



SPORTS

Fayetteville State twins balance basketball, family and academics



COMMUNITY FOCUS

Martin Luther King Jr. Triangle events.

The Triangle Tribune

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BESSIE COLEMAN, AVIATOR

52 Weeks of Black Brilliance: Bessie Coleman, Aviator

On Jan. 26, 1892, Bessie Coleman was born in Atlanta, Texas. She was the first Black woman in the world to earn an aviator's license.

Like many other African Americans in the early 20th century, Coleman decided to seek better opportunities in the North.

She moved to Chicago in 1915 and lived with two of her brothers on the South Side. Both of them had fought overseas during World War I and most likely encouraged her dream of becoming a pilot. However, she faced prej-

udice both as a woman and an African American and found herself unable to train in the United States.

With the encouragement of Chicago Defender Publisher Robert S. Abbott, Coleman learned French and saved up money from her work, first as a manicurist and then a manager of a chili parlor.

In November 1920, she gained entrance into the Caudron School of Aviation in Le Crotoy, France. On June 15, 1921, Coleman obtained her pilot's license from the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale,

and after some additional training in Paris, she returned to the United States in September 1921.

Upon her return, Coleman became a barnstormer with the Chicago Defender as her sponsor and toured the United States. On Oct. 15, 1922, more than 2,000 people came to the Checkerboard Field in west suburban Maywood (now Miller Meadow Forest Preserve) for her first exhibition in Chicago. Coleman died in a plane crash in Florida in 1926.

- Submitted By Chicago History Museum



Donald Hughes and his mother, Jackie Wagstaff.

Durham Black PAC seeks to strengthen Durham's Black political power

By Kylie Marsh

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DURHAM - Many Durham political action committees dedicate themselves to racial equity and economic prosperity for all, but how many can prove their track record?

Donald Hughes is an East Durham native. Hughes was introduced to civic engagement both in the home and at his school, Eastway Elementary. There, former city council member

Cynthia Brown spoke to students about the importance of being politically involved. At home, Hughes' mother, Durham activist and former school board member Jackie Wagstaff, reinforced this principle.

"She encouraged us to use our voices to advocate for those things in our community that we wanted to see improved," Hughes said of Brown.

As fourth graders, Hughes and his classmates spoke to council members about the lack of

safety and security in their community and around their school, which was across from the Few Gardens housing project. Hughes said there wasn't a stop-light at the intersection, and students witnessed open drug activity through the school's windows.

Hughes and other Black residents formed the Durham Black PAC a year ago. He said the PAC is comprised of community

Please see **PAC/2A**

Black students feel less welcome at UNC after Supreme Court decision

By Brianna Atkinson

WUNC

Samuel Scarborough knew something was different when he stepped into the Black Convocation at UNC-Chapel Hill last year.

There were not nearly as many Black students there as in the past. It was a trend he had also noticed other places on campus.

"I've seen the drop offs in my classes. I've seen the drop offs in some of our on-campus cultural events. I've seen the drop

offs in just walking around campus," Scarborough said. "I've seen a lot less Black students and that's something that really challenges - not only mine - but everyone's as Black students sense of belonging here."

The annual Black Convocation in the Stone Center is designed to bring Black students together to build community.

Students sing songs, play games, and listen to presentations from the Black Student Movement and other organiza-

tions on campus.

Scarborough, a junior, began college the year the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that UNC-Chapel Hill and other universities couldn't consider race in admissions.

Two years later, UNC's enrollment of several historically underrepresented groups has noticeably declined, with Black student enrollment falling the most.

The number of Black students

Please see **BLACK/2A**

Durham candidates make their case at political mixer

By Kylie Marsh

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DURHAM - Candidates introduced themselves to the public at the Durham People's Alliance's candidate mixer at Motorco Music Hall Tuesday evening.

The offices up for election are Durham County sheriff; clerk of superior court; district, superior and appellate court judges; school board members; district attorney; N.C. State House and Senate; and the U.S. Congress.

The room was packed, both for audience members and the candidates, who were only allowed a strict one-minute slot to make remarks.

North Carolina State Senator Natalie Murdock spoke on behalf of incumbent U.S. House of Representatives Valerie Foushee.

Murdock lauded Foushee's track record of introducing legislation on health care, climate change, protections for immigrants and impeachment of President Donald Trump.

"She is no stranger to fighting; she is no stranger to delivering," Murdock said.

Challenging Foushee is Nida Allam, vice chair of the Durham County Board of Commissioners. Allam said she would champion working families, a living wage and Medicare for all.

The room gave special attention to N.C. Supreme Court Justice Anita Earls, who discussed being part of a Democratically-controlled court that opposed unconstitutional gerrymandering and voter ID laws and ruled that "every student in the state is entitled to a sound, basic education."

Earls also revealed her breast cancer diagnosis on social media this week.

Wake County District Court Judge Christy Walczyk will run against Attorney James Whalen for the N.C. Court of Appeals Seat 3. Walczyk said she is the only woman running in the race, and, if elected, will be the only remaining Democratic woman to sit on the bench of 15 judges.

Whalen served as an appellate attorney for former N.C. Attorney General Josh Stein fighting against gerrymandering.

Attorney Ameshia Chester-Cooper will run against Attorney Myra Griffin for Superior Court Seat 2. Chester-Cooper is special deputy attorney general at the N.C. Department of Justice. Griffin, a former assistant AG, is in her second term as vice-chair of the N.C. Industrial Commission.

Incumbent Judge Dorreta Walker is being challenged by Attorney Keith Bishop for District Court Judge Seat 2.

For Seat 5, incumbent Judge Clayton Jones said "a personal matter" has made this year's race "different" for him, following endorsements from the People's Alliance in years past.

"I'm asked to actually trust the criminal justice system," he said. Jones is being challenged by Attorney Christy Malott.

Incumbent District Attorney Satana Deberry, who is running for a third term, said she delivered on every promise.

"I have shown clear progressive values," she said. "We have seen crime decrease, we have seen more community participation, we have seen the jail population go down so we can spend more money on our schools and our parks."

Challenger Jonathan Wilson, Esq. said Durham deserves "a district attorney that is going to rebuild that trust that has been lost over the years between the com-

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Durham Black PAC seeks to strengthen Black power

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members who have a desire to see that Black political power in Durham is strengthened in a way that is "unapologetic."

These policy priorities include environmental justice, affordable housing, safe neighborhood, and connecting youth to employment opportunities.

"One of the questions that the Black PAC always asks is, when folks tout their successes as elected officials in Durham, how do the metrics bear out that success?" Hughes said. "Do we see more Black people as homeowners, or are more Black people able to afford to rent in this community? Do we see communities that are largely minority less impacted by environmental harms than they previously were? And I really

think the answer to a lot of those questions is no."

Other historically established Durham PACs have not presented candidates that improved quality of life for Black residents, Hughes argues.

"They say, 'hey, we're the progressives, or we're this group that represents Black folks.' But when do we start to stop and take stock and say, 'well, what are the results?'"

Hughes points toward resources for communities that are facing strains due to the level of gentrification as priorities for the Black PAC.

The group also wants to ensure Durham's youth have connections to job training opportunities, and not just for the high achievers.

"Those opportunities have to make their way to people who live in public

housing, to young people who may even be homeless, people who may have been justice involved at some point," he said.

Hughes said the demographics other PACs mobilize are largely non-Black, and the ones that are African American may not want to "ruffle feathers" to maintain their political power.

Even so, there are community members raising their voices in opposition to the public officials in Durham, whether it be on social media or in person. They don't need to wait for the city's leaders to come to them.

"You have to create an environment that's welcoming," Hughes said. "If you criminalize, demonize or trespass them, then they're never going to be engaged. Maybe that's part of the plan."



COURTESY

Black students feel less welcome at UNC-CH

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made up 7.8% of last year's class, and the same level this year. That's down from 10.6% before the Supreme Court ruling.

In 2023, Scarborough said he was one of four or five Black students in his classes. Now, he considers himself lucky if he's one of two.

"Being one of one is a drastic shift. Although that might not seem a lot, a decline of one to two people in the classroom, it does mean a lot in your day-to-day experiences," Scarborough said. "This university that is supposedly representing this diverse state of North Carolina only has less than 8% of its incoming enrollment - both this year and last year - being Black students, even though we make up roughly 20% of the state. I think that's devastating, and I think that's a contradiction of values."

Scarborough is not alone in feeling isolated. UNC's student body president, Adolfo Alvarez, said students have also been telling him they're feeling the effects of the diminishing Black community on campus.

"That's a problem that

people feel less encouraged to find community at Carolina," Alvarez said. "That just does the whole opposite of what colleges are built for. They're meant to build character; they're meant to help you grow personally. And for a lot of people, their identity is also part of who they are as people."

Following the end of affirmative action, campuses across the country have enrolled fewer Black students. James Orr, UNC's senior vice provost for undergraduate student success, said the university's decline of underrepresented students is "on par" with other institutions.

"We have the responsibility to admit, to enroll, and graduate the best and brightest North Carolinians across the state," Orr said. "Regardless of their race, regardless of their gender, regardless of all of those different variables."

Chancellors across the state collectively cut nearly 60 DEI-related positions and at least seven central offices last year. UNC administrators eliminated the most, axing 20 roles and six DEI offices across the university. In its first meeting of the fall semester, the

Board of Trustees celebrated this metric, calling it an "unwavering focus on excellence." Only one trustee, Ralph Meekins, openly criticized the moves.

"I look around the room, and I see we look a lot alike, and I think we think a lot alike," Meekins said at the September meeting. "We spent millions of dollars fighting for the right to consider race in some fashion on a holistic basis. Prior boards fought for that. I was proud of that and still proud of that. The Supreme Court has spoken, so nothing we can do about that, but I didn't think we needed to celebrate it."

Meekins later told WUNC he's spoken with a lot of Black students on campus who don't feel like they are welcome.

"That's not the right message to send, because they are. And, in fact, we need to make greater efforts to provide them with a safe, comfortable, wonderful experience here on campus," Meekins said. "When you start taking down familiar places and spaces where certain populations know they can go and be safe and secure, it concerns me."

Durham candidates make their case at political mixer

Continued from page 1A

munity and the district attorney's office."

Incumbent Sheriff Clarence Birkhead is being challenged by Johnny Hawkins. "We've accomplished a lot over these past several years, but there's more to do," Birkhead said. Those things include continuing to refrain from collaborating with Immigration and Customs Enforcement, as well as improving conditions in the Durham County Jail.

Hawkins introduced himself as having 38 years of experience in law enforcement and corrections, including working with the N.C. Department of Public Safety and chief of detention at the Durham County Sheriff's Office. He said he wants to focus on a "community-focused" safety initiative that engages youth to curb gun violence and work closely with Durham's HEART program.

Several school board candidates listed problems with transparency and teacher pay in Durham Public Schools. Incumbent and current board of elections chair Bettina Umstead said she knows there is more to do.

Other school candidates are Nadeen Bir, Dilcy Burton, Rachel Waltz, Davit Melikian, Natalie Bent Kitai, Lauren Sartain, Peter Crawford, Gabrielle Rivero, Jerome Leathers, Kristy Moore and Xavier Cason.

Incumbent Sophia Chitlik is being challenged by former city council member DeDeana Freeman for the N.C. Senate. "We need effective leadership now more than ever," Chitlik said, speaking of her track record supporting child care, maternal health and "holding the Republicans accountable."

Freeman said her campaign is about "more than just being progressive."

"This is about liberation," she said. "We have a lot to do; a lot of ground to make up, because we have a fascist in the White House." The two will face Republican LaKeshia Alston.

OPINION

D.E.Irony: Fewer white men in college keeps MAGA in power

By Rann Miller

WORD IN BLACK

Since race can't be used as a factor in college admissions, the number of white men enrolled in college has dropped significantly. Colleges had relaxed admissions standards for white men to help balance a class's racial and gender diversity, but the move toward meritocracy has hurt white men the most.

Maybe Donald Trump wants to make it harder for white men to get into college. Perhaps it is not an accident that affirmative action has come to an end in higher education institutions. Maybe none of this is the irony some people think it is.

The Trump administration's rollback of DEI policies has an unintended consequence: white men, the Trump Administration's core demographic, are being excluded from college admissions. And that could be playing into the hands of white conservative elites who depend on white men and their grievances to stay in power.

The prospect of fewer white men attending school is part of a larger trend. Since 2018, enrollment among white students has dropped by 19% across all sectors: public, private, two-year, four-year, selective and non-

selective. Since the Supreme Court banned race as a consideration for college admissions, enrollment among college freshmen who self-reported as white dropped to 31% in 2025 from 40% in 2023.

Generally, in sheer numbers, more women attend colleges and universities than men. Therefore, in an attempt to secure gender balance, higher education institutions will admit more white men with lower test scores or other qualifications than women. In that sense, white men benefited from affirmative action.

However, the Trump Administration issued an executive order along similar lines. Under the order, colleges and universities that receive federal funding are prohibited from considering gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, or political views in admissions or hiring.

That means the admissions office's balancing act, which seeks diversity but actually benefits white men, will come to a halt. But maybe that's the point.

Consider Trump's electoral base. According to a CNN exit poll from the 2024 election, Trump won 60% of the white male vote, and 69% of white men without college degrees — his most supportive demographic. In 2020, Trump

received 70% of the vote from white men without a college degree. In 2016, it was 71%.

In all three elections, white male voters represented a third of the total electorate. For perspective, voters of color represent slightly less than a third. Securing voters for the Trump administration is more than just splintering voters of color from the Democratic candidate. It is also keeping white men ignorant so that they can be appealed to with racism, sexism and capitalism wrapped in a neat package of toxic masculinity.

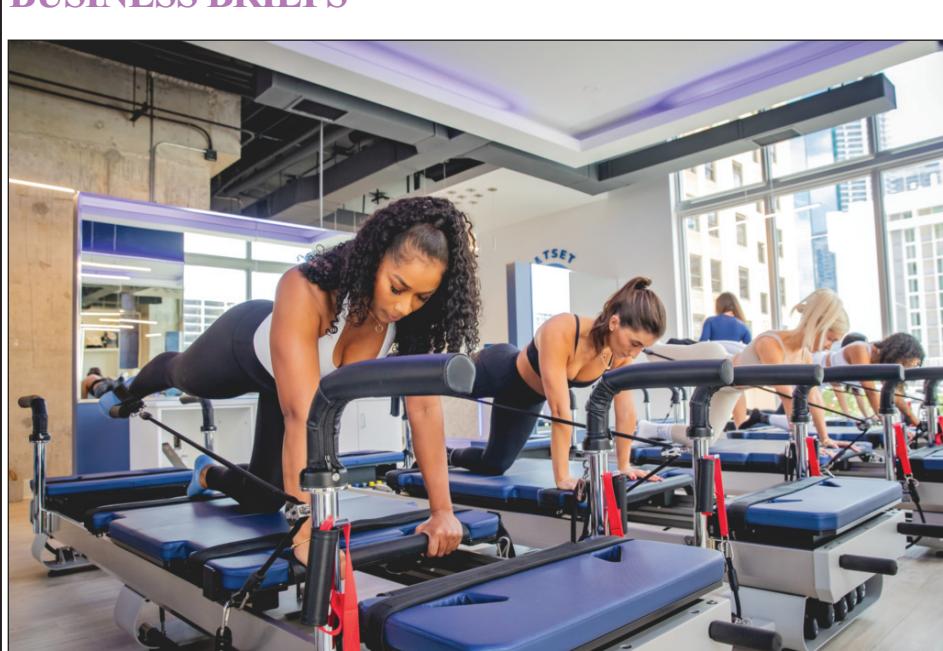
Why? Because it works. Conservative elites can then manipulate those men into voting against their interests, helping secure political power for white people in a society that is becoming more diverse.

White men without college degrees love Trump, and MAGA conservatives believe colleges are bastions of liberal brainwashing. In reality, though, higher education writ large is designed to cultivate critical thinking skills in a racially and ideologically diverse setting.

That reality doesn't develop a prospective white male Trump voter; keeping white men out does.

(Read the entire article on our website.)

BUSINESS BRIEFS



JETSET Pilates opens in North Hills.

BLACK CHAMBER

City of Raleigh is partnering with Black Chamber of Raleigh to host an information session on grants and resources for small businesses Jan. 20, 6-7:30 p.m., Raleigh Pathways Center, 900 S. Wilmington

St. Register: www.eventbrite.com

OPENINGS:

* JETSET Pilates, part of the modern Reformer Pilates franchise, opens a new studio this weekend in North Hills, 200 Park at North Hills St., Suite 141,

Raleigh. Visit: jetsetpilates.com/nc/north-hills.

* Tasty's Fusion Cuisines' soft opening is Jan. 19, 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., 11016 Capital Boulevard, Wake Forest.

Send business briefs to info@triangletribune.com

Women with fibroids have increased heart disease risk

By Jennifer Porter Gore
BLACKDOCTOR.ORG

For many Black women, years of heavy bleeding, pelvic pain and exhaustion during menstruation are dismissed as simply "having bad periods." But a growing body of medical research shows that uterine fibroids, noncancerous growths in the muscle wall of the uterus, are at

the center of a major, and often overlooked, health crisis for women — especially Black women.

Groundbreaking research finds women who suffer from fibroids face an astonishingly higher long-term risk of heart disease, stroke and peripheral artery disease, with Black women disproportionately affected.

The research, published in the Journal of the Amer-

ican Heart Association, found the long-term risk in women diagnosed with uterine fibroids is over 80% higher than in women without fibroids.

Dr. Stacey E. Rosen, AHA president and senior vice president of the Katz Institute for Women's Health in New York City, says the study "highlights yet another as-

Please see WOMEN/3A



Women with fibroids have heart disease risk

Continued from page 2A

pect in the unique factors that impact women in regard to the leading cause of death among them - cardiovascular disease."

Although fibroids aren't cancerous, having them can be life-altering. Heavy menstrual bleeding can lead to iron-deficiency anemia, fatigue and days of missed work or school. The discomfort also can affect patients' ability to sit comfortably, much less exercise. The condition has also been linked to fertility problems, pregnancy loss and preterm births in pregnant women.

Black women with fibroids are more likely than white women to report that their pain was minimized or their symptoms dismissed altogether. And they were less likely to be offered a full range of treatment options, which means their rate of hysterectomies is higher than for white women.

This elevated risk of heart disease showed up in women of all races and ages but was particularly strong in women younger than 40. The risk for cardiovascular disease in this age group was 3.5 times higher in those with fibroids compared to those without.

"Nearly 26 million pre-menopausal women in the U.S. are impacted by uterine fibroids, and many do

not experience any symptoms," says study author Julia D. DiTosto, who is a doctoral candidate at the University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine. "Yet, despite the high prevalence, fibroids are understudied and poorly understood."

Uterine fibroids are so common that researchers estimate that up to 80% of women in the U.S. will develop the condition by age 50. Women's health officials say fibroids are the leading reason women need hysterectomies.

Yet a landmark national survey and several follow-up studies found that Black American women have triple the rate of uterine fibroids, and the tumors develop roughly 10 years earlier on average than in white women. Black women are also more likely to have larger and more numerous tumors.

JAMA researchers studying the link between fibroids and cardiovascular disease analyzed a U.S. database of health information from 2000 to 2022. They studied more than 450,000 women whose average age was 41 and who were diagnosed with fibroids.

Those women were compared to just over 2.2 million women who had not been diagnosed with the fibroids.

After 10 years of follow-up analysis, women with

fibroids were found to have an 81% higher risk of developing cardiovascular disease compared to women without fibroids. Also, at the 10-year mark, more than 5% of women with fibroids had already experienced a cardiovascular event, compared to 3% of women without fibroids.

The researchers stress that more data is needed before formally changing the current medical guidelines for assessing cardiovascular risk. "The strength of the relationship between heart disease risk and uterine fibroids was striking," DiTosto said. The results, she says, "support having thoughtful conversations between women and their providers about heart health in the context of a fibroid diagnosis."

Rosen says the study can provide the foundation for a breakthrough in an aspect of women's health that is often overlooked. "It also is an opportunity to recognize the very important role all of a woman's health care clinicians can play in her overall health, including heart health," she said. "Because many women may use annual 'well-woman' visits to their gynecologist or their general practitioner as their primary point of care, these visits offer exceptional opportunities that go beyond gynecologic health."

For voters in states that count mail-in ballots based on postmark deadlines, and for patients navigating appeals, authorizations and Medicare paperwork, the distinction is anything but academic.

"In recognition of the importance that the election laws in some states place on postmarks, it has been longstanding policy of the Postal Service to try to ensure that every return ballot mailed by voters receives a postmark, whether the return ballot is mailed

with postage pre-paid by election officials or with a stamp affixed by the voter," officials wrote in a release. "A voter can ensure that a postmark is applied to his or her return ballot by visiting a Postal Service retail office and requesting a postmark from a retail associate when dropping off the ballot."

The issue gained wider attention after a detailed explanation circulated to millions of viewers on social media from the account @cjnlegalnurse, a health care advocate who outlined how the rule shift moves risk away from institutions and onto individuals.

"The postmark rule changed quietly, and it affects voting and health care. Let me explain what just happened at USPS because this is not minor and it's not theoretical," the user said. "So as of this week, the United States Postal Service clarified that a postmark date is no longer tied to when you drop your mail off. It's tied to when that mail is first processed by an automated facility."

As the user explained, a letter placed in a mailbox on Monday may not reach a sorting center until Wednesday, making Wednesday the official postmark.

"In nursing and health care advocacy, timing is everything," the user said. "And this rule shifts the risk from the institution back to the patient. The system didn't get faster, the rules just got tighter."

marked by election day," the user said. "Under this rule, you can mail your ballot before election day and still have it postmarked after. So that's not voter fraud, that's logistics quietly overruling intent."

USPS guidance confirms that most postmarks are now applied at large processing plants rather than local post offices and that mail may sit before receiving a postmark due to updated transportation schedules.

The agency recommends that customers with deadline-sensitive mail bring items directly to a post office counter and request a manual local postmark.

Health care advocates say the implications extend far beyond elections.

"Health care runs on mail deadlines, appeals, prior authorizations, Medicare notices, and prescription paperwork," the user said. "If an appeal has to be postmarked by a certain date and USPS processes days later, it looks late. So late appeals get denied. Denied appeals delay care."

The user said the shift places the burden squarely on individuals navigating already complex systems.

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Many states say a mail-in ballot counts if it's post-



FILE PHOTO

National Institutes of Health building.

Trump administration agrees to drop anti-DEI criteria for stalled research grants

By Jacob Fischler
NC NEWSLINE

The Trump administration will review frozen grants to universities without using its controversial standards that discouraged gender, race and sexual orientation initiatives and vaccine research.

In a settlement agreement filed in Massachusetts federal court Monday, the National Institutes of Health and a group of Democratic attorneys general who'd challenged the new criteria for grant funding said the NIH would consider grant applications made up to Sept. 29 without judging the efforts related to diversity, equity and inclusion, or vaccines.

The settlement provides an uncontested path for the agency while courts de-

cide whether the administration can use its controversial analysis. The administration did not agree to permanently ditch its campaign to evaluate health research funding decisions based on schools' DEI programs.

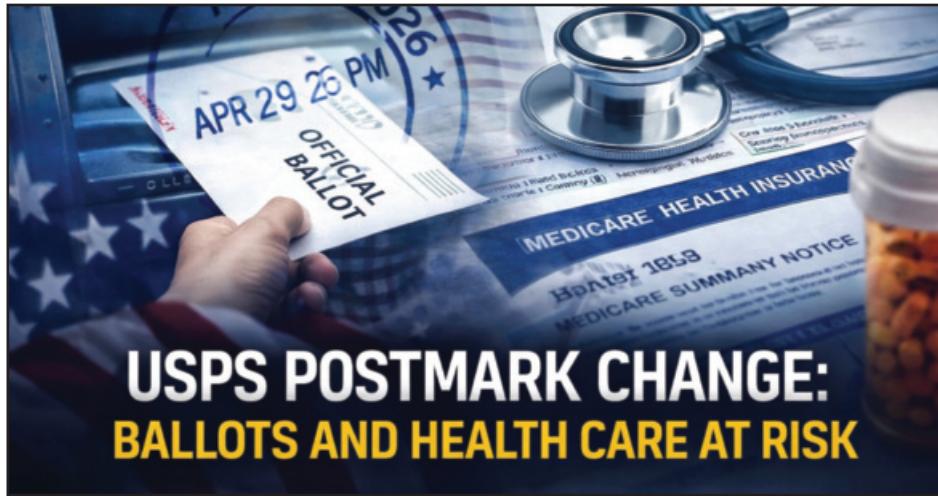
NIH officials "will complete their consideration of the Applications in the ordinary course of NIH's scientific review process, without applying the Challenged Directives," the settlement said, adding that the agency would "evaluate each application individually and in good faith."

The settlement was signed by U.S. Department of Justice lawyers and the attorneys general of Massachusetts, California, Maryland, Washington, Arizona, Colorado, Delaware, Hawaii, Minnesota, Nevada,

New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island and Wisconsin.

In a Tuesday statement, Massachusetts Attorney General Andrea Joy Campbell said the agreement commits the Department of Health and Human Services to resume "the usual process for considering NIH grant applications on a prompt, agreed-upon timeline."

The 17 attorneys general sued in April over \$783 million in frozen grants. A trial court and appeals court in Massachusetts sided with the states, but the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in August that the trial judge lacked the authority to compel the grants to be paid, especially in light of a similar decision involving the Education Department.



New postal service rule could quietly void ballots and delay health care

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA NEWSWIRE

A quiet clarification by the United States Postal Service is drawing renewed scrutiny after health care advocates and voting rights observers warned that the change could carry serious consequences for millions of Americans who rely on postmarks to meet legal deadlines.

Under new USPS guidance that took effect late last month, the date printed on a postmark no longer reflects when a letter or ballot is dropped into a mailbox.

Instead, the postmark now reflects the date the mail is first processed at an automated sorting facility, which can occur days after the item is mailed.

The Postal Service says the change is intended to clarify how postmarks are applied, particularly as transportation schedules and regional processing systems evolve.

For voters in states that count mail-in ballots based on postmark deadlines, and for patients navigating appeals, authorizations and Medicare paperwork, the distinction is anything but academic.

"In recognition of the importance that the election laws in some states place on postmarks, it has been longstanding policy of the Postal Service to try to ensure that every return ballot mailed by voters receives a postmark, whether the return ballot is mailed

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Many states say a mail-in ballot counts if it's post-

North Carolina now has more registered Republicans than Democrats

By Steve Harrison
WFAE

Last weekend marked a milestone in North Carolina politics: For the first time, more people in the state are registered to vote as Republicans than Democrats. The change, which has been years in the making, was once unthinkable in a state where Democrats dominated for more than a century.

New data released Jan. 3 by the N.C. Board of Elections shows Republicans with 2.3 million registered voters and Democrats with 2.1 million. The GOP now has a 2,077-vote advantage. Unaffiliated voters remain the largest group of voters, with 3 million.

"It is absolutely fair to say this is the first time in North Carolina history we will have more Republicans than Democrats registered," Western Carolina University political science professor Chris Cooper said.

He noted that the Democrats' decline isn't necessarily the GOP's gain. Most new voters are unaffiliated, not declaring themselves with either party, and the share of Republican registration has stayed at around 30%.

But the steep decline in registrations is worrisome for Democrats, he said. "This is a story of Republican stability and Democratic demise. And the way that's playing out is that people at the end of their

lifespan, when they die, tend to be Democrats. And the people who are entering the voting pool tend to be unaffiliated."

The flip comes at a time when the Democratic Party appears reinvigorated as it works to oppose President Donald Trump. Democrats won elections in Virginia, Georgia and New Jersey in October, and flipped seats in North Carolina's municipal races last fall. And millions have marched in No Kings protests in Charlotte and across the nation.

But there's a conundrum amid all this momentum: The Democratic Party still doesn't have many people willing to become Democrats. That's true nationwide and in North Carolina.

At the start of President Obama's second term in 2012, there were 820,000 more Democrats than Republicans in North Carolina. In last year's presidential election, there were only 106,000 more Democrats. Even after President Trump's tumultuous 2025 — marked by the president's low approval ratings — the Democratic registration lead continued to dwindle.

Stanly County, 45 minutes east of Charlotte, is a prime example of what's happened. In 2012, there were 13,700 registered Democrats in Stanly. Now there are just 7,915. The county is mostly rural. Its biggest city, Albemarle, is best known for being the home of country singer

Kellie Pickler. There is a sign honoring her at Court House Square downtown.

A block away is the new headquarters for the Stanly County Democratic Party. It's in a storefront that used to hold music lessons. In December, a small Christmas tree was displayed in the window, decorated with blue ornaments.

Erin Soto became the party chair in the spring. "Everything here has been donated," she said about the new office. "We've been blessed in that regard. Right on the desk, we've got our voter registration. This is a poster board that people can click on the QR code to donate."

When she became party chair in May, the county party was on life support. It had only \$700 in the bank and just three of 22 precincts organized.

Now the party has \$37,000 and half of the precincts manned. People also appreciate the party being more visible, with the downtown office. "Even my beautician said, 'I didn't know there was a Democratic Party.' I get that a lot," Soto said.

Lakshya Jain, a Democrat, is the CEO of Split Ticket, which analyzes voting data. He said the Democratic Party's registration woes are not a rural thing or a North Carolina thing. It's happening everywhere, including in other swing states like Pennsylvania

Please see REPUBLICAN/5A



COURTESY

Richard Smallwood, bottom row, center, and the Richard Smallwood singers.

Legendary gospel singer Richard Smallwood's Durham connection

SUBMITTED BY DENISE HESTER

With great sadness, I'm sharing the passing of my prolific cousin Richard Smallwood. Although absent from us physically, his music lives on to bring us closer to God.

RICHARD SMALLWOOD - THE HAYTI CONNECTION

Gospel legend Richard Smallwood is known the world over for his prolific musical creations and his mesmerizing performances. But what is less known is his connection to Hayti and his Durham relatives, one of whom is me.

Richard Smallwood's mother, Mable Ruth Locklear Smallwood, was born in Durham County to Richard and Nellie Weaver Locklear. They, along with other family members, left the Cain Plantation (Hardscrabble as it was known then) in Orange County

and settled in the bustling Hayti community. Residential addresses included 105 E. Piedmont Avenue and 203 Enterprise Street taken from the Hills Directory of Durham in the 1920s. An only child born in 1915, Cousin Mable grew up in a loving Christian family and graduated from Hillside High School before marrying the Rev. Chester Smallwood and moving to Washington, D.C., in 1934.

The family tree from Cain Plantation days goes back as far as we can tell to Jack Cain who was 102 years old in the 1870 census. From there, the tree branches with common ancestors with a variety of relationships. To make it make sense, we all called each other "cousin" no matter how close or distant the relationship.

Mable Smallwood's other family members living in

Durham included her grandmother Annie Weaver, aunt Viola Weaver and Winnie Weaver. Older ancestors included Sally Weaver and David Weaver who are buried in Geer Cemetery along with Annie.

My family tree is descended from Winnie Weaver aka Winnie Cain (my great-great grandmother). Her children were Lula Cain Banks, Bessie Cain and Octavious "O.C." Cain. Lula's children were Bessie Banks Allison and Rivers Banks. Bessie's children were Olivia Clements Weaver and Robert Clements, and cousins Michael Clements and Robert D. Clements.

Even after leaving Durham, Mable and Richard Smallwood visited often, and Richard performed many times in Durham and nearby cities.

STAFF REPORTS

Steer clear of these sneaky tactics designed to keep you ensnared in debt.

* **Low minimum payments:** Credit card companies might entice you by lowering their minimum required payments from 5% to 2%. While low payments may seem helpful, they're actually Public Enemy No. 1 for those trying to take control of their finances.

Avoid this trap by paying your balance in full each month. If you can't do this, pay as large a portion as you can or at least pay more than the minimum.

* **Overly generous offers:** You probably receive at least eight of them a month - loan offers for thousands of dollars. The company found you on a generic mailing list, and

then determined from their general market research that you can handle the loan. But the ONLY person who knows whether or not you can afford something is YOU. Keep temptation at bay by unsubscribing and opting out of marketing offers.

* **Introductory APRs:** The credit card companies lure you with low introductory Annual Percentage Rates of 0%, but after the honeymoon of just six to eight months is over, that "platinum" rate jumps an average of 16 percentage points.

And just because you've pre-qualified for a stellar rate, you may not get it. In fact, once your credit history is reviewed, you may be sent a card with a much higher rate. Protect yourself by reading the fine print first!

* **Late fees:** To avoid extra fees, make your payment as soon as possible upon receipt of your bill. If shopping for credit, look for cards with late fees of less than \$20 and grace periods of at least 25 days.

* **Punitive APRs and hidden fees:** After just one late or missed payment, most companies will hike your rate to as high as 30% until you pay on time for a full year. Another trend: hidden "minimum" fees for transactions like balance transfers and cash advances. And so-called "fixed" APRs can be raised with as little as 15 days' notice. Your best defense: Think carefully before accepting any offer. Odds are you'll wind up paying more than you bargained for.

AROUND THE TRIANGLE



Raleigh annual toll increase is in effect.

RALEIGH TOLLS

Annual toll rate increase for the Triangle Expressway and Monroe Expressway is now in effect.

BREAKFAST

NC Right to Life Prayer Breakfast for Life is Jan. 17, North Ridge Country Club. Tickets: www.ncrtl.org.

VETERANS

The next Veterans and Coffee meetup is Jan. 13, 10:30-11:30 a.m., Top Greene African American Cultural Center, 401 MLK Jr. Boulevard.

MOBILE DROP-OFF

Free mobile drop-off Jan. 17, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Anything With A Plug Recycling, 6002 Falls of Neuse Road.

THEATRE

Triangle African American Theater Preview '26 is Jan. 18, 7-9 p.m., Raleigh Little Theatre, 319 Pogue St. Tickets: raleighlittletheatre.org.

theatre.org

DURHAM FORUM

Durham NAACP Political Forum is Jan. 11, 2-5 p.m., Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist, 1007 S. Roxboro St.

BREAST CANCER

The next Breast Cancer Support Group is Jan. 12, 6-7 p.m., Lincoln Community Health Center, 1301 Fayetteville St. Call 919-956-4000.

SCHOLARSHIP

Applications are open for the Connia H. Watson Memorial Scholarship for two Durham high school seniors. Learn more at gdbc.org. Deadline: Jan. 15.

CONCERT

Sherri Shepherd: Make It Make Sense Tour is Jan. 17, Carolina Theatre, 309 W. Morgan St. Visit www.carolinatheatre.org.

PAGEANT

Interest meeting for Ms. Full-Figured North Carolina/Virginia Pageant is Jan. 17, 3 p.m., NERRA, 506 Ramseur St., Suite 2. Contact: msfullfiguredncpageant@gmail.com.

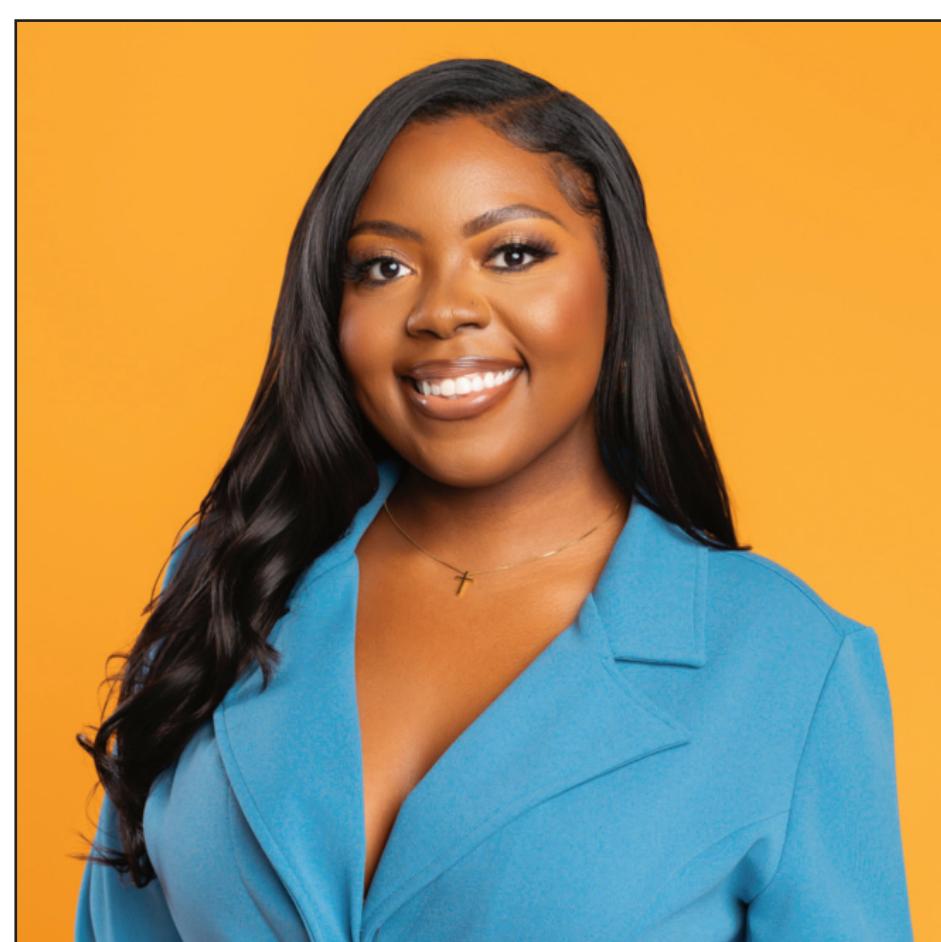
CONFERENCE

NC Budget & Tax Center's Economy For All 2025 conference is Jan. 22, 5-8 p.m., Durham Convention Center. Tickets: ncbudget.org/econ4all

MISC. SCHOLARSHIPS:

* Perry Scholarship Fund honors veterans living in Wake, Durham or Chatham counties. Submit a nomination at www.perryscholarshipfund.com. Deadline: Jan. 31.

* Marian Anderson Legacy Scholarship is accepting applications for undergraduate and graduate students studying music. Visit www.dar.org/. Deadline: Jan. 31.



Candace Burge

Durham author releases debut children's book on mental health

STAFF REPORTS

DURHAM — Durham author and mental health therapist, Candace Burge, will debut a children's book, "Yurie and the Copycat Chameleon," to help children identify, understand and express their emotions.

Blending colorful illustrations with social-emotional learning themes, "Yurie and the Copycat Chameleon" gives young readers the language and tools to explore big feelings in a healthy, developmentally appropri-

ate way.

The book also includes a feelings wheel, making it a valuable resource for families, educators and mental health professionals.

"Big feelings are a normal part of growing up, but many children don't always have the language to express them," Burge said. "This book helps kids put words to what they're feeling in a way that feels safe and supportive."

As conversations around children's mental health

continue to grow nationwide, "Yurie and the Copycat Chameleon" offers an accessible entry point into emotional literacy.

The story encourages self-awareness, emotional vocabulary, and confidence—skills that research shows are foundational for long-term mental wellness.

The book also highlights diverse representation, reinforcing that all children deserve to feel seen in stories about growth and emotions.

"Yurie and the Copycat Chameleon" will be released Jan. 14 and will be available at www.candaceburge.com and Amazon.



Continued from page 3A

abandon the party."

He's surprised Democrats wouldn't have registered more people in 2025 as Trump's approval ratings dropped. "And the fact that they haven't, honestly, is a tiny bit concerning. This is the time when parties are supposed to rebound," Jain said.

But he says the registration problem isn't due to tactics or a lack of re-

sources. It's about brand identity, and he said too many people see the party as too left-wing.

"If half of the people on your own side think that you are too liberal, you can bet your ass that the people on the middle, and the people on the other side of the spectrum definitely think that," Jain said.

NC has more registered Republicans than Dems

Continued from page 3A

abandon the party."

He's surprised Democrats wouldn't have registered more people in 2025 as Trump's approval ratings dropped. "And the fact that they haven't, honestly, is a tiny bit concerning. This is the time when parties are supposed to rebound," Jain said.

But he says the registration problem isn't due to tactics or a lack of re-

Sports summit highlights women's flag football

Women's flag football is exploding.

Girls as young as 8 are playing the game, and sponsors and investors are noticing.

BallHer's Choice Sports Flag Football has been on the forefront in the Triangle to engage girls and women in the sport. The league has hosted tournaments and clinics since its inception in March 2023. Its theme is "Her Sports. Her Choice. Her Way."


BONITTA BEST
BallHer's Choice Sports was founded by Maria Barber, the commissioner of the league. Barber is a social worker who got involved in flag football through a personal trainer despite having no experience.

The league just finished its sixth season in the Triangle and has grown to nine teams.

Its Let Her Be Sports Summit 2026 for ages 13 and up is Jan. 31, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the OYM THE CENTER in Raleigh. Registration is at www.eventbrite.com.

The networking summit will gather athletes, coaches and supporters to celebrate and encourage girls and women in all sports. Some of the topics covered will be career pathways, personal branding, eliminating barriers, athletic development and, of course, mental health. It's open to the beginner as well as the experienced athlete.

BallHer's Choice spring flag football league runs April 19 to June 7 at Old Chapel Hill Road Park in Durham. The minimum age to participate is 17 and the maximum age is 65. Registration is ongoing at ballherschoicesports.com. Volunteers also are needed.

CIAA Hall of Fame
The CIAA released its 2026 HOF class, and while all eight are quite deserving, one name stood out for me.

Fred Whitted was as nice as he was passionate about preserving HBCU history. I put his death in my top 10 sports moments of 2025 because that's just how special he was.

Fred loved HBCUs, he loved his alma mater, Winston-Salem State, and he loved history. I still have one of the first Black College Sports Encyclopedias he published back when the CIAA Tournament was in Raleigh. It is priceless.

We sat together at so many tournaments and talked for hours. If a player scored so many points or grabbed a bunch of rebounds, Fred would say, "that's not a record. (Fill in the blank) holds the record."

Everybody, and I mean E-V-E-R-Y-B-O-D-Y called Fred for information. When ESPN produced the documentary "Black Magic," detailing the history of CIAA basketball, producers knew who to call.

How sad that he's not here to accept an honor long overdue.

The remaining seven:

* Jerome "Biggie" Bell Sr., Virginia State (1974-79): Bell is VSU's all-time leader in career assists, single-season assists and single-game assists.

* Andrea Giscombe, St. Augustine's (1996-97): CIAA and NCAA national track and field champion, and she helped coach the Falcons to 21 national titles and 79 CIAA championships with legendary coach George "Pup" Williams.

* Akira Turner, Fayetteville State (2010-11): One of the most decorated bowlers in CIAA history.

* Otis Stroud, Johnson C. Smith: Four decades of announcing CIAA games and tournaments. And what a voice!

* Ralph "Pete" Hunger, Vir-

Please see FLAG/7A

The Triangle Tribune Sports

January 11-17, 2026 | 6A



COURTESY

Twin Strength

Alivia and Aijah Evans balance basketball, family legacy at FSU

By Adrian Ferguson
FSU SPORTS INFORMATION

FAYETTEVILLE - When Alivia and Aijah Evans committed to Fayetteville State University, they weren't just joining a basketball team. They were stepping into a journey that blends athletic excellence, academic rigor, and a deep sense of family legacy.

The twins from Winston-Salem have quickly become two of the most compelling stories in Bronco athletics, not only for what they do on the court, but for the purpose that drives them off it.

At Quality Education Academy, the sisters set the bar high. Alivia graduated as Valedictorian, while Aijah followed as Salutato-

nian in 2023. Their achievements reflected years of discipline, sacrifice and mutual support. Both were standout athletes, helping lead their team to a conference championship while excelling in the classroom with honor roll and Dean's List recognition.

That combination of brains and basketball made them natural fits for Fay-

etteville State, and for majors that demand both compassion and determination.

For Alivia, nursing is personal. "I want to be a nurse because of the care my family received when my grandmother was diagnosed with terminal cancer," she said. "Watching nurses, including my aunt,

Please see TWIN | 7A

HBCU FOOTBALL

NCCU great in NC Sports Hall of Fame

By Bonitta Best
editor@triangletribune.com

N.C. Central
Alumnus Louis Breeden will be inducted into the 2026 North Carolina Sports Hall of Fame May 1 in Greensboro.

The standout defensive back led the Eagles in interceptions three straight seasons. He was drafted in 1977 by the Cincinnati Bengals in the seventh round and played 10 seasons. He was a first-team All-Pro

selection in 1982 and amassed a career 33 interceptions.

In the recruiting department, Anderson running back Bryson James is transferring to Eagleland. Anderson is a Division II Christian university in South Carolina. James rushed for 1,023 yards and eight touchdowns in two seasons.

Defensive back Jelani Vassell and linebacker Max U'Ren have been added to the Allstate HBCU LEGACY BOWL I



February.

On a sour note, several Eagles have entered the transfer portal: defensive lineman Wisdom Simms, outside line-

backer Donquarius Parker, offensive lineman Ja'Quan Sprinkle and defensive end Thomas Johnson.

Please see HOF | 7A

COLLEGE CORNER

Late SAU coach inducted into sports HOF

WOMEN

N.C. Central

MEAC play began last weekend with a 20-point loss to three-time defending champion Norfolk State. The Eagles haven't beaten the Spartans in two years.

The team travels to Baltimore this weekend to take on Morgan State and Coppin State before hosting first-place Howard next Saturday.

Morgan Callahan leads the team in scoring and rebounds with 11.3 points and 6.7 rebounds a game.

Shaw

CIAA action is in full swing. The Bears have four straight home games, starting with Tuesday night's matchup against Virginia Union. Shaw rallied from 14

points down in the second half to defeat the Panthers for the second time this season.

Mikyah Finley led all scorers with 26 points, including 7 of 10 from 3-point range.

Lincoln (Pa.) came to town Jan. 8, then it's Bowie State on Monday and the surprising and first-place Winston-Salem State next Saturday.

D'Ayzha Atkinson leads the team in scoring with 17.2 points per game.

MEN

N.C. Central

The Eagles are 5-2 at home and 0-9 on the road. The fifth home win was a doozy over defending champion Norfolk State to open conference play and earning Khouri Carvey his



DONALD WATKINS
Mikyah Finley scored 26 points, over a third of Shaw's 63 points in the win against Virginia Union.

third MEAC Defensive Player of the Week Award.

The men follow to Baltimore this weekend before hosting

Howard next Saturday. Gage Lattimore leads the team in scoring with 18.9

Please see LATE/7A

Twin Strength: Sisters balance basketball, family

Continued from page 6A

who is a registered nurse, support, educate and advocate for my grandmother showed me how important nurses are during difficult times."

That sense of purpose mirrors the way she plays basketball. As a guard/small forward, Alivia has become the Broncos' Swiss Army knife, contributing to every area of the game. Whether it's rebounding, defending, facilitating or scoring, she fills the gaps and steadies the team.

Aijah's path began with a passion for oncology nursing, inspired by their grandmother's battle with cancer.

"I choose oncology nursing because I am deeply passionate about supporting patients and families as they face cancer," she said. "Oncology nurses do more than provide medical care; they offer com-

passion, education, and hope while guiding patients through diagnosis, treatment and recovery, and sometimes end-of-life care. I saw with my grandmother how a good nurse can make a difference, and I wanted to be that person for others."

The 2024-25 season tested Aijah in ways she never expected. Early in the year, she suffered her second ACL injury, a setback that forced her to confront the long, grueling road of recovery once again. Watching Alivia thrive while she heals has been bittersweet, motivating, but also a reminder of what she's missing. Yet her faith and determination remain unshaken.

Growing up in Winston-Salem, the twins were inseparable. They trained together, pushed each other and built a competitive fire that still burns today. At FSU, that connection didn't fade. If anything, it deepened.

"Having my twin sister as my basketball teammate is honestly really fun," Aijah said. "We already know how each other thinks, so playing together feels easy. We push each other to do better and keep each other motivated. Overall, it makes basketball more enjoyable playing with someone who's always got my back."

That bond has carried them through the highs of championships and the lows of injury. When Aijah went down with her ACL tear, Alivia didn't just step up on the court; she stepped up in every way, playing for both of them and keeping her sister connected to the team. And when Aijah returns, the Broncos will once again have the full force of their twin chemistry on the floor.

Late St. Aug's coach inducted into sports HOF

Continued from page 6A

points per game.

tack.

Shaw

The Bears put their unbeaten home streak (5-0) on the line Tuesday against the Panthers, but first-place VUU walked away with a 75-61 win. Shaw, which won its first seven games of the season, is 3-3 in its last six games.

The men also play Lincoln, BSU and WSSU at home. Avery Huggins leads the team in scoring and rebounds with 15.5

points and 6.1 rebounds a game.

Norfolk State

Assistant men's basketball coach Leonard Fairley has been named to the 2025 Silver Waves Media Rising Stars Mid-Major Assistant Coaches and GMs List, which recognizes emerging talent in college basketball. Fairley is among over 100 coaches recognized.

Hampton's Kyron Cartwright is the other HBCU assistant coach on the list.

SPORTS SHORTS

RALEIGH

* Raleigh Tennis Association's Available Player Mixer is Jan. 17, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Millbrook Exchange Tennis Park. Visit raleightennis.com.

DURHAM

* Free girls and boys basketball tryouts Jan. 17, 4

p.m., Holt Athletic Association Gym off Milton Road.

* Annual MLK "910 vs. 919" High School Basketball Invitational, Jan. 17, noon, Jordan High School, 6806 Garrett Road. Tickets: ticketstripe.com.

CHAPEL HILL

* The Back Nine Golf, a

premium indoor golf and entertainment complex, opened this weekend at the Elliott Square Shopping Center. Visit: linktr.ee/B9ChapelHill.

Send your sports announcements, photos to: info@triangletribune.com.

NCCU great in North Carolina Sports HOF

Continued from page 6A

Shaw

Wheeling University defensive back Tazion McQueen has committed to the Bears.

Howard

According to several media reports, 1998 graduate and star quarterback Ted White will be the Bison's next head football coach. White was an assistant on the team from 2011-16.

Legacy Bowl

More additions to the HBCU LEGACY BOWL.

* Tuskegee DB Michael King Jr.

* Kentucky State

OL Daniel Bostic

* Virginia State OL

Bruno Onwuazor

* Morgan State DB

Jadon Carter

* S.C. State S

Brennen Scott

* S.C. State WR

Jordan Smith

* Delaware State

OL Jester Johnson

* Bowie State DB

Jordan Williams

Ashton Grable

* Morehouse CB

Carlos Dunovant

Transfer Portal

* Benedict WR/KR

Jaxon Williams

* Southern WR

Darren Morris

* Alcorn State DB

Geoffrey McElroy

* Hampton CB

Andre Jackson

* Southern S

Treylan James

* Alabama State

WR Asa Gregg

* Grambling WR

Tyron Williams

* N.C. A&T QB

Nelson Layne

Turnin' Pro

These players are declaring for the NFL, CFL and UFL drafts.

* Delaware State

DB Amir Anderson

* Delaware State

QB Kaiden Bennett

* Jackson State LS

Hunter Burns

* Texas Southern

TE Jalen Williams

* Florida A&M OL

Goodbye. Hello.

* Albany State QB

Isaiah Knowles

has followed Quinn

Gray to Florida

A&M.

Women's flag football

Continued from page 6A

ginia Union: A dominant defensive back and the only Division II player drafted in the 2002 NFL Draft.

* Donald Ware, football officiating: No, not Donald Ware (no D on end) of Boxtrow.com. This Ware was a 31-year conference official, and he still has his sanity.

* George Leonard, Virginia State (1976-79): Leonard graduated as the program's all-time rushing leader with 3,575 yards and 33 touchdowns.

* Charlie Neal: Jimmy Jenkins Legacy Award Recipient: There are not enough words to describe Neal. Google.



KEMET™

NOTABLE BLACKS WITH JANUARY BIRTHDAYS ACTIVITY SHEET

Hi Everyone!

You know what I discovered? As I traveled back and forth through time, we kept flying over some great birthday parties going on! I never knew so many notable folks were born in January! Join me in celebrating their birthdays by learning more about them through this activity sheet.



ONE MINUTE MADNESS!

In one minute or less, unscramble the names of these famous January individuals.

The bold letter is the first letter appearing in their name.

xMa oaRhc _____

roMsr testhCnu _____

beDbe lenAi _____

raZo INae tonHsrn _____



LOOKING TO SUBMIT AN IDEA?

What topic would you like to see Kemet tackle and who would you like to see Kemet write about in the future? Send your request to KEMETCOMIC.COM.



WE WENT BACK IN TIME TO 1947 TO VISIT JACK ROBINSON "JACKIE" ROBINSON!

Do you know any "multi-sport" athletes? If you didn't, you do now. Meet Jackie Robinson! This citizen athlete earned a spot in the Hall of Fame at UCLA. He played and lettered in baseball, football, basketball and track! And he also won trophies for playing the game of tennis! He went on to "break the color barrier" in major league baseball in 1947.

Robinson experienced a lot of racism from integrating the sport of baseball. Players tried to injure him with their cleats, pitchers threw balls at his head, and umpires openly called incorrect plays. Yet, Robinson persevered. "Number 42" was much more than a baseball legend; he represented the hopes and dreams of black youths that they could become whatever they chose with hard work, resilience, determination and perseverance. Robinson once said, I'm not concerned with your liking or disliking me...all I ask is that you respect me as a human being."



WHO SAID IT?

Identify the quote with the person.

Quote:

- A. "I always keep a ball in the car."
- B. "The idea of a rapper being a star on a sitcom just wasn't heard of."
- C. "The two things you can't fake are good food and good music."
- D. "Float like a butterfly and sting like a bee"

Person:

- Ella James
- Muhammad Ali
- Tatyanna Ali
- Hakeem
- Olajuwon

MY NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

On January 1, most people will make a New Year's Resolution. What are you determined to do better this year? Write your resolution on the lines below.

WHO GOT PLAYED?

Draw a line connecting the character with their real-life actor.

Character:

Olivia Pope

Tre Styles

Trudy Smith

Dorian Long

Actor:

Ray J

Kerry Washington

Cuba Gooding

Regina King

www.KEMETCOMIC.com

ONE MINUTE MADNESS!
Max Rockatoss
Morris Chestnut
Zoe Saldana
WHO GOT PLAYED?
A. Cuba Gooding
B. Cuba Gooding
C. Cuba Gooding
D. Cuba Gooding



APEX
* Jan. 16-19, 6:30-8:30 p.m. - MLK Jr. Commemoration Weekend, Apex Senior Center, 63 Hunter St. Visit www.apexcinc.org/MLK.

KNIGHTDALE
* Jan. 19, 2 p.m. - MLK Day Interfaith Community Program, First and Main, 315 N. First Avenue

RALEIGH
* Jan. 18, 3-6 p.m. - "When Community Gathers" unity celebration of music, dance and art, Top Greene African Ameri-

can Cultural Center, 401 MLK Jr. Boulevard.

DURHAM
* Jan. 10, 2-5 p.m. - Durham Parks and Recreation presents MLK Community Day, W.D. Hill Recreation Center, 1308 Fayetteville St.

* Jan. 17, 10 a.m. to noon - MLK Jr. Day of Service, N.C. Central LeRoy T. Walker Complex on campus.

* Jan. 19, 1-4 p.m. - 15th Annual Dream Big Book Drive giveaway, Boxyard Research Triangle Park

* Jan. 19, 10 a.m. to noon - MLK Jr. Family Day of Service, Family Life Center at Lyon Park, 1309 Halley St. Help pack 30,000 meals.

* Jan. 19, 6 p.m. - Annual religious service, Orange Grove Missionary Baptist, 505 East End Avenue.

* Jan. 27, 11 a.m. - Durham City-County MLK Jr. Day Employee Observance, First Presbyterian Church, 103 Meadowland Drive.

HILLSBOROUGH
* Jan. 16, 10 a.m. to noon - MLK Holiday Program, Passmore Senior Center, 103 Meadowland Drive.



Ella West Gallery outgrows space in downtown Durham

Launching Wall Street Art Festival in 2027

STAFF REPORTS

DURHAM - Outgrowing its physical space in downtown Durham, Ella West Gallery's mission to champion meaningful contemporary art, elevate underrepresented voices and create platforms where artists can thrive will expand.

In its new form, the Gallery will further its reach across geography, medium and form through installations unique to each location.

Ella West's flagship event, the first Black Wall Street Art Festival, will be staged Sept. 10-12, 2027, in downtown Durham's vibrant Black Wall Street where the gallery spent two years at 104 W. Parrish Street. In the vein of Afro-punk Festival in Brooklyn, New York, and Charleston, South Carolina's Spoleto Festival USA, Black Wall Street Art Festival will be an art experience rooted in history and community, celebrating the resilience and contemporary creativity of Durham. Artists, vendors, sponsors and volunteers are invited to inquire about partnership opportunities at blackwallstreetartfestival.com.

"This exciting path forward is cutting-edge, agile

and mobile, allowing Ella West to disrupt the art ecosystem without the heavy overhead of a physical gallery, manifesting our goal to increase access to art, no matter where you are," said founder Linda Shropshire, who has been a firsthand witness to the recent shift from traditional gallery models to a new personalized, experiential approach.

"It is fitting that one of our flagship projects will be the Black Wall Street Art Festival, where we will both recognize legacy and work toward a new shared future. Staged just steps from where we first witnessed the power of cultivating community through the powerful lens of art, I am thrilled to continue this work with the collectors, partners, and artists who have been part of our story."

This new format is an example of a growing nomadic gallery movement, which allows curators to be nimbler and more creative with the places, spaces, and partnerships that bring artists and collectors together, staging exhibitions and experiences in surprising locations like private homes and empty warehouses, as well as public

outdoors spaces like Black Wall Street Art Festival. This transition also marks a shift from "blue chip" art galleries, which focus on established artists rooted in traditional museum and exhibition backgrounds, to "red chip" galleries driven by new, emerging artists outside the historical art canon presented to collectors through creative, tailored experiences.

In its physical space, the gallery showcased Ernie Barnes, Jeremy Biggers, Kennedi Carter, Maya Free-
lon, Stephen Hayes, Clarence Heyward, Justin Ellis, Isabel Lou, Joel Mamboka, Rigoberto Mena, Renzo, Julia Rivera, Lamar Whidbee, and more.

With a focus on celebrating cultural heritage, empowering emerging artists, and providing transformative community programming that connects history, creativity and education, the nonprofit will help stage exhibitions, residencies, and educational initiatives that propel youth engagement, community art activations, school partnerships and artist professional development.

For more information, visit www.ellawestgallery.com.

Cary 2025 Kwanzaa Celebration

Hundreds turned out for the 2025 Kwanzaa Celebration at the Cary Arts Center. Attendees were treated to dance performances, children-produced artwork, a STEM program and a vendor market.



MATHIAS BISHOP



Katie Dunn Rogers Scholarship

The North Carolina Community Foundation named Taylor Evans a recipient of the Katie Dunn Rogers Scholarship. A native of Wendell, Evans is attending Charlotte. Despite living with sickle cell disease, Evans continues to pursue higher education with strength and determination. Her goal is to build a career in international business and consulting, where she can help companies thrive while making a meaningful impact around the world. Inspired by a passion for global studies, entrepreneurship and cultural connection, she hopes to one day own her own consulting firm.

Evans sees Charlotte as the perfect place to grow both academically and personally. She's excited to explore leadership opportunities, learn from her peers, and engage in experiences that align with her vision for the future.

"I am going to be known for how I can uplift others, how I can lead with empathy and how to turn struggles into a strength," she said.



COURTESY

The Tribune is now on Snapchat and Tik Tok. Give us a follow!



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