the St. John's Afro Club, and was a State Ambassador for the Ohio Attorney General's Office. LJ has been an Ambassador for Books For Buddies and worked as a caddy at the Inverness Club. He plans to attend Miami University and major in marketing. LJ is the son of Karyn McConnell and Lawrence Hancock, Sr. He received

*...continued on page 11*

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# Community Conversation Sparks Call to Action

*By Tricia Hall  
Sojourner's Truth Reporter*

Toledo's NAACP organized a community conversation on Tuesday, January 11 to discuss violence in the community.

The dialog featured four local panelists: Judge Ian English, Lucas County Common Pleas Court; JoJuan Armour, City of Toledo Commissioner of Administrative Services; Romules Durant, EdD, Superintendent of Toledo Public Schools and Keary Sarabia, CEO of RFS Behavioral Mental Health. The conversation moderator was Fletcher Word, editor of The Sojourner's Truth.

Rev. Willie Perryman, local NAACP president, opened the meeting and delivered a prayer. "I want to welcome all of you that have joined us here and on the live stream. Let's have a real community conversation. We want safer community, we don't want any more violence, and want this gathering to help our community."

The moderator opened the program by stating the statistics about gun violence before addressing specific questions to each of the panelist. "Let's talk about gun violence, there were 71 homicides in 2021 and 61 in 2020," said Word.

Judge English grew up in Toledo and worked this way through the legal profession before earning his position as a judge. He described the existence of gun violence in the Black community as a threat to the existence of Black people. He later explained how the age and gender of defendants is shifting since he began his career in 1993 and when he became a judge in 2015.

"Let's define the problem and talk about the well-being of our people. It's difficult to explain how serious the circumstances are in our community. We're fighting to save our existence. These shootings can result in grief from two families if the prosecution is successful," said English.

"The defendants are younger, especially the ones transporting the guns.

*...continued on page 10*



*Fletcher Word, The Sojourner's Truth Newspaper Editor; Michael Alexander, Sr., Toledo NAACP 1st Vice-President; Keary Sarabia, Behavioral Health; Rev. Willie Perryman III, NAACP Toledo President; Judge Ian English, Lucas County Common Pleas Court; Romules Durant, EdD, Toledo Public Schools Superintendent; JoJuan Armour, City of Toledo Commissioner of Administrative Services; Leon Fitzpatrick, Toledo NAACP Executive Committee Member*



*Keary Sarabia and Romules Durant, EdD*



*Robin Copeland speaks as Pastor Willie Perryman looks on*

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***Community Conversation... continued from page 9***

There're also more women that are involved but the court system has pushed back against incarceration for possession because it takes the person away from their job and family. There are neighborhoods in Toledo, especially the ones that JoJuan is working in, that feel a weapon is needed to defend themselves," he continued.

"There were 1,300 shootings last year in Toledo, but the solve rate is low which means that those cases don't make it to court. The majority of these shootings are begin committed by a small group. A small and narrow problem can lead to violence in our streets but we need to move past this and demand results. We need to treat this like an epidemic and commit the resources," English explained.

Toledo Public Schools recently announced the district's plan for the three "Rs." District superintendent Romulus Durant, EdD explained why this plan is necessary and immediate next steps. He also addressed the current resources that are available to students to address mental health and current collaboration efforts to address access to guns near school grounds.

"The three Rs are restart, refocus and respect, because we redesigned a program to address student behavior and accountability. We recognized that we need to stay out of remote learning, because there's devastating effects on impoverished neighborhoods. The students were spending six to eight hours with us, where they ate, learned and had recreational time. Remote learning allowed the teachers to see the trauma in some of those homes, which could make it harder for the student to escape from later. We need the community to be engaged," explained Durant.

"We're looking for more men to mentor, we support Mr. Armour and his staff, so whenever space is needed, we support him. When Toledoans United for Social Action (TUSA) asked us to train our teachers in social and emotional learning, we did that. We don't just talk about it, but be about it," said Durant.

"There are mental health specialists in each school and the high schools have health centers. If a parent or guardian knows that a student needs services, let us know. We need to take back our communities," he added.

"We collaborate with community partners for a Friday weapon's check where a group canvasses and collects weapons. That's just one of our proactive approaches. We plan to offer more satellite programs and reconnect with the faith-based community to recruit more volunteers. For example,



LaShawnda Kinnebrew speaks as  
Harold Mosley looks on



Judge Ian English and JoJuan Armour

The Movement and Tina Butts will mentor students and we're meeting with CityPark League. We will hold press conferences once details are finalized," said Durant.

Mental health expert Keary Sarabia, also grew up in Toledo, began by providing background information on how the pandemic could impact children and explain that kids today have different types of peer pressure.

"The pandemic exacerbated trauma for kids but social media did allow kids to engage with each other. Addressing mental health isn't the sole solution, but in conjunction with other programs and education. Kids tell me how violent it is out there. But it does start at home. A first-grader isn't a reason why that kid is late or doesn't have a coat at school. The earlier a child gets into mental health programs, they will have better outcomes versus older children," said Sarabia.

The City of Toledo hired Toledan JoJuan Armour to focus on youth violence. His charge was to address the issue in the Junction neighborhood with four violence interrupters, but currently the department has only two and still saw a decrease in neighborhood shootings. Armour described the current state of his team's work in the neighborhood, how trust is built and the culture of violence.

"Gun violence isn't just one thing, there isn't just one answer because the answer is just as detailed as the problem. I'm a prevention advocate and social emotional learner. That means Junction is different than north Toledo or east Toledo. One hundred percent of the gun violence incidents in Toledo were based off an argument! These youth aren't able to de-escalate. There needs to be a holistic approach and understand that we can't save them all but we can save a lot. Gun violence has been around since the Cowboy days but we need to revive community volunteer programs," explained Armour.

"Marginalized communities distrust historically. We don't trust medicine or law enforcement. We don't trust government or voting because black folks have been undercounted. But we need to build up medicine, law enforcement, government and voting because not participating hurts us. Transparency is how we build trust," said Armour.

"The culture of gun violence is glamorized but the first ones that aren't in that lifestyle get knocked down and will take credit for the body. Real criminals that live this life don't plan and there is so much lack of respect in this world. They will die for their friends but won't live for their mothers," added Armour.

In addition to the panel comments, three mothers whose children were murdered due to gun violence addressed the panel and audience. LaShawnda Kinnebrew's son Christopher was murdered on July 3 she and shared her frustrations about the status of the unsolved murder. Brandi Hopkin's son Jahneil Douglass was shot and murdered over two years ago, but the case is in limbo because the shooter claims self-defense. Robin Copeland's son Deshaun Lee was murdered in 2010 and she shared how she celebrates his life even though his case is unsolved.

"I want the community and police to help me. I have sleepless nights. I don't want another mother to go through what I have gone through, but I still want justice for my son," shared Kinnebrew. "The defendant was caught and admitted to the shooting but has claimed self-defense. My son was attending the University of Toledo and whenever his friends see the shooter, they call me, and I explain he's on house monitoring. Even though house monitoring is satellite and he can go anywhere in Toledo. I understand wearing a smile on your face when you're torn up inside. My son only had his keys, not a gun," said Hopkins.

"I don't want another mother to know what I felt. I don't want the mother of that person who killed my son to know how I feel. We need to stop all this madness, it's just escalated since 2010. His case is still unsolved and every year I celebrate his birthday to remind people that his case is unsolved and to celebrate his life," added Copeland.

The hybrid conversation was held in-person at Jerusalem Baptist Church on Dorr Street and streamed live on the NAACP Toledo's Facebook page.



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# 2022 School Choice School Fair for Grades K-8

*Special to The Truth*

The Northwest Ohio Scholarship Fund along with National School Choice Week are presenting a School Choice School Fair for Grades K-8 on Saturday, January 29 from 10:00 AM until 1:00 PM at the Franciscan Center of Lourdes University, 6832 Convent Boulevard, Sylvania.

Interested families can learn about the different educational options available in Northwest Ohio including private schools, charter schools, public schools and homeschooling as well as tuition scholarships.

"The pandemic created conditions that forced families to seek out fresh solutions for their children's education. Parents saw more clearly than ever that children truly have a variety of learning needs. This fair will give parents an opportunity to visit with schools to see what they have to offer," said Megan Salameh, Project Coordinator for the Northwest Ohio Scholarship Fund.

Representatives from thirty participating schools and School Choice Ohio will have tables with informational materials to share. Parents will

also have an opportunity to learn about the scholarships available for private education including the EdChoice Scholarship Program and the Northwest Ohio Scholarship Fund.

EdChoice scholarships provide students from underperforming schools as well as students whose household gross income is at or below 250% of the federal poverty guidelines the opportunity to attend a private school. There are over 200,000 students eligible for an EdChoice voucher in the State of Ohio for the 2022-2023 school year.

The Northwest Ohio Scholarship Fund awards scholarship assistance for low-income students who reside in one of nineteen counties in Northwest Ohio for private school tuition and home-school expenses.

The fair is part of National School Choice Week. It is an event for the whole family. Parking and admission are free. This family fun event will include a picture booth and DJ to entertain children. For more information visit <https://nsof.org/events/> or call (419) 720-7048.

## Kaptur Statement on House Passage of the Freedom to Vote: John R. Lewis Act

Last week, Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur (OH-09) released the following statement after the House passed the Freedom to Vote: John R. Lewis Act, which combined the Freedom to Vote Act and the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act into one bill. In a vote of 220-203, Rep. Kaptur joined every House Democrat to pass the bill, while House Republicans were unanimous in their opposition. The bill will now be sent to the Senate for its consideration.

"Across the land, we are witnessing an unprecedented attempt to curtail the foundational American

principle of government being of the people, by the people, and for the people," said Rep. Kaptur. "From despicable efforts to overturn free and fair elections, to unconscionable measures that seek to further deny and restrict access to the ballot box, America is truly at a crossroads. The Freedom to Vote: John R. Lewis Act is a vitally important tool to safeguard the health and vibrancy of our precious democracy. As we approach the commemoration of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday, I urge the Senate to swiftly act in order to preserve freedom and justice for present and future generations."

*Alpha Phi Alpha... continued from page 8*

a \$2000 scholarship.

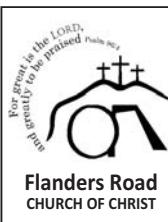
**Nicholas Pineda** - senior at Perrysburg High School where he holds a 4.017 GPA. He is a member of the National Honor Society and is an Eagle Scout. Nicholas has also volunteered with Zion Lutheran church by providing food to the homeless in downtown Toledo. He plans to attend The University of Cincinnati and major in secondary education. Nicholas is the son of Gerald and Jennifer Pineda. He received a \$3000 scholarship.

**Caleb Prater** - senior at Bowling Green High School where he maintains a 3.6 GPA. There, he is a member of the varsity basketball team. He is also a member of Glass City Church of Christ. Caleb participates in the Lan Leadership Institute through the University of Toledo and volunteers

through La Posada homeless shelter. He plans to attend Ohio University and major in psychology. Caleb is the son of Lutricia Prater and Latrelle Prater. He received a \$1500 scholarship.

**Joshua Smith** - senior at E.L. Bowsher High School and has a GPA of 3.5. He is a member of the varsity basketball, track and field, and cross country teams. Joshua is also a member of the Bowsher choir and a member of the Principal's List. He is involved with the University of Toledo's Upward Bound Program and has spent time volunteering at Hospice of Northwest Ohio. He is still undecided at this time on a college or university, but plans to major in psychology. Joshua is the son of

*...continued on page 13*



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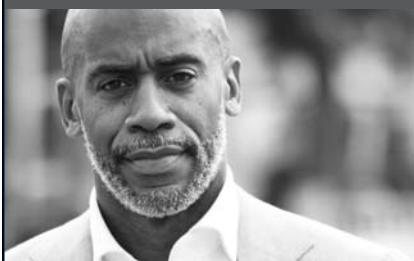
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# Sons of Toledo Has World Premiere at Prestigious Mammoth Film Festival

*Sons of Toledo*, a short film about the lives of barbers fighting to keep their community together, will have its world premiere at the fourth annual Mammoth Film Festival February 3-6, 2022 in the resort town of Mammoth Lakes, CA.

The film is based on the true stories of Toledo's Black Barber community, their role as community advocates in their neighborhood, and the hardest role they fulfill for far too many of their customers, performing the final cut. Sons of Toledo tells the story of a young barber, who after receiving the early morning news of his younger brother's murder, he pushes through the muddy waters of grief to find the courage to do the impossible- give his brother one last cut.

Filmed on location in Toledo, Ohio in the summer of 2021, the film features all community performers from the city's barber shops shot in a pseudo-doc style to authentically center on the voices and stories that are underserved and under-heard in many of today's conversations around gun violence and youth.

The film was funded through donations under a non-profit model to ensure all resources returned to the communities featured in the film. The local screenings in and around Toledo featured community conversation, free haircuts for the city's youth and Testing and Vaccination clinics in an effort to utilize story to assuage the dual Covid and Gun violence pandemics facing the city for the past 20 months.

The film primarily features first time filmmakers and actors seeking to shine a light on the Glass City and its "mud made" mentality and identity; all core themes in the film.

"The script was created from interviews and written in the shops with the barbers, based on their stories and experiences giving the "final cut" to many of the young men from their shops," shared Matt Foss (co-writer and producer). "We set out to tell this story while trying to build capacity for listening and telling more as there's a need here in Toledo, believing these true stories can catalyze meaningful conversations at an urgent time in our community and hopefully in service of those happening across the country."

The film was directed by Monty Cole, an award-winning theatre and film director from Chicago, who co-wrote the script with Foss: "Matt and I talked a lot about how to create moments of listening. While making this film, we were constantly listening for moments to center the community, allow them to truly be themselves, speak for themselves and give the world the opportunity to listen to them."

Cole described his experience in the city, saying "There's a suffering that's happening in Toledo, Ohio but there's also a groundswell

of healing that has come from inside the community. It's incredible to watch and we're so thankful that the Mammoth Film Festival has given us this opportunity for us all to stop and listen to Toledo."

The film was created by a mix of Chicago film artists and first-time filmmakers in Toledo. Grammy award winning musician, Andrew Dost, scored the film.

A full screening schedule will be released shortly from Mammoth Film Festival on date and time of the premiere (<https://www.mammothfilmfestival.org/>) and subsequent screenings and premieres will be announced in the upcoming months.

## SONS OF TOLEDO

Directed by Monty Cole

Written by Matt Foss & Monty Cole

Produced by Matt Foss and Diana Perez Riveros

Director of Photography - Candice Majors

Production Designer - Eleanor Kahn

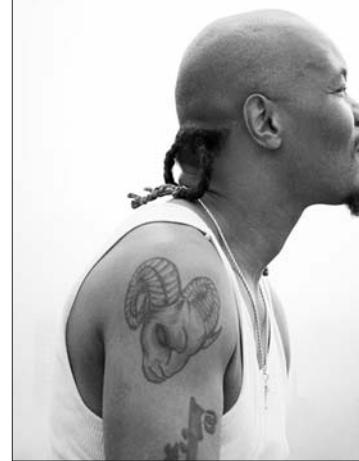
Editor - Rob Seiffert

Music Composer - Andrew Dost

Featuring: Marcus temple, Cincere Temple, Jamal Grant, Jeremy Pratt Jr. Shinaul Jones, Shaun Temple, Alison H. Day

## SONS OF TOLEDO

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# *Yinka, Where Is Your Huzband?* A Novel by Lilzzie Damilola Blackburn

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

The Truth Contributor

"I just want you to be happy."

You've heard that before, and yet, unsolicited advice never does. All the y'oughtas ("What y'oughta do is....") and the unexpected help make you want to scream, even though you know that people really do mean well when they offer it. The thing is, they are not the CEO of your life. As in the new book, *Yinka, Where Is Your Huzband?* by Lizzie Damilola Blackburn, they need to mind their own business...

It was almost getting so that Yinka Oladeji didn't want to go anywhere.

Every time she went out, someone – her Mum, her Aunty Debby, Big Mama – someone was asking when she was going to find a huzband. Pronounced auz-band in the British-Nigerian way, it was a total embarrassment.

It probably didn't help that Yinka's little sister, Kemi, was expecting her first baby, or that her friend, Rachel, just got engaged and Ola just had her third child. It also didn't help that Yinka lost her job, and the man she loved, Femi, who'd dumped her and moved to America, was back in the city with his beautiful fiance.

Femi had broken up with Yinka two years ago.

She should have a huzband by now, right?

Maybe so. Yinka had to admit that romance would be nice, and so she created a spreadsheet and filled it with sticky-note ideas, vowing that she'd have a date for Rachel's wedding. She agreed to let Aunty Debby fix her up with Alex, but he was pretty clear that he really liked Yinka's BFF, Nana. Yinka went online, on many dating sites and she swiped, swiped, swiped. She considered Derek, but she didn't like him like that. Donovan was kind of a jerk,

c.2022  
Pamela Dorman Books / Viking  
\$26.00  
384 pages

Marcus wanted just one thing (ahem!), and Emmanuel had someone with lighter skin in mind.

And so, Yinka began to look harder. She even considered men she rejected once before but the more she looked for a date-slash-potential-huzband, the more her other relationships suffered. Now, nobody wanted to be around Yinka. Where's the happily-ever-after in that?

At this point in your life, the pandemic, your career, whatever, you've had your fill of nosy-but-well-meaning questions and advice you don't need. And so, *Yinka, Where Is Your Huzband?* is a book for you.

Indeed, this sweet little rom-com removes any sting a busybody might leave by taking the ultimate in none-of-your-business literature and turning it upside down. Author Lizzie Damilola Blackburn inserts way too many meddlers into Yinka's life, and the resulting mess is hilarious – especially when the lies pile up and readers are given a peek at several obvious solutions, only one of which has anything to do with a huzband. Not to be a spoiler or anything, but peace is made, but not before readers get the lightest touch of feminism from this completely enjoyable story.

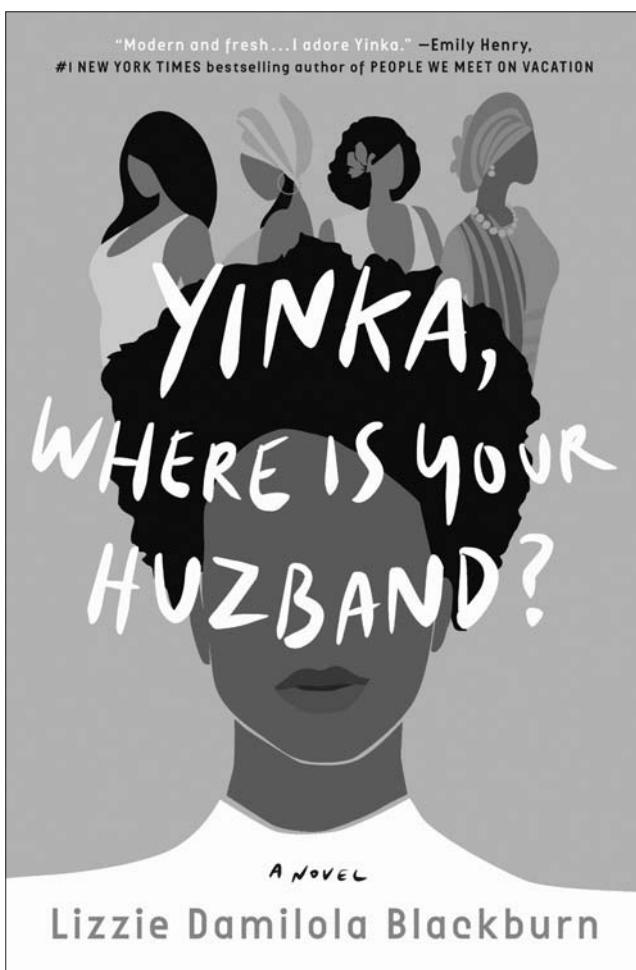
Beware that there are Criticisms inside this novel but nothing that's too difficult to understand. Mostly, understand that *Yinka, Where Is Your Huzband?* is going to just plain make you happy.

*Alpha Phi Alpha... continued from page II*

Timothy Smith and Tamara Smith. He received a \$2000 scholarship.

Rev. John C. Jones, leader of HOPE Toledo, and president of the Alpha Xi Lambda chapter thanked sponsors, speakers, the event committee and 240 in person guests. The event is available on livestream and was filmed by Creadio. Young returned to the podium to give the benediction.

Alpha Xi Lambda has raised over \$30,000 for scholarships this year. In order to contribute, visit their website axl1906.org, or support via cashapp: \$axlscholarship.



*Yinka, Where is Your Huzband author, courtesy  
Aiden Harmitt-Williams*

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# CLASSIFIEDS

Page 14

January 19, 2022

## ADVERTISEMENT FOR PROPOSALS TOLEDO-LUCAS COUNTY PORT AUTHORITY TOLEDO, OHIO

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that Sealed Bids will be received by the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority for all labor, material, insurance, and equipment necessary for the Component 2: Reconstruction of Dock Face – Phase 3 project located at Facility One, 3518 St. Lawrence Dr., Toledo, Ohio 43605, in accordance with the approved plans and specifications, to the Port Authority at One Maritime Plaza, Toledo, Ohio 43604.

The "Component 2: Reconstruction of Dock Face – Phase 3" project consists of:

**WATERFRONT:** Removal of old fendering system, supply and install new fendering, repair sheet pile wall, and create new drainage openings in the sheet pile wall. Remove and replace the sheet pile concrete cap.

**DOCK SURFACE:** Remove existing crane rails, remove pavement to 50 feet from sheet pile wall, removal electrical manholes and conduit, furnish and install new drainage, backfill and new pavement. Pavement will also be required between tracks in the areas of the track where there are turnouts or switches. In addition, tie backs, as directed on the drawings, should be completely dug up so that they may be inspected.

A portion of the existing storm system will need to be reworked including a lift station. This will require excavation, new pipe, manholes, backfill and discharge through the sheet pile wall. The electrical power for the lift station is to be coordinated with the electrical contractor.

**RAILROAD TRACK:** The track is to be removed. The track should be graded and all track meeting AREMA Class 1 Relay shall be reused. It is assumed that 60% of the rail can be re-used on this project. Track is to be replaced, including ballast. Precast concrete crossing panels will also be installed along the straight portions of the track.

The base bid for the rail would be to non-perform track removal between 0+00 and 2+50 and also 37+00 to 41+60. The alternate for this area would be to remove and replace track assuming 60% re-use of track.

**PHASING:** The Port of Toledo operations will continue through construction. As such, the dock face reconstruction will be completed in sections along the dock. All work must be completed in a section of the dock (including rail and pavement) prior to moving to the next section. The drawings currently show 5 phases to complete the dock restructuring. The order and location of these phases are indicated on the drawings, however, Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority and Midwest Terminals of Toledo Inc., may reorder the phases during construction to fit the shipping schedule.

**GENERAL:** This is a lump sum bid. All quantities shown on the bid sheet are to be verified with the plan documents by the bidder. The sum of the line items may not add up to your total lump sum fee. These unit prices are to be used in the event of an owner directed change to the contract documents. Bids will be accepted for Dock Reconstruction (Waterfront + Dock Surface) and Rail independently or in combination. If submitting for combined scope (Base Bid #3), line item rates must also be provided for Base Bid #1 and Base Bid #2 along with all associated alternates.

This project is funded through a U.S. Dept. of Trans. Maritime Administration (MARAD) PIDP grant and an Ohio Maritime Assistance Program grant (MAP). The engineer's estimate for Component 2: Reconstruction of Dock Face – Phase 3, Base bid #1 is approximately \$4,316,193.00, Alternate base bid #1 is approximately \$380,332.00, and Base bid #2 is approximately \$5,983,600.00, Alternate base bid #2 is approximately \$245,600.00. The combined total bid for this project is approximately \$10,925,725.00. Bids that are in excess of 10% above the engineer's estimate would be considered non-responsive. This project may be awarded by the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority at its sole discretion.

Sealed bids will be received at the Port Authority's administrative offices, 1st floor reception area at One Maritime Plaza, Toledo, OH 43604, until Wednesday, February 16, 2022, 10:30 AM, at which time and place all bids will be publicly opened and read aloud via conference call. Conference call-in information will be shared in addendum no. 1.

Only qualified contractors are eligible to submit bids for this project. Contractor qualification status must be in force at the time of bidding, at the time of award, and through the life of the construction contract.

Plans, Specifications, Instructions to Proposers, and Forms of Proposal and Contract are on file and may be obtained by either (1) obtaining hard copies from Becker Impressions, 4646 Angola Road, Toledo, OH 43615, phone 419.385.5303, during normal business hours, or (2) ordering from Becker Impressions, via their website [www.beckerplanroom.com](http://www.beckerplanroom.com) at the cost of reproduction.

Please note there will be a pre-bid meeting for this project for all prospective bidders on Wednesday, January 26, 2022, at 9:00 AM, this meeting will be held online via Zoom Video Conference. Prospective Bidders interested in joining in the Pre-Bid meeting should contact Tina Perkins ([TPerkins@Toledoport.org](mailto:TPerkins@Toledoport.org)) at Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority prior to Tuesday, January 25, 2022, at 4:00 pm, for a copy for the meeting invitation to be used. This meeting invitation will include a link to the video conference as well as separate call-in numbers to join either by video or by phone. Attendance is suggested, but not mandatory.

As site visit has been scheduled for Thursday, January 27, 2022, at 10:00 AM for interested bidders. A maximum of two (2) individuals per bidder with valid identification and proper personal protective equipment (PPE) will be permitted to attend. Attendees should meet at the stone parking lot next to the main gate at George Hardy and St. Lawrence Dr.

Please submit all questions to the Port Authority, Tina Perkins at [TPerkins@Toledoport.org](mailto:TPerkins@Toledoport.org) by Thursday, February 3, 2022, at 3:30 PM local time. Additional information can be found at [www.toledoport.org](http://www.toledoport.org)

Thomas J. Winston  
President and CEO  
Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Lucas Metropolitan Housing (LMH), located in Toledo, Ohio is seeking experienced applicants for the following position(s): Maintenance Mechanic 3. For complete details, visit <https://www.lucasmha.org> and click on Careers. Deadline: 01/23/22. This is a Section 3 covered position. HUD recipients are encouraged to apply and are to indicate on the application if you are a LMHA Public Housing client or Housing Choice Voucher Program participant. Persons with disabilities are encouraged to apply. NO PHONE CALLS. Equal employment opportunity shall be afforded to all qualified persons without regard to age, race, color, religion, religious creed, gender, military status, ancestry, disability, handicap, sexual orientation, genetic information or national origin.



## CONTINUUM OF CARE (COC) NAVIGATOR

Employment Classification: Full time, salary

### SUMMARY

The Toledo Lucas County Homelessness Board (TLCHB) is seeking a Housing Navigator to work collaboratively within Lucas County's homelessness crisis response system to:

- Identify housing opportunities for households experiencing housing insecurity, both families and singles, to prevent and rapidly resolve eviction.
- Identify housing and other community resources that will allow for long-lasting stability.
- Navigate financial assistance programs and services aimed at avoiding or resolving eviction.
- Coordinate with landlords and property managers to provide or maintain housing opportunities and promote housing stability for families & individuals with housing needs.
- Assist households in navigating other community resources with the goal of achieving long term housing stability.
- Provide referrals to longer-term community resources when necessary.

Full job description available at [endinghomelessnessstoledo.org](http://endinghomelessnessstoledo.org).

All prospective candidates should submit a resume and cover letter via email to [communications@tlchb.org](mailto:communications@tlchb.org).

*Living Legacies... continued from page 16*

artists from Alabama – particularly Boykin, Alabama (known also as Gee’s Bend) – “frequently embody religious references or significant designs and ... expanding the histories and legacies of quiltmaking in America,” notes the press release about the exhibit.

Much of the art in the exhibit dates back to and reflects the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s. Many were active during the period and Thornton Dial’s “Mountaintop” piece is especially poignant because he was an associate of Dr. King.

The exhibition includes a reading area with resources and materials reflecting the artists’ work and themes to allow visitors to reflect and comment.

Souls Grown Deep’s mission is to advocate for the inclusion of Black artists from the South in the canon of American art history and to also foster economic empowerment, racial and social justice and educational advancement in the communities that gave rise to these artists.

The Living Legacies exhibition is in the TMA New Media Gallery until May 1. For general information, visitors can call 419-255-8000 or 800-644-6862 or visit toledomuseum.org.



*Jessica Hong explains the exhibit*

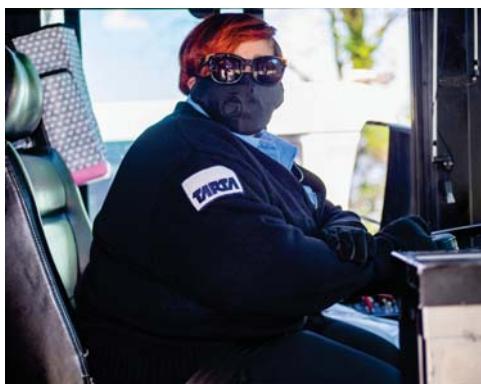
## Toledoans Celebrate a Day of Service

In the spirit of giving back and remembering Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., a few women came together on a brisk morning in Toledo, Ohio to give back, or pay-it-forward as you might say. The women donated to Naomi House residents some much needed items during this time which were masks and hand sanitizer.

Let's continue to spread that good news in our communities for 2022!!! We must continue to let our lights shine.



*Wanda Terrell-Galloway, Nicole Robinson, Jacqueline*



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# Living Legacies: Art of the African American South

*Sojourner's Truth Staff*

"My art is the evidence of my freedom. People have fought for freedom all over the world. I try to show that struggle. It is a war to be fought. We're trying to win it." – Thornton Dial

Thornton Dial, patriarch of a family of artists, whose work is included among the exhibition of African American art on display now at the Toledo Museum of Art, wrote that in explanation of one of the forces that propelled him as an artist.

Some of Dial's pieces, including his seminal "Trip to the Mountaintop" are part of the collection obtained from the Souls Grown Deep Foundation, a collection titled Living Legacies: Art of the African American South.

The Museum has obtained 24 works over the last two years from the Souls Grown Deep Foundation, a vitally important organization which supports the work of African American artists in the southern United States. The Living Legacies collection debuted on Friday, January 14 and will continue until May 1.

Artists included in the exhibition are the Dial family: Thornton and his two sons Thornton, Jr and Richard Dial. Included in the collection are the works of Leroy Almon, Lonnie Holley, Ronald Lockett, Joe Minter, John B. Murray, Royal Robertson, Georgia Speller, Henry Speller, Luster Willis along with several generations of women quiltmakers: Louisiana Bendolph, Mary Elizabeth Kennedy, Jessie T. Pettway, Lola Pettway, Lucy T. Pettway, Martha Pettway, Rita Mae Pettway and Florine Smith, as well as Estelle Witherspoon, one of the founders of the Freedom Quilting Bee.

Thornton Dial's large-scale "Trip to the Mountaintop" is an homage to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr's last, famous speech in Memphis during which he exhorted his followers to try to make America a better place but cautioned that he might not be among them in their continued struggle.



Thornton Dial's Trip to the Mountaintop



Thornton Dial's Reaching Out with Love and Fear



Richard Dial's The Comfort of the First Born



Thornton Dial Jr's Home Sweet Home



Louisiana Bendolph's Housetop



Leroy Almon's The New Heaven



Lucy T. Pettway's Four-Way Star

Dial's sculpture is a combination of wood, metal, clothing, rope, wire and steel symbolizing the long arduous trek up a mountainside. His epic work is the culmination of a variety of pieces by the southern-based Blas artists.

"Living Legacies celebrates the multiplicity, power and complexity of these artists' practices that represent a crucial part of the American experience and art historical record," said Jessica Hong, TMA's curator of modern and contemporary art. "The exhibition is intended to illuminate these visionaries' multifaceted creative achievements and enduring legacies."

The Souls Grown Deep Foundation began its ongoing program in 2014 in order to transfer works to the permanent collections of leading American and international art museums. One of the typical ways in which artists from the Foundation and in the Living Legacies collection express themselves is through the use of everyday objects in their art.

Lonnie Holley, for example, has used discarded materials such as old car parts, truck gears, electrical cords and recycled pieces of communication technology to critique societal wrong from racial injustice, to child neglect, to environmental destruction.

Lockett (The Verge of Extinction, 1994) and Minter (How Do I Look?, 1997) also express themselves through metal assemblages.

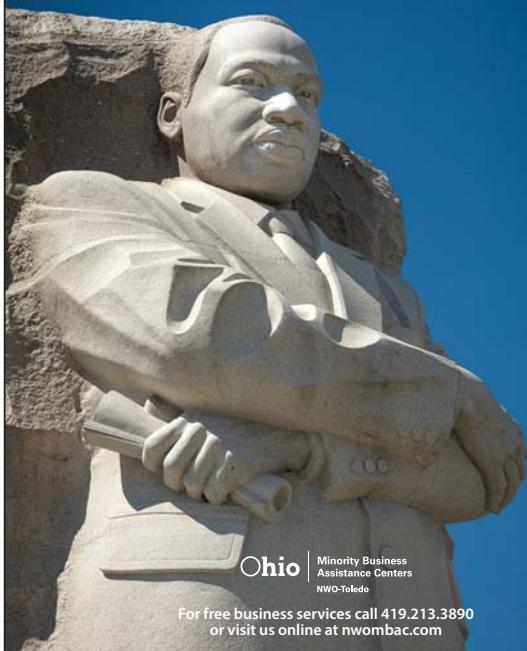
The use of everyday objects is especially present in the collection of quilts in the exhibit.

A variety of patterned quilts by Bendolph, Kennedy, the Pettways and other ... continued on page 15

## Our Commitment: Empowering Communities to Succeed!

"Life's most persistent and urgent question is,  
'What are you doing for others?'"

— Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



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