



SPORTS

Southern varsity boys bring home school's first title.



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# The Triangle Tribune

THE TRIANGLE'S CHOICE FOR THE BLACK VOICE SINCE 1998

"Serving Raleigh, Durham and Chapel Hill"

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« 52 WEEKS OF BLACK BRILLIANCE »

## Fannie Lou Hamer: A Survivor of Medical Injustice

COURTESY OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY

In 1961, Fannie Lou Hamer went to a hospital in Mississippi seeking treatment for a uterine tumor. What she didn't know, however, was the procedure would result in her losing not only the tumor but also her reproductive organs, as part of a gruesome and forced sterilization carried out without her consent.

Hamer's experience was not an isolated case but rather part of a statewide, systemic effort in Mississippi to reduce the Black population through eugenic practices. Hamer's

personal trauma did not break her spirit, instead it fueled her commitment to fighting for justice and equality for Black people. Despite the immense pain she endured, Hamer continued her work as a leader, organizer and activist. She became an outspoken voice for both the Civil Rights Movement and for the rights of women, particularly Black women who had suffered in silence for so long.

Hamer's testimony and activism were pivotal in exposing the systematic abuse of Black people in the South and the covert medical violence that dis-

proportionately affected women of color. She later spoke out about her experience, helping to raise awareness of the brutal practice of forced sterilization and the unethical, often dangerous, medical procedures performed on Black women.

In her powerful words, Hamer reflected on the profound injustice she faced: "I am sick and tired of being sick and tired." Her fight wasn't just against the government or the racial segregation of her time; it was also against a system that used medical institutions as tools of control over the lives and bodies of

Black women.

Her advocacy for women's reproductive rights was ahead of its time, and her experience with forced sterilization highlights the intersectionality of racial, economic and gender oppression. Through her tireless activism and her unwillingness to be silenced, Hamer not only exposed the practices of forced sterilization but also paved the way for reproductive justice movements that focus on the needs and rights of marginalized communities, especially women of color.

<https://buymeacoffee.com/africanamericanhistory>



COURTESY

Fannie Lou Hamer was a woman before her time.



FACEBOOK

Wake Forest iStem Magnet Elementary School.

## Parents file lawsuit against WCPSS over alleged sexual assault of 5-year-old student

By Kylie Marsh

[kylie.marsh@triangletribune.com](mailto:kylie.marsh@triangletribune.com)

A family is seeking legal action against the Wake County Public Schools System for its mishandling of an alleged sexual assault of a kindergartner during the 2023-24 school year.

The student (the family requested anonymity), who was 5 years old at the time, attended Wake Forest iStem Magnet Elementary School.

The parent said she noticed

something was wrong when their son had regressed in toilet training.

"He started becoming very aggressive, being afraid to go to the bathroom," she said.

According to Stop It Now!, a nonprofit organization that equips adults to stop child sexual abuse, sudden bedwetting in a previously toilet-trained child is a warning sign of sexual abuse.

The child told his parents that "there were monsters in the

bathroom," and regressed to sleeping in bed with them. One night after wetting the bed, he told his mother that another minor male student entered the school's bathroom and proceeded to touch, stroke and kiss his penis.

"We were highly concerned, not just for our son but for that child," the parent said. "Exactly what is he being exposed to that he would come to school and do

Please see **ASSAULT/2A**

## NC lawmakers want to revamp property tax relief programs for seniors

By Greg Childress

NC NEWSLINE

Southeast Raleigh homeowner Anthony Pope fought long and hard to qualify for one of the state's senior adult property tax exclusions. When Pope finally got it, his property tax bill dropped from \$4,600 to roughly \$2,000 a year.

Like many seniors on fixed incomes, Pope was feeling the pinch of rising property taxes that some say make homes unaffordable. "It's definitely been a big help for me," Pope said.

Those concerns have caught the attention of lawmakers in Raleigh, prompting leaders of the state House and Senate to launch committees to review factors contributing to high property taxes and identify ways to reduce the burden on homeowners.

State Senate Leader Phil Berger, R-Rockingham, also announced recently he will introduce legislation during the short session to halt property tax revaluation change for one year while the legislature "examines and adopts" property tax re-

forms. That signals that a permanent solution to the problem is likely to be at least a year away.

"North Carolinians are shouldering the burden of massive increases in local budgets," Berger said. "A moratorium will be the first step in making much-needed reforms to property taxes in our state."

Lawmakers have begun to push reforms to the state's homestead exclusions, such as increasing income limits, to

Please see **NC/2A**



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

A rendering of the Obama Presidential Center on the South Side of Chicago.

## Obama Presidential Center grand opening celebrations in June

BY OBAMA FOUNDATION

The Obama Foundation recently announced that the Obama Presidential Center's grand opening celebrations will begin on June 18 and last through June 21, with a series of events that bring together the change-makers, community members, volunteers and supporters who made the Obama presidency a reality.

President Obama shared the announcement in a video on social media.

"It is easy to look around right now and feel like the challenges we face are simply too big. But hope is not about ignoring the hard stuff," he said. "It is that thing inside us that insists something better awaits if we are willing to work for it. Here on the South Side of Chicago, hope is getting a permanent home. Starting on June 19, you can visit the Obama Presidential Center. This is not a monument to the past; it is a living destination for people who refuse to accept the status quo. If you feel that way, this is your invitation to join us."

The same instinct animates changemakers across the globe and is central to the Foundation's mission to inspire, empower and connect people to change their world.

"We have always believed in the power of ordinary people to come together to make extraordinary change," Foundation CEO Valerie Jarrett said. "The opening of the Obama Presidential Center will be a beacon of hope to the world and a place where we hope guests will be inspired to bring change home to their communities."

The center will be dedicated on June 18, and the campus, including all free areas as well as the Museum, will open to the public on June 19. Grand opening celebrations will continue June 20-21 with live performances, family-friendly activities, food, art and storytelling across campus. The public events will be preceded by gatherings for alumni, community members, supporters and young people.

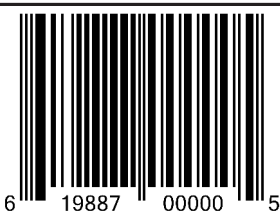
Tickets will be available in May, and pricing will be in line with other Chicago cultural institutions. Museum entry will require a timed ticket, but other areas of the 19.3 acre campus are free and accessible. Those who want to be the first to receive information are invited to sign up at [Obama.org](https://Obama.org).

"This grand opening is just the beginning," Jarrett said. "The Obama Presidential Center is about the everyday people who make our democracy work, not just those we see in the headlines. We can't wait to welcome people this June."

Index  
News 1A  
Classifieds 4A  
Life/Religion 5A  
Sports 6A  
Focus 8A

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GREG CHILDRESS

Homes in Southeast Raleigh.

## NC lawmakers want to revamp property taxes

Continued from page 1A

make them accessible to more homeowners. "They [seniors] cannot afford the property tax bills for the home that they have owned for decades and paid off," State Rep. Erin Paré, R-Wake, told NC Newline. "They've had to make difficult decisions between the things that they need to buy to live, like their prescription drugs, and paying gigantic property tax bills."

North Carolina offers three property tax relief programs for qualified homeowners that are administered by counties:

\* The Elderly/Disabled Homestead Exemption is for residents 65 years or older or those who are totally and permanently disabled. The program excludes from taxes the greater of \$25,000 or 50% of the assessed value of the owner's permanent residence. To qualify, income for the preceding year must be \$38,800 or less, including both incomes for a married couple.

\* The "Circuit Breaker" limits the amount of annual property taxes the owner pays on their permanent residence. Eligibility is limited to homeowners who are 65

and older or who are totally and permanently disabled. The tax bill is limited to a fixed percentage of income, and any taxes owed above that limit are deferred until a "disqualifying event" such as the owner's death. This program requires a new application to be filed every year. Income for both an applicant and spouse cannot exceed \$58,200.

\* The Disabled Veteran Exclusion excludes up to the first \$45,000 of the appraised value of the permanent residence of a disabled veteran who has a total and permanent service-connected disability or who received benefits for specially adapted housing. There is no age or income limitation for this program.

Paré filed House Bill 59 last year to expand eligibility for homestead exclusions. The bill is one of several filed targeting high property tax rates, but none have yet made it into law. "There's a lot of different proposals right now that are being gathered from all members of the [House] committee that will hopefully end up in one piece of legislation," Paré said.

Anthony Pope has some ideas for improving home-

stead exclusion programs. He was denied the exclusion at first because the family home he lives in has two names on the deed - Pope's and his sister's. The circuit breaker requires all owners to have owned and occupied the residence the previous five years. Pope said his sister received a circuit breaker exclusion for a separate home she owns and lives in.

After arguing his case before the North Carolina Board of Equalization and Review, Pope was granted the circuit breaker. He is unsure why he was granted the exclusion but believes the eligibility requirements are open to interpretation.

The provision requiring all people on a deed to have lived in a residence for the past five years and also qualify for the circuit breaker exclusion should be stripped from the eligibility requirements, Pope said.

"I say that's ridiculous because [for] most heirs' property, in particular Black heirs' property, you may have several people on the deed," he said. "Do you realistically expect all of those people to have lived in the house the last five years?"

## Vice President Vance blasts Don Davis, Roy Cooper in Rocky Mount

By Christine Zhu

NC NEWSLINE

ROCKY MOUNT — Vice President J.D. Vance slammed Democratic Rep. Don Davis for his voting record during his Rocky Mount event last week.

Vance criticized Davis for voting with Democrats against what he said were North Carolinians' best interests. "Don Davis is not a man who stands for the people of this state or this district," Vance told an audience of about 200 attendees at a venue in the same complex as Davis's district office.

Davis holds what is probably the most competitive congressional seat in North Carolina, after the latest round of redistricting enacted by Republican state lawmakers last October made the 1st Congressional District even more advantageous for their party. Both parties are targeting the seat, which may prove crucial to control of the House. The GOP currently holds a slim 218-214 majority with three vacancies.

Trump-backed candidate Laurie Buckhout, an Army veteran, won the GOP nomination for the district in last week's primary election. She's challenging Davis for a second time after losing to him in 2024.

Buckhout called out Davis for voting against the "One Big Beautiful Bill" Act, which she touted for dedicating \$50 billion nationwide to a rural health transformation program that she says could have helped his constituents. She said it's time for eastern North Carolina to hold him accountable for his actions.

Davis has received back-

lash from his own party for straying from party lines at times and voting with the GOP. But Vance pointed out that Davis sided with his party against legislation requiring voters to prove their U.S. citizenship.

The U.S. House of Representatives passed the Safeguard American Voter Eligibility Act last month, mandating people show documents like their passport, birth certificate or naturalization papers to vote. It's now in the U.S. Senate, and the Florida state legislature passed its version of the bill.

Mentions of the SAVE Act stood out to some attendees at the event. "Everybody wants a fair and free election," Phyllis Abernethy, vice chair of the Edgecombe County GOP, told NC Newsline.

But more than 21 million Americans don't have documents providing their citizenship readily available, according to research from the Brennan Center, and roughly half of Americans don't have a passport.

In addition to its location in the 1st Congressional District, Rocky Mount is essentially in Democratic Senate nominee Roy Cooper's backyard. It's about 12 miles away from where the former governor grew up in Nashville.

North Carolina's open U.S. Senate seat is pivotal to control over the upper chamber. Democrats see it as one of their best pick-up opportunities in 2026, aiming to narrow or overtake the Republicans' 53-47 majority.

GOP voters selected Michael Whatley, former Republican National Committee chair, to take on Cooper.

Whatley, who served as

chair of the North Carolina GOP before moving to the party's national branch, traveled aboard Air Force Two with Vance to Rocky Mount. "Roy Cooper is one of these people who clearly cares way more about other countries than he does the United States of America," Vance said.

Whatley called Cooper the most "soft on crime" governor in state history.

He alleged Cooper would advocate for cities like San Francisco and New York while leaving behind the rural farmers and manufacturers of his own state.

A Cooper campaign spokesperson said those attacks were false. Cooper spent his career prosecuting violent criminals as attorney general, and signing stricter pretrial release bail policy as governor, the spokesperson said in a statement.

"DC insider and Big Oil lobbyist Michael Whatley is desperate to distract from his support for hundreds of millions in cuts to local law enforcement and public safety efforts that keep North Carolinians safe," the statement read.

Democratic National Committee chair Ken Martin said Trump and Vance have broken the promises they made to voters during their campaign, from avoiding wars to bringing down the cost of living.

"J.D. Vance is trying to sell the American people on the Trump-Vance agenda, but voters aren't falling for his bullsh\*t," Martin said. "As prices soar and jobs disappear, Vance knows that he and Trump have betrayed the American people, including their own supporters, and no amount of spin will change that."

## Parents file lawsuit against WCPSS over assault

Continued from page 1A

this, and is he doing this to the other kids?"

The parents immediately took him to the hospital and called the police, who determined the story was consistent and filed a report to Wake County Child Protective Services. The parents then met with Wake Forest iStem Principal Chell Smith on April 22, 2024.

Neither Wake County Public Schools nor Smith responded to The Tribune for comment.

An audio recording of portions of that meeting was provided to The Tribune.

In the meeting, Smith is heard telling the parents that "CPS won't do anything about it. When it's two children, they won't get involved," Smith said. "It's an odd rule that they have about children. It has to be someone who is an adult."

Smith also says she will speak to the other student's parents to "find out what's going on. This is a serious issue."

North Carolina General Statutes § 7B-301 requires that anyone suspecting abuse or neglect shall report, and "a report is required when a reporter has cause to suspect that any juvenile is abused, neglected."

According to lawsuit filings, the child told his teacher, who instructed the accused student to stop. The alleged victim's mother told The Tribune that Smith said she was personal friends with the

student's mother, and in a second meeting, Smith informed her the accused student admitted to "ball checking," or conversations about the size of other boys' testicles.

The purpose of the second meeting was to plan so their son could return to school on the condition that he didn't have to be around the other student. However, the conversation in the recording centers around their child's academic performance, in which Smith threatens to hold him back a year. The parents believed this was retaliatory action.

In the recording, Smith pulls up the student's report card minutes later, showing that he is on grade level for all subjects.

She then changes her tone, saying the threat of retention "depends on his grades in the fourth quarter."

Smith was unwilling to move the students to separate classrooms. "I can't make definite decisions when I don't have definitive proof or anything to make a decision based on," she says in the recording. "I would just be taking one child's word over another. In this situation, that would work for you, but it certainly wouldn't work for the other child; but if the tables were turned, it wouldn't work for you."

Before attending Wake Forest iStem Elementary, the alleged victim was protected under the Federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, because the family is living in homeless hotels.

The Act provides accommodations to students who are housing insecure for their academic success, such as access to Wi-Fi.

The parent said Wake Forest iStem did not set up an IEP or identify him for McKinney-Vento protections.

She believes this is a violation of his civil rights. The couple has since removed him from Wake Forest Elementary.

"Whenever somebody reports a sexual assault incident, it doesn't matter if it's validated or not. The principal had a due diligence to start a Title XI investigation, which means she was supposed to let her higher ups know that a sexual assault had been reported," the mother told The Tribune.

But state documents show zero sexual assaults for that school year.

While the parents are working full-time, sometimes spending up to 16 hours in a vehicle to make a living off tips from food delivery work, they are also trying to juggle full-time online school and therapy for their son.

The mother told The Tribune their story exhibits the "systemic failures" they have endured, and they are now seeking a civil rights attorney.

To complicate the suit, North Carolina public school districts have a protection called "governmental immunity," essentially shielding the state and local governments from lawsuits in civil matters, via N.C. G.S. § 115C.42.



HOWARD

Howard students at a campus rally.

## At Howard University, protest is tradition. So why ban kneeling?

By Julienne

Louis-Anderson

SPECIAL TO THE TRIBUNE

The women of Howard University are taught to push boundaries.

From novelist Toni Morrison and former Vice President Kamala Harris to fashion designer Kahlana Barfield Brown and actress Taraji P. Henson, Howard women show that Black women were never the afterthought of movements, we were often the architects of them. As a Howard alumna, I carry that legacy with pride.

That's why I'm joining the growing outcry from students and alumni across the globe over the university's new policy banning kneeling during the national anthem.

The policy comes after Howard's women's basketball team knelt during a game against the United States Military Academy at West Point, continuing a

long tradition of protest on Howard's campus. In 2016, Howard cheerleaders knelt in solidarity with former NFL quarterback Colin Kaepernick. Four years later, during the racial reckoning of 2020, Howard's women's basketball team carried the tradition forward — kneeling in solidarity with Black women, men and children facing injustice across the diaspora.

Now the university says kneeling is no longer allowed.

Silencing Black women just after Black History Month and during Women's History Month sends a troubling message, one that reflects a broader pattern in this country: the minimization of Black women's voices, even when we are central to the movement.

When journalist Georgia Fort was arrested alongside Don Lemon during protests, her name rarely trended. When Joy-Ann

Reid lost her show months before controversies surrounding Jimmy Kimmel prompted national outrage, many boycotts only mentioned the latter.

Black women are used to being erased. But being silenced by your own institution, one that claims to value truth and service, is a different kind of pain.

Sports have long been one of the spaces where women learn to use their voices. According to research from EY and ESPNW, 94% of women in C-suite leadership roles played sports growing up. Participation builds confidence, resilience and leadership — skills that help women challenge systems that expect their silence.

It's why Black female athletes, in particular, have often stood at the intersection of sport and protest. Tennis champion Serena Williams famously boy-

Please see HOWARD/3A



## How to talk to your family about money management

STATEPOINT

Money management is not only a logistical challenge for many families, it can be an emotional one too, especially when it comes to transferring wealth from one generation to the next.

Open, honest conversations about your financial values and intentions can cut through some of the stress, and help family members avoid resentment, confusion and even legal strife down the line.

"With American Boomers poised to transfer an estimated \$68 to \$124 trillion to their Gen X, millennial and Gen Z heirs by 2048, the time to have the conversation with your family about money and inheritance is right now," said Heather Hunt-Ruddy, divisional leader, Wells Fargo Wealth & Investment Management. "It starts with letting go of the notion that money is a topic to avoid."

Hunt-Ruddy offers these tips to facilitate productive communication in your family:

\* Don't wait to plan: Don't postpone key decisions about your health, caregiving and estate until

there is a crisis. Pressure can cloud judgment and lead to snap decisions. Worse still, a sudden illness or accident may leave you unable to speak for yourself. Get your house in order now - drawing up or updating an estate plan and other legal documents, selecting a power of attorney, and developing an advantageous strategy for wealth transfer - so that your wishes can be carried out as intended.

\* Don't wait to share: Emergencies are also not the best time to share important decisions about your estate with your family. Begin the conversation intentionally and calmly.

\* Keep it up: Once the ice is broken, get into a rhythm of recurring financial conversations where you discuss goal-setting, review milestones and go over any updates or changes to your plans. It's helpful to know in advance what topics you'd like to cover and who you'd like to be present for each conversation.

\* Set the tone: It's important that financial conversations go beyond just numbers on the page. By

maintaining a collaborative tone and leading with open-ended questions, you can foster a multisided dialogue that ensures everyone's voices are heard, concerns are aired, and values are shared.

\* Prepare the next generation: Many younger adults lack financial know-how. To empower the next generation to manage the inheritance you leave them, as well as navigate their own finances, consider introducing them to the team that helped create your estate planning strategy, such as your attorney, financial adviser and CPA. It's also helpful to recognize that their needs and preferences may differ from yours.

For example, younger individuals may prefer holistic financial advice delivered digitally. Ultimately, you'll want to ensure your children or other beneficiaries have both basic financial experience and are set up with a team they trust.

More insights on generational wealth and other financial topics can be found by visiting [wellsfargoadvisors.com](http://wellsfargoadvisors.com).



COURTESY

## NC DPI investigates Durham County Youth Home violations

By Ahmed Jallow  
NC NEWSLINE

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction will investigate claims that disabled students at the Durham County Youth Home were denied legally required schooling and were sometimes confined to cells for up to 24 hours a day.

The investigation follows a complaint filed December by the ACLU of North Carolina and the Duke Children's Law Clinic. The complaint alleges that Durham Public Schools failed to provide special education services beginning in February 2025.

During a facility-wide lockdown, students reportedly received no more than 30 minutes of instruction at a time.

Advocates say the restrictions continued even after the lockdown was lifted, and students continued to receive only brief periods of instruction.

Youth homes detain young people while their cases move through the ju-

venile legal system.

Many of the residents have identified disabilities that require special education services. Advocates say the combination of confinement and interrupted instruction poses serious developmental and mental health risks.

DPI initially declined to investigate in January, citing insufficient evidence. The complaint was refiled in February with additional documentation, including firsthand accounts from students and a report from Disability Rights North Carolina based on site visits and interviews.

Last week, the agency announced it will examine whether Durham Public Schools complied with federal and state laws governing special education. DPI said it could not comment on an ongoing investigation. The agency expects to complete its investigation and issue a final report by April 25. If violations are found, the state may require corrective action.

Durham Public Schools said while teachers provide

up to six hours of daily instruction, facility lockdowns and security decisions often limit student access. The district said that during lockdowns, "direct educational services are prohibited for safety reasons," but they resume once restrictions are lifted. It added that staffing shortages have also limited teacher access, even when students are not under lockdown.

"Prolonged social isolation poses serious mental health risks for all students, and students with disabilities are particularly harmed when denied the support they need," said Michele Delgado, staff attorney for the ACLU of North Carolina, in a statement.

"Detention disrupts children's education and social lives, particularly for students with disabilities," said Peggy Nicholson, supervising attorney with the Duke Children's Law Clinic. "We hope DPI's investigation will strengthen educational supports at the Youth Home."

## At Howard University, protest is tradition. Keep it

Continued from page 2A

cotted the Indian Wells Tournament for 14 years after enduring racist booing and jeering there. In 2020, players across the WNBA, a league made up largely of Black women, wore "Say Her Name" shirts honoring Breonna Taylor and others lost to racial violence. At Howard, that blueprint meets a longstanding expectation that students speak out, and the basketball team did.

I know the power of sports firsthand. During

my high school years as a member of two varsity teams, I learned self-advocacy and the importance of advocating for others. Our coaches had a phrase: one band, one sound. If one teammate made a mistake, the entire team ran extra laps in the New Orleans heat. The lesson was clear: we were responsible for one another.

Those lessons followed me to Howard.

But the policy banning kneeling sends a different message; one that risks muting the very voices

Howard helped Black women create. When those young women look back on their time at Howard, will they remember the legacy of empowerment that shaped generations before them? Or will they remember that the place meant to nurture their voices was also the place that tried to silence them?

*Julienne Louis-Anderson is a Howard alum who writes about the intersection of culture and politics with education and human development.*



COURTESY

## State Health Plan moves toward tiered-provider structure to lower costs

By Ben Humphries  
EDUCATION NC

At the State Health Plan Board of Trustees meeting on Tuesday, the board unanimously voted to approve a declaration of intent to implement a tiered-provider structure that would categorize health care providers based on the price of care they negotiate with the SHP.

The SHP provides health care coverage to about 750,000 teachers, charter school employees, community college employees, other state employees, retirees and dependents.

The three tiers of the provider structure would be Preferred, Access and Non-Preferred, according to meeting materials. SHP members could still use any in-network provider, but the aim is that members would choose preferred providers more often because of their lower out-of-pocket costs.

Those lower costs would be negotiated by the SHP along with potential commitments to better access

and quality standards, the board said, in exchange for the increased volume of patients the SHP would steer preferred providers' way.

The vote comes as State Treasurer Brad Briner, whose office oversees the SHP, is potentially looking to replace Aetna as the plan's third-party administrator. Aetna replaced Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina, which administered the SHP for over 40 years, at the beginning of 2025. The switch was voted on in December 2022, under former State Treasurer Dale Folwell.

The plan has faced financial challenges in recent years, at one point facing a \$507 million deficit that was projected to grow. Now, following benefit changes and salary-based premium increases, the SHP is "not going to be in a deficit for 2026 or 2027," said Tom Friedman, executive director of the plan, in December.

However, Friedman said at Tuesday's meeting, that doesn't mean the difficulty is over.

"We're candidly never going to be done having to actively manage this thing," he said. "It's not something like you set it and forget it - do two things and be done."

Projections Friedman presented at the meeting showed that, amid rising health care costs, the SHP will stay above its target stabilization reserve level in 2026, and, assuming the General Assembly provides the SHP with a 5% budget increase this year, in 2027.

The plan has asked the General Assembly for a 5% budget increase, according to Dr. Emma Turner, chief economist and director of strategy for the SHP.

Part of ensuring financial stability for the SHP now and past 2027, SHP staff said, is the expansion of cost-saving programs like Lantern Surgical Benefit, which helps members receive surgeries at no cost to them and a lower cost to the SHP.

The shift toward the three-tiered structure is another effort to keep the plan's finances in order.

### BUSINESS BRIEFS

**NETWORKING**  
North Raleigh Chamber's March Business After Hours is March 25, 5-7 p.m., SERVPRO, 5604 Departure Drive. Register: [northraleighchamber.org](http://northraleighchamber.org).

**SOCIAL**  
Carrboro Business Alliance Social is March 25, 5 to 7 p.m., LNGVTY Hub, 601-A W. Main St.

**TOUR**  
The next Durham Business Listening Tour is March 25, 6 p.m., South Regional Library, 4505 S. Alston Avenue.

**CHAMBER**  
Greater Chapel Hill-Carrboro Chamber's Business Before Hours is March 27, 8:30 to 10 a.m., Innovative Carolina Junction, 136 E. Rosemary St., Suite 100.

**MARKET**  
Women's Maker Market Pop-Up is March 28, noon to 3 p.m., Transfer Food Hall, 500 E. Davie St. Visit [www.grlmarket.com](http://www.grlmarket.com).

**EXPO**  
Lit for the Culture Author & Creative Expo is March 29, 3-6 p.m., The Fresh

Collective, 1425 Promise Beacon Circle. Email: [litfortheulturepress@gmail.com](mailto:litfortheulturepress@gmail.com).

**GRAND OPENINGS:**  
\* DLR Group's ribbon-cutting ceremony is March 25, 4 to 5 p.m., 324 Blackwell St, Suite 420.  
\* K38 Baja Grill will open this summer at 147 E. Chatham St., Cary. K38 has a Raleigh location at Seaboard Station. Visit [k38bajagrill.com](http://k38bajagrill.com).

Send business briefs to [info@triangletribune.com](mailto:info@triangletribune.com).

Read The Tribune  
Every month is Black History Month.  
[www.triangletribune.com](http://www.triangletribune.com)

**BIDS**



**ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS**

The City of Hendersonville has the following out for bid: RFQ # 250197055001 for Engineering Services for COH Water System Resiliency Looping Projects. Visit the following link for full details: <https://www.hendersonvillenc.gov/rfp-q-bid/advertisement-bid-260011014001-street-resurfacing-and-bearcat-blvd-improvements>

**EMPLOYMENT**

Expert Quality Engineer, Altera Digital Health Inc., Raleigh, NC. May telecom from US. In an agile dev team, devel, publish & impl tst plns, scenarios & scrpts to eval & tst h/c SW prog chngs & updtes at exprt lev. M-F, 40 hrs / wk. Reqs Bach in CS, Comp Engg / rel / equiv. Reqs 7 yrs SW / qual engg exp. Reqs 7 yrs w/ SoS; SQL Srvr DB & SQL queries & stored proc; MS Tst Mgr; SSMS; 4 yrs: MS Visual Studio; automtd SW tstng; multi-variant tst data mdl; 2 yrs: .Net codng; real-time cust data anlys usng SQL & Excel; integ 3rd prty HIE & Tstng Data Exchg; interop tstng. Apply: send res to: resumes@alterahealth.com & ref #113322.

**LEGAL NOTICES**



**LEGAL NOTICE**

**Request for Letters of Interest and Statements of Qualifications for Engineering Services for Roof Replacement**

at General Services Annex Building.  
RFQ No. 26-028

The County of Durham, North Carolina requests Letters of Interest and Statements of Qualifications for Roof Replacement at Durham County General Services Annex Building to be received on April 28, 2026 at 2:00 P.M., Eastern Time, in accordance with applicable provisions of North Carolina General Statutes and Durham County Ordinances and policies.

An electronic copy of this Request for Proposal (RFP) can be obtained from Durham County's eBid System located under Bid Opportunities at: Durham County | Bid Opportunities

A SITE VISIT will be held on April 9, 2026 at 9:00am Eastern Time, located at Durham County General Services Annex, 1409 Seaton Road, Durham, NC 27713.

Proposers can download a copy of the solicitation and all addenda without registering in the system. However, in order to **automatically** receive email notifications of solicitations and addenda issued by the Purchasing Division, Proposers **MUST** register in the eBid system.

**Durham County is an equal opportunity employer.**

The County reserves the right to accept or reject, in whole or in part, such proposals as appears in its judgment to be in the best interest of the County.



**LEGAL NOTICE**

**JANITORIAL SERVICES FOR DURHAM COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDINGS I, II and JUDICIAL ANNEX**

RFQ No. 26-026

The County of Durham will receive sealed proposals for qualified Contractor(s) to establish a contract to provide janitorial services on **April 30, 2026, at 2:00 P.M. Eastern Time**, in the Durham County Purchasing Division of Finance, 201 East Main Street, 7th Floor, Room 703, Durham, North Carolina 27701. **No proposals will be accepted after the official time and date.**

An electronic copy of this Request for Proposal (RFP) can be obtained from Durham County's eBid System located under Bid Opportunities at: Durham County | Bid Opportunities (Control + Click)

**SITE VISIT:**

A SITE VISIT will be held at 10:30 A.M. Eastern Time, on April 8, 2026, located at DCo Administration Building II, 201 East Main Street, Durham NC 27701. Please meet in the back Lobby area.

Proposers can download a copy of the solicitation and all addenda without registering in the system. However, in order to **automatically** receive email notifications of solicitations and addenda issued by the Purchasing Division, Proposers **MUST** register in the eBid system.

**Durham County is an equal opportunity employer.**

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**LEGAL NOTICES**

**NORTH CAROLINA FORSYTH COUNTY IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JUSTICE**

**OUMNIYA EL MIRAOU, Plaintiff**  
vs. **DISTRICT COURT DIVISION**  
File # 25CV003967-330

**RASHAD NAIM SCARBOROUGH, Defendant**

**NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION**

**TO: RASHAD NAIM SCARBOROUGH, Defendant.**

TAKE NOTICE that a Civil Complaint was filed against you in the above-entitled action by Oumniya El Miraoui on June 26, 2025. The nature of the relief being sought is Absolute Divorce, pursuant to N.C.G.S. Chapter 50-6.

YOU ARE REQUIRED to file an Answer with the Clerk of Court of Forsyth County, North Carolina on or before May 1, 2026. If you fail to file an Answer within forty (40) days of the first publication of this notice, the Plaintiff will request that the Court grant an Absolute Divorce in her favor.

The Hearing for Absolute Divorce will occur virtually via WebEx on May 4, 2026 at 9:30 a.m., or as soon thereafter as the Court can hear the case. Contact the Office of the Forsyth County Clerk of Court at 336-779-6303 to request information regarding participating in the hearing via WebEx.

SHOULD YOU FAIL TO ANSWER OR APPEAR as directed herein, the Court may enter an order which grants the Plaintiff, Oumniya El Miraoui, an Absolute Divorce.

This the 18th day of March, 2026.

By: Lorraine M. Mortis  
Attorney for the Plaintiff  
102 W. Third Street, Suite 522  
Winston-Salem, NC 27101

To be published in The Triangle Tribune on March 22, 2026, March 29, 2026, and April 5, 2026.



**LEGAL NOTICE**

**Request for Letters of Interest and Statements of Qualifications for Design and Construction Admin Services for New Chillers at Durham County Admin II Building**

RFQ No. 26-029

The County of Durham, North Carolina requests Letters of Interest and Statements of Qualifications for **Design and Construction Administration Services for New Chillers at Durham County Administration II Building** to be received on **April 28, 2026, at 2:00 P.M.**, Eastern Time, in accordance with applicable provisions of North Carolina General Statutes and Durham County Ordinances and policies.

**SITE VISIT:**

The site visit will be held on **April 7, 2026, at 10:00 AM** at Durham County's Administration II at 201 E Main St, Durham, NC 27701.

An electronic copy of this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) can be obtained from Durham County's eBid System located under Bid Opportunities at <https://dconc.gov/Finance/Purchasing/Bid-Opportunities> Proposers can download a copy of the solicitation and all addenda without registering in the system. However, in order to **automatically** receive email notifications of solicitations and addenda issued by the Purchasing Division, Proposers **MUST** register in the eBid system.

The County reserves the right to accept or reject such proposals as appears in its judgment to be in the best interest of the County.

**LEGAL NOTICES**



**LEGAL NOTICE**

**Water and Drain Treatment at Various Durham County Facilities**

RFQ No. 26-027

The County of Durham will receive sealed proposals for qualified Contractor(s) to establish a contract to provide HVAC Chemical Water and Drain Treatment Services at Durham County Facilities on **April 16, 2026 at 2:00 P.M. Eastern Time**, in the Durham County Purchasing Division of Finance, 201 East Main Street, 7th Floor, Room 703, Durham, North Carolina 27701. **No proposals will be accepted after the official time and date.**

**SITE VISIT:**

A SITE VISIT will be held at **8:00 A.M.** Eastern Time, on **March 31, 2026**, beginning the tour of location at The Durham General Services Building located at **310 South Dillard Street Durham NC 27701**.

An electronic copy of this Request for Proposal (RFP) can be obtained from Durham County's eBid System located under Bid Opportunities <https://dconc.gov/Finance/Purchasing/Bid-Opportunities>.

Proposers can download a copy of the solicitation and all addenda without registering in the system. However, in order to **automatically** receive email notifications of solicitations and addenda issued by the Purchasing Division, Proposers **MUST** register in the eBid system.

The County reserves the right to accept or reject, in whole or in part, such proposals as appears in its judgment to be in the best interest of the County.

**FOOD**

**Make Easter Even Sweeter With a Show-Stopping Spring Dessert**

(StatePoint) Looking for simple ways to elevate your Easter celebrations? This spring, home bakers are embracing bright colors, playful details and easy upgrades that turn classic treats into eye-catching centerpieces.

From pastel cupcakes and fruit-filled tarts to brunch-worthy pastries, festive finishing touches can instantly elevate your spread. The best part? With a few smart shortcuts and decorative flourishes, busy families can create desserts that look bakery-level beautiful—without spending all day in the kitchen.

One simple way to bring personality to seasonal treats is by incorporating PEEPS Marshmallow into your baking. Their signature Chick and Bunny shapes and cheerful hues make them a natural fit for everything from cupcakes and brownies to pastry creations and dessert boards. Just one or two on top can transform an everyday treat into a celebration-ready showpiece.

"Whether you're hosting brunch or bringing dessert to share with friends and family, PEEPS can help tie your baking into the spring season," says Caitlin Servian, brand manager at PEEPS. "Our classic Chicks and Bunnies add a playful finishing touch that instantly makes spring desserts feel special and unmistakably festive."

Spring entertaining doesn't have to be complicated to feel memorable. By incorporating ingredients that reflect the flavors of the season, you can create desserts that spark smiles the moment they hit the table. To help inspire your celebrations, baking and hosting influencer Sheri Wilson is sharing her PEEPS Puff Pastry Baskets recipe featuring PEEPS POP-TARTS Frosted Strawberry Flavored Marshmallow Chicks. Created in collaboration with POP-TARTS, the Frosted Strawberry flavor adds a sweet and fruity twist that pairs perfectly with fresh berries and whipped cream, making it an ideal treat that delivers both convenience and wow-factor for any spring gathering!

Makes: 4 baskets  
Prep time: 25 minutes

**Ingredients:**

- 4 sheets puff pastry, thawed
- 1 large egg, beaten
- 2 cups heavy cream, whipped
- 1 cup sliced strawberries, plus extra for garnish
- 1 package PEEPS POP-TARTS Frosted Strawberry Flavored Marshmallow Chicks
- Royal icing flowers, optional

**Instructions:**

- Unroll the thawed puff pastry sheets and cut out 8 rounds with a large circle cutter or mini tart pan. Place 4 rounds onto a lined baking sheet.
- Cut out the centers of the remaining pastry rounds with a slightly smaller cutter.
- Brush the larger rounds with egg wash, then place a pastry ring on top of each one. Brush again with egg wash. Top with a second pastry ring and brush again with egg wash. Poke the bottoms with a fork to prevent it from bubbling up while baking.
- To make the basket handles, slice 1/2-inch strips of pastry, then twist into a rope. Place onto a baking sheet in a half-moon shape and brush with egg wash. Bake for about 10 minutes at 400-420 degrees F or until puffed up and golden brown.
- Once baked and cooled, press the middles of each pastry basket down with a spoon. Fill with sliced strawberries and whipped cream.
- Top each one with a PEEPS Pop-Tarts Frosted Strawberry Flavored Marshmallow Chick, halved strawberries, and a royal icing flower. To complete each basket, gently press the pastry handles into the whipped cream.

For more Easter inspiration, visit [peepsbrand.com](https://peepsbrand.com).

By combining flaky pastry, fresh fruit and a sweet Marshmallow element, you can capture the spirit of Easter and the spring season in a way that feels approachable, colorful and celebration-ready.

**THE CHARLOTTE POST PUBLISHING COMPANY**

CELEBRATING 141 YEARS OF EXCELLENT JOURNALISM & PRINT MEDIA SERVICES



COURTESY

## The growing 'age in place' ministry for churches is growing

By Thom Rainer  
BAPTIST PRESS

A quiet shift is taking place among senior adults. Instead of moving into retirement communities or assisted living facilities, more are choosing to remain in their own homes as long as possible.

The common phrase is "aging in place," but for churches, "ministering in place" may be a better description.

It's not just about where seniors live. It's about how they live and how the church walks with them. This shift matters. A lot.

Age-in-place is becoming the preferred choice, not the exception. Most senior adults want to stay where they are. Home is familiar. It's comfortable. It holds decades of memories. Moving feels like loss.

For churches, this reality changes the ministry map. Senior adults are no longer centralized in one location. They are spread throughout the community - often within minutes of the church building.

That means ministry must move outward. The mission field is down the street.

Churches can meet practical needs and make homes safer at modest cost.

Most homes were not designed for aging bodies. Poor lighting. Slippery floors. Stairs without sup-

port. Small issues quietly become big risks.

Here's the good news: many fixes are simple and affordable.

Extra handrails. Grab bars. Floor or motion-sensor lights. Non-slip surfaces. Clear walking paths. These changes can often be made at modest costs, yet they dramatically improve safety and confidence.

Churches are uniquely positioned to help. With volunteers, coordination and a little planning, congregations can organize home safety days, light repair teams or simple assessments.

No medical training required. Just willing hands and caring hearts. This is ministry at its most tangible. Age-in-place ministry keeps seniors engaged as disciples, not sidelined members.

One of the hidden dangers of age-in-place living is isolation. As mobility decreases, church attendance often drops. Group involvement fades. Seniors begin to feel forgotten. That's not inevitable, but it is common.

Healthy age-in-place ministry pushes back against the drift. Regular visits. Transportation help. Hybrid groups. Intentional communication. Simple steps that keep people connected. Just as important, churches must continue to invite senior adults into meaningful roles.

Many bring wisdom, prayerfulness, generosity, and mentoring capacity that younger generations desperately need. Age-in-place ministry is not about managing decline. It's about stewarding continued discipleship.

Age-in-place ministry creates quiet but powerful evangelism.

When churches care well for senior adults, people notice. Neighbors notice. Adult children notice. Many of those adult children are unchurched. They are watching closely to see who shows up for their parents.

This kind of ministry builds trust without marketing. It opens doors without pressure. It reflects the Gospel long before it is spoken. In many communities, age-in-place ministry becomes one of the most visible and credible expressions of a church's witness.

Not flashy. Not loud. But deeply faithful.

The age-in-place movement among senior adults is not a passing phase. It is a long-term reality. Churches that recognize it early, and respond with humility and care, will find that ministry in living rooms and neighborhoods can be just as powerful as ministry in pews and programs.

Sometimes the most effective outreach is simply showing up.

## TBS Technologies expands across North Carolina

STAFF REPORTS

RALEIGH — TBS Technologies, a leading business technology solutions provider formerly known as Triangle Business Systems, will hold a grand opening of its new headquarters at 7230 ACC Boulevard. The location celebrates a significant milestone in the company's continued growth and investment in the Research Triangle region.

The 13,000-square-foot facility, purchased last summer, expands TBS Technologies' operational capacity and supports its growing portfolio of managed print, IT, cybersecurity and workflow solutions. The grand opening is March 26, and the community is invited.

Founded by Ryan Major, Triangle Business Systems was established with a mission to deliver dependable technology and long-term partnership to businesses across North Carolina. Major began his career in the office technology industry, gaining experience in sales, operations and customer engagement. His early exposure to the challenges organizations faced, particularly inconsistent service and transactional vendor relationships, shaped the foundation of the company.

"From the beginning, the goal was to build a company centered on accountability, service excellence and long-term customer success," Major said. "This new facility represents how far we've come and positions us to continue serving our customers at an even higher level."

In its early years, Triangle Business Systems focused on copiers, printers and



COURTESY

Staff members at TBS Technologies.

document solutions, quickly earning a reputation for service reliability and local accountability. Over time, the company grew to become the largest independent Xerox dealership in North Carolina, reflecting both market leadership and customer trust.

As technology needs evolved, so did the organization. Recognizing that print was increasingly connected to IT infrastructure, security and digital workflows, the company expanded its offerings and rebranded as TBS Technologies to reflect its broader role as a comprehensive technology solutions provider.

Today, TBS Technologies delivers integrated solutions including managed print services, IT and managed network services, cybersecurity and physical security solutions, workflow automation and cloud-enabled technologies. The company serves organizations across health care, education, manufacturing, professional serv-

ices and the public sector.

A key milestone in the company's expansion occurred in spring 2025, when it acquired Aggie Tech, a local managed service provider with more than 20 years of experience serving businesses throughout the Research Triangle Park area. TBS Technologies has also emerged as a national leader through its partnership with Toshiba and is recognized as one of Toshiba's largest minority-owned and operated dealers in the United States.

The company is a proud partner of Duke University athletics, supporting one of the region's most respected institutions and reinforcing its commitment to teamwork, leadership and excellence.

"The grand opening of our new headquarters is not just about a building," Major said. "It represents our long-term commitment to our customers, our employees and the communities we serve."

## Bulbs with season long color, pollinator appeal

By Melinda Myers

SPECIAL TO THE TRIBUNE

Boost the beauty and pollinator appeal of your gardens and containers with flowering bulbs. A combination of spring- and fall-planted bulbs can provide season-long color and nectar for bees, butterflies, hummingbirds and other pollinators.

Include a few dahlias known for their excellent pollinator appeal. The award-winning Collarette Pooh grows 24 inches to 30 inches tall and features cherry red and yellow daisy-like flowers. Light up your gardens with Kelsey Sunshine collarette dahlias.

The pale-yellow outer petals make a nice backdrop for the frilly white inner petals. Add even more color with the HS Date single dahlia with burgundy leaves and melon-colored flowers. Grow these and other dahlias in a sunny location with moist well-drained soil.

Add vertical interest and color to flowerbeds and containers with gladiolas. Start planting batches of the corns in spring and continue every week through early summer. You and the hummingbirds will enjoy the longer bloom time. Select from a wide range of colors, including white, pink, orange, yellow, red, bicolors and more.

Once flowering begins you may need to provide some support. Just slide a bamboo stake next to the plants and secure the stems with twine to keep top-heavy plants upright.

Enjoy the bold foliage, showy flowers and visiting hummingbirds and other pollinators by including cannas in the full to part



sun areas of your landscape. Select dwarf varieties for containers and grow cannas where you can easily view the visiting birds.

Consider growing a few begonias in containers and hanging baskets. Most tolerate some shade and many bloom from spring through frost.

Grow a few containers of some of the lesser-known bulbs. Hymenocallis, also known as Peruvian daffodil or spider lily, has large, lightly fragrant white flowers.

The blooms attract butterflies, moths, and other pollinators while deer and rabbits tend to leave them be. Pineapple lily (*Eucomis*) has spikes of blooms topped with a small cluster of leaves. The flowers attract bees, butterflies and other pollinators.

Provide some late-season nectar for a variety of butterflies by growing blazing star (*Liatris spicata*). This North American native plant produces spires of fuzzy purple flowers and combines nicely with rudbeckias, asters, dahlias and other late-season bloomers.

Plant pre-chilled lily bulbs in spring or fall with other spring-flowering bulbs that need a winter

chill to bloom. Either way, you'll enjoy their color throughout the summer by planting various early-, mid- and late-season lilies. See Longfield Gardens' Bloom Times for Lilies article at longfieldgardens.com for help with your selection. Ensure success by planting them in full sun and well-drained soil and protecting them from rabbits and deer.

Support early visiting pollinators with fall-planted spring-blooming bulbs.

Look for opportunities to add these to your landscape. Make a list and note in your calendar so you are sure to get them planted in fall.

Plan for months of spring color starting with early-blooming crocus, snowdrops (*Galanthus*), glory of the snow (*Chionodoxa*) and grape hyacinths (*Muscari*). Include early-, mid- and late-spring blooming tulips, daffodils and hyacinths.

Add a few uniquely flowered fritillarias, bearded iris in a rainbow of colors and a few showy alliums.

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, *Small Space Gardening*.

### AROUND THE TRIANGLE

#### RALEIGH FESTIVAL

Raleigh Tea Festival is March 22, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Marywood Hall & Garden, 622 Maywood Avenue. Visit: [raleighteafestival.square.site](http://raleighteafestival.square.site).

#### COMMEMORATION

Senator Jeanne Hopkins Lucas Commemoration Week is March 23-27 on NCCU's campus. Contact: [Peace.Ajirututu@ncleg.gov](mailto:Peace.Ajirututu@ncleg.gov).

#### EXPO

Senior Lifestyle, Health & Home Expo is March 25, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Kerr Family YMCA, 2500 Wakefield Pines Drive. Register: [www.wxpo4seniors.com](http://www.wxpo4seniors.com).

#### DANCE JAM

Sistahs Moving N' Grooving line dance jam is March 27, 6-8:30 p.m., Tarboro Road Community Center, 121 N. Tarboro Road.

#### FESTIVAL

Foodies Food and Culture Festival is March 27-29, 1-7 p.m., Triangle Town Center.

#### COMMUNITY MEETING

Advance Community Health's Neighborhood Network community meet-up is March 28, 10 a.m. to noon, Chavis Community Center, 505 MLK Jr. Boulevard.

#### MENTAL HEALTH

A mental health initiative is launching March 28, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Christian Faith Baptist Church, 509 Hilltop Drive. Call 919-714-3854.

#### GIVEAWAY

A community giveaway is March 28, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Redeeming Love Church, 3425 Rock Quarry Road.

#### FESTIVAL

KoreaFest returns March 28, 9:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., Agri Supply Exposition Center at the NC State Fairgrounds. Tickets: [fitofan.com/koreafest-2026](http://fitofan.com/koreafest-2026).

#### HAIRCUTS

Free haircuts for those with special needs only is March 28, 1-5 p.m., Dix Park Magnolia Room, 1700 Umstead Drive.

#### DURHAM HOMELESSNESS

A community meeting on housing the homeless is March 26, 6 p.m., Trinity United Methodist Church, 215 North Church St. RSVP at [eventbrite.com](http://eventbrite.com).

#### ROUNDTABLE

The next Community Luncheon Roundtable is March 26, noon, Elizabeth Street UMC, 1209 N. Elizabeth St. Free to public.

#### BOUTIQUE SALE

Dress For Success March Spring Boutique Sale is March 27-28, 701 William Vickers Avenue.

#### MARKET

Annual Spring Fling Market is March 28, 2-6 p.m., Durty Bull Brewery, 206 Broadway St., Suite 104. Open to the public.

#### JUSTICE FAIR

A Legal Eagle Community Day & Social Justice Fair is March 28, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Durham Co. Main Library, 300 N. Roxboro St. Free to the public.

#### RALLY/MARCH

"No. Billionaires. No Kings." march and rally is March 28, 10:30 a.m., CCB Plaza, 201 N. Corcoran St.

#### CHAPEL HILL FUNDRAISER

Shamrock 'N Run 5K fundraiser for child abuse prevention is March 28, 7:30 a.m., KD house, 219 E. Franklin St. To participate or donate: <https://runsignup.com>.

#### MISC.

SCHOLARSHIPS Congressional Black Caucus Foundation is accepting applications for its 2026 Scholarship Programs. Visit [www.cbfcinc.org](http://www.cbfcinc.org). Deadline: March 27.

# No respect for HBCU DI men's teams

Winston-Salem State women should be in the NCAA Division II Elite Eight this weekend. If any CIAA women's team was good enough to go all the way, it was WSSU.

Oh well, the ladies not only represented the CIAA with excellent play and even better class, but they also raised the bar for all HBCU Division II women's teams that are still fighting for respect. And let's not forget the free publicity and recruiting aspect that no amount of money can buy.

Eighteen Division I and II HBCU women's teams earned postseason bids via the NCAA, WBIT, WNIT and BCIC.

Compare that to nine for the men via the NCAA and BCIC.

At least DII teams can earn more than one spot in the NCAA Tournament, but it's one-and-done for DI men's teams.

Alabama A&M chose the Women's Basketball Invitation Tournament over the Women's NIT. The WBIT was founded in 2024 and is fully funded by the NCAA.

It takes the top seeds denied a spot in the Big Dance for a chance at redemption. All expenses are paid, games are streamed on ESPN+, with the semifinals and championship broadcast live on ESPNU and ESPN2.

The competition is stiffer. AAMU travels to BYU as opposed to possibly hosting a WNIT game. But to be the best you got to...well, you know the rest.

But let's not put the WNIT out to pasture just yet. While teams have to pay to play, it's still a respectable tournament that gives mid-majors a chance to shine.

Remember the success HBCUs had last year? The creation of the WBIT opened up more spots. The MEAC's Maryland Eastern Shore earned an automatic berth, but Norfolk State also received an at-large bid. This wouldn't have happened with no WBIT.

The Black College Invitational Championship is March 27-28 on Virginia State's campus featuring eight DII teams: Virginia State, Benedict, Bowie State and Central State on the women's side, and Bluefield State, Central State, Virginia State and Edward Waters on the men's. The suspense is not who wins but how many fans will show up.

The top men's seeds snubbed by the NCAA can extend their season in the NIT, which used to be the top collegiate postseason tournament back in the day.

The joke is many of those teams don't want to play in the NIT. Some just flat-out turn down the invite, while others - pressured by the school - show up just to shut folks up.

The NIT was a gem for HBCU DI men's teams. If the regular season champion got upset in the conference tournament, it knew it had a spot in the NIT. Until it didn't.

Trying not to fall further behind the NCAA's shadow, the NIT revamped its selection process a couple of years ago and eliminated automatic berths for regular season champions. No HBCU team has been invited since.

The College Basketball Invitational, which selected HBCUs in the past, cancelled this year's tournament.

And the College Basketball Crown was created by Fox Sports with the express purpose of focusing on Name, Image and Likeness benefits for teams. Interestingly, the Crown reduced its tournament from 16 teams to eight this year, some with losing records. Serves 'em right.

Both Howard and Prairie View A&M won their First Four matchups this week. The SWAC has won five of its last six First Four appearances.

You'd think folks would get a clue.



BONITTA BEST

# HAIL TO THE CHAMPS!



The Southern School of Energy & Sustainability Spartans won the NCHSAA 7A Men's Basketball State Championship. The Spartans defeated Mooresville, 54-47, at Lawrence Joel Veterans Memorial Coliseum, finishing 28-3 and capturing the first basketball state title in school history.

### Championship Game Leaders

\* A.J. Morman: 16 points, Army National Guard most outstanding player

\* K.J. Terry: 13 points, Charlie Adams most valuable player

\* Martin Ashley: 10 points, N.C. Farm Bureau Sportsmanship Award

After coming up just short in last year's state finals, the Spartans returned determined and finished the job, making history for their school and for Durham Public Schools.

## HBCU BASKETBALL

# Howard earns a win and the MEAC money

By Bonitta Best  
editor@triangletribune.com

### WOMEN

#### N.C. Central

Terrence Baxter was released on Monday after three seasons as head coach and fifth overall with the program.

"We are thankful to coach Baxter for his service, leadership and commitment to NCCU and our student-athletes," director of athletics Louis "Skip" Perkins said. A national search will begin immediately.

### NCAA

Howard's remarkable season earned it a respectable 14th seed in the NCAA Women's Basketball Tournament.

The Bison take on The Ohio State March 21 on ESPN in the first meeting between the two teams. HU won a conference-record 12 games enroute to winning the conference championship.

In the SWAC, Southern played a First Four matchup against Samford past our print deadline.

### WNIT

Maryland Eastern Shore earned



COURTESY

### Howard men wins a thriller in First Four.

its first postseason berth in program history. The Hawks traveled to Wake Forest March 19 for a first-round matchup.

UMES won a record 18 games

and finished second in the conference standings. With first-place Howard advancing to the NCAA, the automatic WNIT bid went to the Hawks.

Joining UMES is Norfolk State. The Spartans lost in the final to Howard but impressed the WNIT

Please see **HOWARD/7A**

## COLLEGE CORNER

# HBCU players on the move in NFL season

### WOMEN

#### N.C. Central

After a 1-21 start, the Eagles have won three straight softball matches and are undefeated in conference play (3-0).

NCCU swept Coppin State in a triple header. The team travels to Morgan State this weekend before returning home to face Longwood March 25 at Thomas Brooks Park in Cary.

### Shaw

The CIAA Round-Up runs March 26-28 at Walnut Creek Softball Complex to open conference play in softball.

The Bears (1-14) need some wins. Shaw is on a seven-match losing streak.

### MEN

#### N.C. Central

It is official. Tennis standout Riccardo Jones was inducted into the 2026 MEAC Hall of Fame Class.

And speaking of the

MEAC, Colon and Jean Oliver, 1967 Eagle graduates and parents of head football coach Trei Oliver, were honored during the MEAC Tournament. Coach Oliver looks just like his mother.

In tennis, the Eagles have won four straight matches and six of their last seven. They host Guilford this weekend on campus and Longwood March 26 at Cary Tennis Park.

Correction: In a previous article on NCCU's 2025 homecoming, a statement regarding Dr. Danye Negash Medhin being arrested at the 2024 homecoming failed to clarify that all charges against Medhin were dropped and expunged.

### Shaw

Avery Huggins, Dreveon Scott and Isaiiah Buckley were named to the 2026

Please see **HBCU/7A**

# Jackson's impact on and off the track earns her \$5K scholarship

By Anthony Jeffries  
N.C. CENTRAL SPORTS INFORMATION

DURHAM - Laila Jackson, a North Carolina Central standout in track and field and cross country, is no stranger to success - both on and off the track.

A 2024 All-MEAC cross country performer, Jackson helped the Eagles' distance medley relay team finish first as the NCCU women placed third at the 2026 MEAC Indoor Track & Field Championships. An eight-time MEAC track and field medalist, Jackson was the conference 800-meter champion in 2023 and has earned MEAC all-academic honors in both sports.

Her accomplishments led to more recognition for the Avondale, Louisiana, native. During the recent Athletes Unite Conference on campus, Jackson was given a \$5,000 scholarship - a moment that caught her off guard.

"I was surprised," she said. "I'm just thankful!"

The senior was one of two scholarship recipients selected by Shakeout, Inc., a nonprofit organization behind the annual



NCCU SPORTS INFORMATION

Shakeout owner Classye James, left, and NCCU runner Laila Jackson.

Athletes Unite Conference. The scholarship honors student-athletes who excel athletically, academically (maintaining at least a 3.5 grade point average) and through service in their communities.

Shakeout owner Classye James says the nominations were submitted by student-athletes and administrators from institutions across the region, including North Carolina State, Duke, North Carolina, North Carolina Central and Winston-Salem State.

"We received a strong group of nominations from student athletes who are doing incredible

Please see **JACKSON/7A**



Howard women earned a respectable No. 14 seed in NCAA Tournament.

# Howard earns a win and gets MEAC some money

Continued from page 6A

selection committee to garner a fifth consecutive postseason bid (three NCAA, 2 WNIT). NSU hosts Loyola Chicago March 21 at 2 p.m.

In the SWAC, Alcorn State hosts South Alabama March 21 at 4 p.m.

**WBIT**

The Women's Basketball Invitation Tournament, in its third year, has replaced the WNIT in the No. 2 spot for postseason women's tournaments.

Alabama A&M, which was upset by Southern in the SWAC Tournament, accepted the invite by WBIT instead of its automatic berth to the WNIT. The Bulldogs travel to BYU this weekend.

**CIAA**

Winston-Salem State was less than 30 seconds away from a trip to the NCAA Elite Eight. Instead, the Rams committed back-to-back inbound turnovers that allowed IUP to score

five straight points and take the win. The heart-breaker doesn't negate an outstanding season for WSSU, which finished 28-4.

**SIAC**

Edward Waters gave top-seed Alabama-Huntsville all it could handle in the NCAA South Regional before falling, 95-85, in a game much closer than the final score.

The Tigers are in their second season as a Division II member. Amelya Hatch led all scorers with 25 points.

Three-time SIAC champ Miles also lost in the first round to fifth-seed Nova Southeastern, 91-71. The Bears finished with a program-record 25 wins.

**MEN NCAA**

Howard held off a late rally by UMBC Tuesday night to win their first NCAA Tournament game in program history. HU advances to the 64 field to face No. 1-seed Michigan. In the SWAC, Prairie View

A&M played Lehigh Wednesday night for the right to meet No. 1 seed Florida.

In the Ohio Valley Conference, Duke alumnus Nolan Smith led Tennessee State to a No. 15 seed and a date with Iowa State.

**Division II**

Fayetteville State lost to California (Pa.) in the Atlantic Region quarterfinals to end its season at 23-7.

Virginia Union defeated West Liberty for the second time this season but lost in the second round to IUP. The Panthers finish 25-6.

SIAC champion Morehouse lost to top-seed Nova Southeastern in the NCAA South Regional quarterfinal. The Maroon Tigers finished 22-10.

**Coaching Vacancies**

- Albany State
- Bowie State
- Bethune-Cookman (W)
- Florida Memorial
- Kentucky State
- Lincoln (Pa.) (W)
- Shaw
- Shaw (W)
- Winston-Salem State



N.C. Central coach Trei Oliver and his parents, Colon and Jean Oliver.

# HBCU players on the move in free agency

Continued from page 6A

BOXTOROW HBCU All-America Teams.

Huggins is on the first team, while Scott and Buckley earned second team honors.

The university recently posted the position for head coach. Don't you need money for that?

**N.C. A&T**

Head coach Shawn Gibbs named Donovan Jackson as the new offensive line coach. Jackson replaces Ron Mattes who retired after 10 seasons. Jackson was an assistant coach at Arkansas-Pine Bluff.

**NFL**

Several former HBCU players were on the move during NFL free agency.

\* Johnson C. Smith RB Emanuel Wilson signed a one-year \$2.1 million deal with the Seattle Seahawks after playing three seasons with the Green Bay Packers.

\* South Carolina State DL Javon Hargrove signed a two-year \$23 million contract with Green Bay.

\* S.C. State CB Cobie Durant signed on for one year \$5.5M with Dallas.

\* Alcorn State CB Claudin Chelrus signed one year with Carolina Panthers.

\* Fayetteville State CB Joshua Williams is now a Tennessee Titan after earning two Super Bowl



Riccardo Jones

rings in three years at Kansas City.

**Transfer Portal**

\* Florida A&M DL Landon Bolding

\* Alabama State S Ta'Shaun Sims

\* Arkansas-Pine Bluff OL Dylan Booker

\* Southern QB Cam'Ron McCoy

\* Hampton QB Isaiah Freeman

\* Howard OL Tim Artis

\* Alabama State E Davier Fairrow

\* Jackson State WR Tyquan Henderson

**Goodbye. Hello.**

\* Georgia State CB Sam McCall to Bethune-Cookman

\* Western Carolina DE Richard Garrett, Tennessee State

\* Mississippi Valley State CB Prince Ijioma, Oklahoma Sooners

\* Hampton DE Mcowens Innocent, Chicago State

\* Miles DB Brandon Parnell, Hampton

# Jackson earns scholarship

Continued from page 6A

work on and off the field," James said. "Each nominee submitted a video sharing why the scholarship would make a difference for them and how they plan to use it."

Jackson's story and leadership stood out to the selection committee.

"What she has accomplished as an athlete at Central spoke volumes to

me and the committee," James said. "She has also been a champion for the conference as an ambassador. We know that once student athletes finish competing, the support they need isn't always there. Knowing she needed assistance to finish her last semester, we were honored to support her."

James and NCCU Direc-

tor of Athletics Louis "Skip" Perkins presented the scholarship to Jackson during the conference at the NCCU Student Center.

"To see how things worked out, it definitely reminded me of the importance of speaking up for yourself, telling your story, and continuing to show how your impact makes a great difference," she said.

**The Best in HBCU Sports**  
triangletribune.com

## BLACK WOMEN PROFESSIONAL TENNIS PLAYERS ACTIVITY SHEET

Hi Everyone!

Sankofa 82 and I wanted to know what does Australia, England, France and the United States all have in common? Here's a clue for you. "Tennis, anyone?" These are places we traveled to that have Open Tennis Tournaments. We couldn't help but notice that there were only a few Black Female Tennis Players. Let me share who we met along the way to honor Women's History Month...

**THE BEST OF THE BEST!**

Full of excitement, passion, and edge-of-your-seat anticipation, tennis has become an enjoyable worldwide sport. Some of the most influential and successful tennis players come from the black community. From the first Black Grand Slam Title Queen, Althea Gibson, to the current Grand Slam Title winners, Naomi Osaka and Serena Williams, these legendary black and multicultural women have contributed significantly to the game, breaking gender and racial barriers along the way.

**ALTHEA GIBSON**

Gibson was the first Black American athlete to cross racial barriers and play international tennis matches. She won 11 Grand Slam tournaments and was inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame and the International Women's Sports Hall of Fame.

**ORA WASHINGTON**

Washington played tennis before Althea Gibson. She was known as the "Queen of Tennis" for skills on the court. She won eight National Crowns in women's singles.

**ZINA GARRISON**

Garrison started tennis at the age of 10. She was the first Black American to reach a grand slam final since Althea Gibson. She won three Grand Slam titles, which included the 1987 Australian Open and the 1988 1st 1990 Wimbledon tournaments.

**THE DYNAMIC DUO! : SERENA AND VENUS WILLIAMS**

Serena, The Greatest Of All Times (GOAT), has been a reigning champion of the French Open, Australian Open, US Open, Wimbledon, and WTA Tour Championships. She holds the most major singles, doubles, and mixed doubles titles for active tennis players.

**THE NEXT GENERATION SHINES ON...**

Coco Gauff has become the latest Black female tennis player to blaze a trail in the sport.

Other notable Black tennis players from the U.S. include: Taylor Townsend, Sachia Vickery, Robin Montgomery, Clervie Ngounoue, Asia Muhammad, Alycia Parks, Madison Keys and Sloane Stephens.

**ONE MINUTE MADNESS!**

Unscramble these words in one minute or less. The first letter is highlighted in bold.

dnarG miSa \_\_\_\_\_  
 TeInsn \_\_\_\_\_  
 Tuornmaeth \_\_\_\_\_  
 kelRca \_\_\_\_\_  
 Cnoipham \_\_\_\_\_

**NAME FOUR TOURNAMENTS!**

\*BONUS.. NAME ONE MORE!

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
 4. \_\_\_\_\_

**TENNIS TERMS**

Circle all the tennis words that you know.

BACKCOURT	JUMP	LOVE	FALLT	CHAIR
ADVANTAGE	STAND	BACKHAND	FALL	DOUBLES
DEUCE	MATCH	LEAN	ACE	SERVE
ROW	SLICE	SET	VOLLEY	POINT

**WHO'S WHO IN TENNIS!**

Name 3 Early Black Female Tennis Players

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name 3 Present Day Black Female Tennis Players

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

HELP ME CARRY A NEW TENNIS RACKET FOR SALE!

AS ALL TAKE ENJOY!

THANKS AND CHAMPION!

I REMEMBER WITH ME WILL FIND MY RACKET!

WWW.KEMETCOMIC.COM

ANSWER KEY

ONE MINUTE MADNESS: dnarG miSa = Grand Slam, TeInsn = Tennis, Tuornmaeth = Tournament, kelRca = Racket, Cnoipham = Champion

NAME FOUR TOURNAMENTS: Australian Open, Wimbledon, US Open, French Open

WHO'S WHO IN TENNIS: Althea Gibson, Serena Williams, Venus Williams, Naomi Osaka, Coco Gauff, Sloane Stephens, Taylor Townsend, Sachia Vickery, Robin Montgomery, Clervie Ngounoue, Asia Muhammad, Alycia Parks, Madison Keys

# Crowned in Legacy. Commissioned to Lead!



FACEBOOK

The SISI Small PEARLS Lead Academy's 6th Annual Small PEARLS Lead Conference was a day of encouragement, empowerment and love at Wake Chapel Church.

## FRATERNITY NEWS

### Talent Hunt Program



COURTESY

Last month, the Durham Chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity held its annual Talent Hunt Program at St. Joseph AME Church in Durham.

The program is one of the fraternity's international mandated programs established in 1946 to provide youth with opportunities to showcase their artistic and creative talents. Front row, left to right: Jaden Jampayas, first place; Ashten Jampayas, fourth place; Siena Geddes, third place; and Raphael Mouawad, second place. The other two participants are Hallett Ray and Caroline Hobbs.

## HBCU NEWS

**N.C. CENTRAL**  
 1993 alumnus Robert E. Gaddy Jr., an experienced law enforcement operator well-versed in community-based policing, is NCCU's new permanent chief of police. His appointment was effective March 1. Having led the NCCU Patrol Division for the past four years, Gaddy became NCCU's interim chief of police on Dec. 8, 2025. He will lead one of the premier police departments in the University of North Carolina System and will be tasked with ensuring an even safer and more secure campus environment. NCCU students, faculty, staff, community members and other stakeholders participated in an extensive and rigorous search process. Throughout those processes, Gaddy demonstrated a strong commitment to NCCU. He proposed plans to increase communications and positive interactions with all NCCU stakeholders, with emphasis on the students. Gaddy is a New Bern native and is a longtime member of the Eagle family, having earned a bachelor's degree in crim-



COURTESY

inal justice from NCCU, with plans to complete his master's degree in criminal justice this spring. He served in the Durham Police Department for 27 years, including as District 2 and District 3 Com-

mander, and leadership roles in Special Operations, Criminal Investigations, the Selective Enforcement Team and several other specialty units. He retired as a captain in 2022.

## SCHOOL NEWS



PHOTO/WAKE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Camille McDaniel, center, and family celebrate her award.

### East Garner Middle School social worker earns award

**WAKE COUNTY**  
 East Garner Magnet Middle School social worker Camille McDaniel was named the 2026 WCPSS school social worker of the year. McDaniel began her WCPSS career in January 2020. In August 2021, she transitioned to a Student Assistance Program role at Willow Spring High School, where she also served as the junior varsity women's basketball coach. She returned to the WCPSS School Social Work Department in January 2025 and now supports students and families at East Garner Mid-

dle. McDaniel was nominated by her assistant principal, who highlighted both her leadership and her heart for students. "Ms. McDaniel has been an incredible addition to the East Garner community. She has revamped our attendance protocol, basing it on a systematic approach rather than on individuals. She is a wonderful asset in knowing many of the policies and procedures that are necessary for ensuring our students succeed. But, most importantly, she builds relationships with students, and they see her

office as a safe and inclusive environment." McDaniel was named the winner out of five finalists. This other finalists were Madison Bowser of Briarcliff and Cary elementary schools; Ginny Mann, Scotts Ridge Elementary; Brittany Nguyen, Harris Creek Elementary; and Lauri Van Oostrum-Reed, Dillard Drive Middle. At East Garner, McDaniel has strengthened attendance systems, supported families in accessing critical resources, and cultivated a welcoming space where students feel safe and valued.

