



SPORTS

Former Howard football player tackles dental school



COMMUNITY FOCUS

Chick-fil-A awards student employees college scholarships

The Triangle Tribune

THE TRIANGLE'S CHOICE FOR THE BLACK VOICE SINCE 1998

"Serving Raleigh, Cary, Durham and Chapel Hill"

VOLUME 28 NO. 21

Week of May 24-May 30, 2026

\$1.00



« 52 WEEKS OF BLACK BRILLIANCE »

North Carolina court case that reshaped voting rights

STAFF REPORTS
A landmark court case that reshaped voting rights across the state soon will be recognized with a North Carolina Highway Historical Marker. The N.C. Historical Marker Program is part of the N.C. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.

The marker commemorating the Bazemore v. Bertie County Board of Elections court case will be dedicated May 24 at the intersection of West Watson and Sterlingworth streets in Windsor.

The case originated in

May 1960 when Nancy Bazemore, a 47-year-old African American resident of Bertie County, walked into the Woodville precinct to register to vote. What followed was a legal battle that reached the North Carolina Supreme Court and reshaped voting rights across the state.

Bertie County's racial demographics told a stark story. Black residents outnumbered white residents by a 3-to-2 ratio, yet registered white voters outnumbered registered Black voters by nearly 9 to 1. County registrars main-

tained this disparity through a literacy test, a tool created in the late 19th century specifically to disenfranchise Black voters across the South.

In Woodville, the test took the form of dictation with a registrar reading aloud from the state constitution. Applicants transcribed what they heard with spelling errors counting against them. The North Carolina attorney general previously declared such spelling-based dictation tests illegal in March, but Bertie County ignored the ruling. Bazemore re-

ceived a failing grade and was denied registration.

She appealed immediately. At her hearing a week later, her attorney, James R. Walker Jr., an Ahoskie native and UNC School of Law graduate, announced that Bazemore refused to submit to another dictation test. When the board rejected her appeal, Walker filed a lawsuit which ultimately landed before the North Carolina Supreme Court.

Walker's brief was pointed and thorough. He argued that the literacy test



COURTESY OF N.C. DEPT. OF NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES

Please see **VOTING/2A** Nancy Bazemore



KYLIE MARSH

Durham County commissioners and Durham Public Schools staff discuss standard of living for employees.

DAE demands wage increase for classified staff

By Kylie Marsh

kylie.marsh@triangletribune.com

DURHAM - Durham Public Schools' classified staff are asking for a 12% wage increase in the county budget.

"Classified staff are struggling. They are working two or three jobs to make ends meet," said Angel Parkstone, clinical nurse specialist representative for Durham Association of Educators.

DAE, the labor union for Durham Public School workers, hosted its first public living wage town hall last week at NorthStar Church of the Arts.

There, classified staff took

turns sharing their experiences serving Durham public school students while also trying to keep up with the increasing cost of living. Classified staff includes instructional assistants, custodians, cafeteria workers and bus drivers.

Durham County Board of Commissioners Vice Chair Nida Allam and Commissioner Stephen Valentine attended on behalf of the board.

"A 12% wage doesn't even bring us up to where we need to be," Parkstone said. While DPS bus drivers' wages range between \$19.43 and a maximum of \$28 per hour after 30 years of

service, GoTriangle offers a starting wage of \$22.68 plus bonuses. A DPS custodian can earn a maximum \$20.95 per hour after 30 years, compared to a city or county custodian's hourly starting wage of \$21.90. "The county is already paying their workers more than what we're making, which makes our jobs less desirable," Parkstone said.

In Durham County, a living wage for an individual with no children is \$24.35 an hour.

Asia Pope is DAE's at-large representative for classified staff. Pope's healthcare costs have tri-

Please see **DAE/2A**

« OPINION »



Overcoming the guilt of a medical diagnosis

By Sharron Rouse

THE AFRO

One day I woke up and noticed my legs were swollen. I thought my symptoms could have been related to a previous lupus diagnosis or recent high-risk pregnancy. I was urged to see a doctor. And the results - a nurse told me that my kidneys were failing. I was flooded! I was 31 years old with a whole life ahead of me.

Failing kidneys were a surprise to me. After a biopsy, I was diagnosed with focal segmental glomerulosclerosis, a disease that causes scarring in the parts of the kidney that filter blood. The doctors could not explain why I had FSGS.

After being hospitalized for a few days, I had to figure things out along with my family. How could I continue living my life after discovering something so serious? What adjustments, medications, dialysis or even transplant would I have to endure? Twenty years ago, there was not a lot of information available. I was scared and frustrated, but research helped me understand the disease, its effects and that I was not alone.

I began working with my doctors to manage the disease, but my kidneys continued to decline. I had a personalized medical treatment plan that was only doing so much to slow the progression, and a few years later, I was told I needed dialysis, which took a toll on me. I was tired both physically and emotionally.

The next step in my kidney journey was a transplant. My sister was my donor. The transplant was successful, but I still didn't know why all of this had happened to me. And then I learned about the APOL1 gene and the increased risk of kidney disease due to certain genetic changes.

After an at-home genetic test, I found out I had two copies of the APOL1 variant inherited from my parents, a variation connected to increased risk for kidney disease. APOL1-mediated kidney disease caused my FSGS. I now had answers.

The diagnosis liberated me from the uncertainty of having done something in my youth that could have caused all of this, and it alerted me to the seriousness of the disease and its effects. We are all born with the APOL1 gene, but those of us with ancestors from Western or central Africa, who may identify as Black, African American, Afro-Caribbean, Hispanic or Latino/Latina, may have mutated variations of the APOL-1 gene, with

Please see **OVERCOMING/2A**

Black Leaders for Roy Coalition launched for Cooper's Senate bid

By Kylie Marsh

kylie.marsh@triangletribune.com

More than 125 Black leaders from across the state have launched the Black Leaders for Roy Coalition in support of the former governor's campaign for U.S. Senate.

Cooper for Senate announced the coalition last week in partnership with Black leaders and supporters from Buncombe County to Pitt County. The coal-

ition brings Cooper to listening sessions, organizing events and regular meetings with Black citizens across the state.

"Roy is working hard to earn every vote, and our campaign is listening to and talking with Black North Carolinians throughout the state about how Roy will continue to stand up for them in the U.S. Senate," a source from Cooper for Senate told The Tribune.

Cooper's campaign promises to lower costs on working class people and protect voting rights and access in North Carolina. His "Make Stuff Cost Less" campaign includes regulations on insurance, healthcare, grocery, utility, housing and childcare costs, all which weigh heavily on the state's working families.

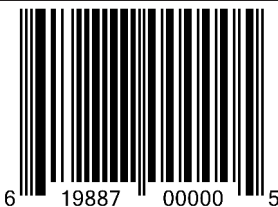
President Donald Trump has endorsed Cooper's opponent,

Please see **BLACK/2A**

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

5007 Southpark Drive,
Suite 200-G
Durham, NC 27713
(919) 688-9408
© 2026 The Triangle Tribune

Publisher: Gerald O. Johnson
Managing Editor/Sports Editor: Bonitta Best
Advertising: Linda Johnson
info@triangletribune.com
www.triangletribune.com



North Carolina case that reshaped voting rights

Continued from page 1A

as administered in Bertie County was unconstitutional under the state constitution's separation of powers clause, because it effectively granted legislative authority to local election officials.

He documented that the dictation requirement was applied exclusively to Black applicants. He also identified the test's inherent vulnerabilities to abuse — a registrar's pronuncia-

tion, reading speed, a voter's hearing or speech patterns, and the registrar's own discretion in grading could all determine the outcome, with little accountability.

In April 1961, the court ruled in Bazemore's favor. Though the justices declined to find bad faith on the part of Bertie County officials, they found the test as administered unreasonable and beyond legal intent.

The significance of the court case extended beyond Bertie County. Federal civil rights reports and subsequent voting rights discussions cited the case as evidence of the burden of literacy tests imposed on African American citizens.

For more information about the historical marker, visit the Nancy Bazemore blog post or call 919-814-6625.

DAE demands wage increase for DPS staff

Continued from page 1A

pled, from \$30 to \$90 per a prescription she needs monthly. "This creates a barrier," she said.

Shashawn Anderson is a certified teacher for exceptional children. She said every moment of a classified staff's day is "student-centered."

"We are providing personal care. Feeding. Tube-feeding sometimes. Catheterizing students. So, almost like medicinal care as well," she said.

Ryan Burch has been working for two years as an elementary school instructional assistant for exceptional children. "I've always understood that, especially in North Carolina, there's always been an issue with paying teachers what they're worth," he said. "There is a dark humor that says you have to have a side hustle or two if you want to be a teacher in North Carolina. Now I'm seeing it's even worse than I thought it would be."

Lakeisha Register is an instructional assistant for pre-kindergarten exceptional children. Her responsibilities include

feeding and diapering eight nonverbal students between the ages of 3-5 with varying levels of autism.

"I am getting hit, bit, scratched, so I'm always on the lookout trying not to get hurt," she said. "I think you have no idea what actually goes on inside these classrooms. I'd love to see all of you come substitute in an EC class."

She said a 12% raise would give her an extra \$300 a month as a cushion. "It would give me more peace of mind to know I am not sitting at zero at the end of every month," she said. "Thankfully, I have a husband who has a pretty good job, so I'm in a better spot than many of my co-workers."

Crystal Graves is also an IA for EC students and president of the Cornwallis community, a Durham Housing Authority property. She is also the caregiver of her disabled sister.

"As both a community leader and resident, I see firsthand how hard it is for working families to transition out of public housing. We are told all the time that public housing should be a

stepping stone," she said. "But the reality is many Durham Public School employees still cannot afford to live within city limits."

Other commissioners declined to attend due to previous engagements but also to avoid "inadvertently creating quorum."

Durham County Manager Claudia Hager proposed a county budget May 11, most notably an additional \$10.9 million for DPS, "which covers continuation costs that have risen with inflation," according to DAE President and DPS high school science teacher Mika Tweitmeyer.

The budget proposal didn't include that \$14.8 million requested by DAE from meetings with the union and county staff, which would include the 12% wage increase for classified staff. That requested raise would increase the wage to \$19.22 per hour.

"The county manager's proposal is insufficient because our workers can't wait. You heard it here tonight," Tweitmeyer said. "Workers are going to have no choice but to leave."



U.S. Senate Democratic candidate Roy Cooper greets fans at North Carolina A&T State University in Greensboro.

Black Leaders for Roy Coalition launches

Continued from page 1A Michael Whatley. Cooper expressed gratitude to the African American community for its support in a release.

"I'm grateful to have the support of so many Black leaders from all across North Carolina," he said. "From food to health care to housing, North Carolina families are facing skyrocketing prices and DC insiders like Michael Whatley are the problem. I am running to bring North Caro-

lina common sense to Washington DC, push back against the attacks on voting rights and make stuff cost less."

Cooper for Senate is also working to protect voting access among the U.S. Supreme Court's recent decision to gut the Voting Rights Act, which has lasting impacts in the Black Belt.

When North Carolina A&T State University's on-campus polling site was closed by the North Caro-

lina State Board of Elections, Cooper rallied with students to show solidarity.

"From fighting to make health care more affordable to working to lower the cost of groceries, Roy will be the advocate and fighter that North Carolinians need in Washington, D.C.," said Olu Rouse, an NCAT student leader and 2026 N.C. Black Alliance Conen Morgan Trailblazer awardee.

Overcoming the guilt of a medical diagnosis

Continued from page 1A

the presence of two high-risk genes G1 or G2.

Learning that you may be predisposed to having AMKD can provide some relief from the guilt of a diagnosis. Everyone should have a unique medical approach that best aligns with their healthcare needs. The only way to know if you are at risk for developing AMKD or if your kidney disease is the result of APOL1 variants is through genetic testing. Genetic testing, which is a personal decision, may be recommended if you have kidney disease of unknown cause and you are Black, African American, Afro Caribbean or Latino of certain African ancestry.

There is no "one-size-fits-all" approach to healthcare. Talking to your doctor about your options is a starting point.

Over the years, I have become an advocate and supporter of kidney disease research and awareness. I am deeply involved with the community through the organizations I have created and the ones I support. I feel proud to be a voice fighting for change. Organizations such as the American Kidney Fund, which focus on prevention, treatment and post-transplant care, are great resources and allies. You can also learn more about AMKD at KidneyFund.org/APOL1Aware.

I hope that my story helps those who are struggling to understand their diagnosis and how to navigate the difficult times of dealing with kidney disease.



BRANDON KINGDOLLAR/NC NEWSLINE

Voters trickle into the Durham County Main Library to cast their primary ballots.

Who are your county's primary voters – in 2026 and beyond?

By Bob Hall and Adrienne Kelly

NC NEWSLINE

Do you wonder which voters in your county turned out more than others in the March primary? Did Republican men cast more ballots than Democratic women? Did Black seniors outperform white voters age 65 and older?

How did your county compare with the other 99, and did a hot race, like a primary contest for sheriff, drive up overall turnout?

Answers to these questions are revealing, although likely not as telling as how your county's voters behave in a November general election. That's because participation in primary elections is so low.

Statewide, fewer than one out of four registered voters cast a ballot in the March 2026 primary compared to nearly three out of four in the November 2024 presidential election. Even in the expensive Republican primary between Sen. Phil Berger and Sam Page, only one-third of registered Republicans in Rockingham County cast a ballot.

The fact that two-thirds of Republicans stayed quiet and wouldn't help Berger in his existential crisis tells you he didn't lose because of outside spending or Democratic mischief or even Page's popularity. Berger was straight-up abandoned by Republicans in his own county.

Statewide, data for the primary show that Democrats outperformed Republicans, Black and white voters participated at about the same rate, the number of ballots cast by Hispanics and Asian Americans doubled in four years, and turnout among seniors (35%) was five times the rate for young people (7%) — a much bigger gap than in general elections.

Three of the four counties with the highest turnout had a hotly contested Republican primary for sheriff, and Unaffiliated voters casting Republican

ballots made the difference in who won. Those same four counties — Mitchell, Hyde, Beaufort and Graham — were also the four counties with the highest turnout among white voters and four of the five counties with the highest turnout for Unaffiliated voters.

The relatively high participation of white women and Unaffiliated voters in Beaufort and Hyde contributed to Rep. Keith Kidwell's defeat. The two counties with the highest Black voter turnout — Northampton and Bertie — were also the two with the highest turnout for Democrats in eastern North Carolina. The strong turnout of Black women in those two counties helped protect Rep. Rodney Pierce against former Rep. Michael Wray's challenge and also lift Patricia Smith to a decisive victory over Rep. Shelly Willingham.

The 10 counties with the lowest turnout include many that rank low in general elections. Robeson County ranked No. 100 in November 2024 and March 2026. Not surprisingly, the list of chronic low performers includes four counties with a significant number of active duty and retired military registered voters: Cumberland, Onslow, Harnett and Hoke.

Two more counties where less than one out of six registered voters cast a ballot were Pitt County, with relatively younger voters and a boring primary ballot, and Mecklenburg County, with several well publicized primary races but a history of hard-to-motivate voters.

Overall, Black seniors age 65 and above were the subgroup most motivated to participate in the March primary. Their turnout of 41% doubled the 20% rate for Republican men and surpassed the 30% rate for white Democratic women.

The 21% turnout rate for all Black voters basically matched the 22% for all white voters. By contrast, in the 2024 presidential election, the 78% white turnout beat the 66% rate for Black voters by 12 percentage points — the biggest gap in decades. White liberals often bemoan low Black turnout — and, indeed, a 12 percentage point increase in 2024 would have added 185,000 more ballots from Black voters.

Bob Hall and Adrienne Kelly are the former and current executive director of the voting rights nonprofit Democracy North Carolina, respectively.



Read us online!
triangletribunenewspaper.com

NC counties to pay more for SNAP under federal changes

By Lynn Bonner
NC NEWSLINE

The state Department of Health and Human Services told state lawmakers it anticipates 90,000 adults in North Carolina will lose benefits under new work requirements. Massive changes to the food benefits program called SNAP have forced more people who already struggle to maintain stable lives to report work hours if they need federal support to eat.

Former foster youth, some people who are homeless and some military veterans must show they are working, volunteering or attending training programs for at least 80 hours a month to receive food benefits under the federal "One Big Beautiful Bill Act" spending and tax cut package passed last year.

The law also raises the age limit for people who must meet work requirements to 64 from 54 unless they qualify for exemptions and shifts more of the cost of the federal program onto state and county governments.

UNC-Chapel Hill professor Lindsey Haynes-Maslow, who has studied SNAP and nutrition, said she's worried how SNAP recipients — especially veterans without diagnosed disabilities, people experiencing homelessness and former foster youth — will be able to navigate the new requirements to keep federal aid that helps them buy food.

Before this year, young people who aged out of foster care on their 18th birthdays were able to receive SNAP benefits, commonly known as food



stamps, until age 24. "A lot of SNAP recipients, if they can work, they do work," she said. "Many SNAP recipients are working low-wage jobs or multiple part-time jobs."

Many adults who need food benefits work unpredictable hours and "struggle to document who did what and where," Haynes-Maslow said. She is also worried about how government agencies will handle the increased workload as they implement the new rules. "It will take more people and more time," she said. "Someone will have to pay for it."

In North Carolina, SNAP enrollment declined by about 2% between Dec. 1, when the new work requirements took effect, and March. A representative from the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services told legislators last summer that the agency anticipates 90,000 adults will lose benefits because of work requirements.

Households may qualify for federal food benefits through several avenues. There's a standard gross income limit of 130% of federal poverty level, which is about \$42,900 for a family of four. House-

holds can also qualify if they receive Supplemental Security Income or Work First benefits. About 13% of households in the state qualified for SNAP under "Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility," where incomes can range from 130% to 200% of federal poverty level, according to the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services. The upper income limit to qualify under the broad-based category is \$66,000 a year for a family of four.

The federal changes to SNAP are forcing county governments to do additional administrative work to verify employment. Wake County has taken on the added work without hiring more employees, spokeswoman Leah Holdren said in an email. Staff members are required to explain work requirements and exemptions during interviews with applicants, and people who may be required to prove they're working are given documents outlining the policies, Holdren said.

There's now increased coordination between staff members who review applications and staff members who do recertifications to make sure interviews are done on time.

Hospitals test ambient AI to ease burnout of staff

By Mason Spencer
SPECIAL TO THE TRIBUNE

After a long shift at UNC Hospitals, Terrell Doyle still has work to finish. Patient notes still have to be written, and charts have to be completed before he can go home. Exhaustion comes easy as the work continues and never seems to slow down.

For Doyle, a registered nurse, this reality helps explain why hospitals are searching for tools that can reduce work overload without taking away attention needed from patients. The hours spent documenting care after a long shift reflect a growing burden felt across healthcare. Healthcare systems like UNC Health and Duke Health are part of the movement to reduce the burden through the use of artificial intelligence.

Ambient AI is an artificial intelligence technology designed to listen during patient appointments and generate notes or organize patient information to reduce burnout and return more time to direct care. The goal is simple: reduce burnout caused by clinical work and give clinicians more time to focus on the care of their patients. However, hospitals are also learning that successful adoption depends on safeguards, trust and realistic expectations.

"My overall view as a nurse is that AI has potential, especially in the background parts of healthcare like documentation support, workflow improvement and data organization," Doyle said. "But in my experience, it is not something that has yet transformed bedside care in a major way."

In Becker's Hospital Review, "The AI Use Case All Health Systems Are Adopting," one survey of 43 health systems found that Ambient AI documentation tools were the only arti-



cial intelligence application with adoption activity reported by all respondents. Fifty-three percent said they had achieved a high level of success using AI for clinical documentation.

The Becker's Review article states that at Duke, leaders moved from experimentation to large-scale rollout after an early pilot. In January 2025, the system announced plans to expand access to the Ambient AI documentation tool to about 5,000 clinicians across more than 150 clinics after testing it with physicians and advanced practice providers.

Duke Chief Health Information Officer Eric Poon described the technology's rapid impact in unusually strong terms in the Becker's Review article. "I've been in this business 30 years, and nothing has come close to being this impactful, this quickly, at the right time," Poon said.

Poon also said the tool changed the atmosphere of patient visits. The technology helps restore attention to interactions with the patient by reducing the need to divert focus between typing and conversation. He said Ambient AI allowed him to engage more directly with patients while the system generated a draft note in the background.

That atmosphere of less screen time and more human connection is the reason Ambient AI has gained national attention.

A recent qualitative study of clinicians using Ambient AI documentation found that many reported lower cognitive burden and time savings because they didn't have to remember as many visit details at the same time as they documented them.

But clinicians say the impact can look different in daily practice. Bedside staff like Doyle are wary of exaggerated claims. He said direct patient care is built on observation, communication and judgment that AI-generated work can't replace.

"At the bedside, my job is still very human and very clinical," Doyle said. "I'm assessing the patient, watching trends, responding to symptoms, communicating with the care team, administering medications, educating the patient and using my judgment in real time. AI has not replaced any of that."

He said the benefits have been modest with repetitive tasks, like charting support or care-plan writing, rather than the deeper causes of burnout.

"I would describe the benefit as incremental rather than life-changing," Doyle said. "It may make certain tasks a little faster or less tedious, but it has not, in my experience, produced a major measurable drop in burnout at the bedside."

The lesson for hospitals may be that success.

« SPONSORED CONTENT »



STOCK PHOTO

Refinancing readiness and navigating the process in today's market

SPONSORED BY
JPMORGAN CHASE

Depending on where you are in your homeownership journey, refinancing your mortgage can be an effective strategy to help you meet your financial goals. Refinancing may help you save money over time or add money back to your monthly budget if you score a lower interest rate. And depending on the type of refinance you choose, you could also borrow against your home's equity to pay down debt or make a major purchase.

Understanding when and why a refinance might make sense is the first step toward getting the most from this financial tool. There are also different types of refinances to consider, and one might work better for your goals than another.

Roshown McLeod, Chase Home Lending Manager, [WC1.1]explains more about the refinancing process and how you can navigate it in today's market.

What is refinancing?

Refinancing replaces your current mortgage with a new one—usually with a new rate and/or terms. It can often also come with a new set of closing costs. It may also come with a new

lender. So when does it make sense to refinance? You might want to consider a refinance if you want to:

- Change the loan length or lower your monthly payments
- Secure a better or lower interest rate to save on monthly payments
- Switch from an adjustable-rate mortgage to a fixed-rate one.
- Change the loan type to remove mortgage insurance costs
- Access your home equity to fund home improvements, buying another property, or consolidate debt.

How does refinancing work?

Much like your original mortgage, the refinancing process involves a thorough review of your current financial status to determine if you qualify.

Here's an example of what a lender may review:

Credit score and history:

Credit requirements vary by lender and loan type; 620 is a general minimum for conventional mortgages. Lenders want to see responsible credit use, such as a positive payment history on your debt.

Debt-to-income (DTI) ratio:

This metric shows how much debt you have in relation to your income. To calculate your DTI, add up your monthly debt payments and divide by your gross monthly income. Then multiply by 100 to get a percentage. A low DTI lets lenders know you'll likely be able to manage your monthly payments with minimal issues.

Property value and equity:

Many homeowners have built equity over time, and the real estate market can cause property values to appreciate as well. When refinancing, your current loan balance and market value

of the property will help the lender calculate a loan-to-value (LTV) ratio. Refinancing qualifications usually prefer lower LTVs.

What are my refinancing options and how do I choose the right one?

Let's break down a few commonly offered types of refinancing:

Rate-and-term refinance:

This option allows you to replace your current loan with a new one with a different interest rate, different term or both. The primary aim is to secure terms that better suit your current financial situation, while the principal balance remains the same.

Cash-out refinance:

A cash-out refinance allows you to replace your existing mortgage with a new loan for more than you currently owe, leveraging equity you've built up in your home. This type of mortgage refinance might be more suited for those who need funds for significant expenses, such as home renovations or debt consolidation.

No closing cost refinance:

A no closing cost refinance allows borrowers to refinance without paying the upfront fees usually required. The lender may charge a slightly higher interest rate or fold the closing costs into the total loan amount.

Understanding your current financial goals and needs can help you decide which option works best.

The bottom line

Refinancing can be a smart financial move for many people. You may be able to save money in the long term, and you also have options to take cash out if that's what would support your goals. A qualified mortgage professional or home lending advisor can help clarify whether a mortgage refinance makes sense for you and ensure you're on the right path to achieving your financial goals.

For more information, visit chase.com/afford.

For informational/educational purposes only: Views and strategies described in this article or provided via links may not be appropriate for everyone and are not intended as specific advice/recommendation for any business. Information has been obtained from sources believed to be reliable, but JPMorgan Chase & Co. or its affiliates and/or subsidiaries do not warrant its completeness or accuracy. The material is not intended to provide legal, tax, or financial advice or to indicate the availability or suitability of any JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A. product or service. You should carefully consider your needs and objectives before making any decisions and consult the appropriate professional(s). Outlooks and past performance are not guarantees of future results. JPMorgan Chase & Co. and its affiliates are not responsible for, and do not provide or endorse third party products, services, or other content.

Deposit products provided by JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A. Member FDIC. Equal Opportunity Lender.

© 2026 JPMorgan Chase & Co.

The Triangle Tribune

News media are "The Original Influencers"

We have proudly been giving free access to keep our community informed and connected. As we grow and deepen our impact, we are inviting you to support the future of this work.

Support the voice that supports you.

Sustain the story. Support Black-owned media.



FILE PHOTO

Churches urged to counter stigma of mental illness in community

By Laurie A. Lattimore
BAPTIST PRESS

This story was first published on Jan. 24, 1997.

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. - As soon as Virginia walks through the door of the old building renovated for a special church group, she is greeting everyone in the room. "Good morning. God bless you. I love you," she says more than a dozen times on Sunday mornings.

Earnest is quick to lend his Bible to visitors without one. Linda and Vivian and Randy like answering Bible questions. Earnest likes to ask questions.

Roosevelt, a man in his 70s, half sings his praise to God when he closes the group in prayer, "Lord, you the man. I am calling on your name. You walk with me. I'm your friend, you're my friend. You go with me to the end."

It's not an ordinary class. Some get up and pace during the Bible lesson. Some rock steady in their chairs. Some mumble to themselves. But all love God and know God loves them in spite of being consumers of a mental illness; those who have schizophrenia, for example, or depression or bi-polar disorder.

Jimmy Tilley, the leader of the class, who also suffers from depression, chronic anxiety and obsessive-compulsive disorder, wouldn't want the group to act any other way. Tilley and his wife, Jane, started the combined Sunday school and worship time at First Baptist Church, Tus-

caloosa, Alabama, four years ago.

While numbers have dropped because many residents at Tuscaloosa's Indian Rivers mental health center were moved to group homes too far away for pickup, the class is nearly 30 strong every Sunday.

Jane Tilley and Betty Loman, an employee at Indian Rivers and also a consumer, shuttle between the center and transition homes to make sure as many mental illness consumers who want to have a chance to fellowship and praise God each week. The two women teach the Sunday school class, and Tilley leads a worship service following a 15-minute break for cookies, drinks and smokes.

"People are afraid of mental illness," Jane said. "They look at mental illness as a result of doing something wrong, and they don't know how to react."

Her husband knows the stigma firsthand. Jimmy worked for the Tuscaloosa News plus other publications in Dadeville and Andalusia, Alabama, for many years before depression and anxiety set in 20 years ago. Through the help of medication, he maintains a normal lifestyle, which he spends educating the public about mental illness. Tilley and his wife will begin as special education consultants for the Tuscaloosa Baptist Association within the next few months. Tilley also publishes a quarterly newsletter for consumers of mental illness, "Consumer Connection."

Often churches are some of the worst offenders of perpetuating stereotypes and buying into the stigma, Tilley said. "The stigma is so prevalent. And the sad thing is that church is usually the first place people want to go to find acceptance," he said, adding bluntly while his class meets at First Baptist, he believes some church members probably wish they weren't there.

Jane Tilley recalled when her husband was hospitalized, she alerted the church so members could visit him. No one came. "Churches just don't know how to handle it. They don't know how to minister to the person or to their family," she said. "Here, we accept them where they are. They may mumble to themselves, but they can come up with the deepest answers."

Jesse C. Stinson Jr. started the Sunday Club through South Highland Presbyterian Church in Birmingham about 10 years ago. Consumers of mental illness and their families get together for lunch and worship time.

Stinson, diagnosed with acute schizophrenia in 1964, realized during 10 months of institutionalization other people with mental illness had the same needs — to be listened to.

"It would be nice to walk into church and say, 'Yes sir, I have a mental illness. I'm not bragging, and I don't want special attention. I just want to come here for comfort and support,'" he said.

Dorothea Dix Park's Flowers Cottage

Dorothea Dix Park's Flowers Cottage is getting a full transformation, and it's almost ready.

"It's about creating more opportunities for people to gather, spend time together and feel connected to this space," Dix Park Conservancy interim CEO Nick Smith said. Here's a first look at what's coming.

* Cottage Coffee: a new café inside the reimagined cottage, right on Flowers Field.
* Park Bar: an outdoor bar tucked beneath an expanded deck, serving beer, wine and non-alcoholic drinks with sweeping field views.

* A nature-inspired play area and new restroom facility rounding out the west side of the park.

* Operated by local hospitality partners Justin Pasfield and Jeff Clarke.



COURTESY

Flowers Cottage before renovation



Flowers Cottage after renovation

Meet Mariah Walker, Wake County principal of the year

By Hannah Vinuesa
McClellan
EDUCATIONNC

Wake Young Women's Leadership Academy Principal Mariah Walker was named the 2026 Wells Fargo principal of the year.

Over the past two decades, the Raleigh native has worked at nearly every grade level, according to a press release from the Department of Public Instruction. She began her principalship at Hillburn Pre-K-8 Academy before being named principal at WYWLA in 2022. The school serves young women in grades six to 13 within the Wake County Public School System.

"Dr. Walker is the type of leader we need in North Carolina's public schools," State Superintendent Maurice "Mo" Green said in the press release. "Dr. Walker leads her staff and students by creating a culture of respect and authenticity to foster growth in every person who enters Wake Young Women's Leadership Academy."

Under Walker's leadership, WYWLA students have achieved a 100% graduation rate each of the past four years and exceeded growth the past two years, according to the release. "A mentor, advocate and thought leader, (Dr. Walker) fosters collaboration among school leaders and walks alongside them as they grow in their practice," WCPSS Superintendent Robert Taylor shared in his recommendation. "Her broad experience gives her a grounded voice in shaping policy and strengthening systems that support both students and staff."



COURTESY OF WCPSS

Mariah Walker, principal of Wake Young Women's Leadership Academy, is celebrated by her students for being named Wake County's 2026 principal of the year.

As principal, the release says Walker successfully moved WYWLA's early college program from Saint Augustine's University to Wake Technical Community College and now to its current home at Shaw University. Walker "builds community by inviting families to be part of the work of developing young women as leaders to extend beyond the walls of WYWLA," the release says.

During her acceptance speech, Walker noted the importance of her faith, family and students, and said "none of us do this work alone." She spoke to ceremony attendees about the importance of purpose, people and passion — "the reasons we do this work."

"Being a principal is loving an entire community of children and staff, and always finding space for one more," Walker said. "It's choosing every single day to lead with heart, with grace, and with unwavering belief that the children we serve today will flourish and bloom and blossom into the garden of leaders tomorrow."

She said that North Carolina's public schools must be places where "every student, every teacher, and every single family and parent knows that there is a place" for them.

"My leadership is centered around this truth, 'How you make room at your table determines whether your guest wants to eat,'" Walker said in the release. "At Wake Young Women's Leadership Academy, we make room for every student by confronting inequity with courage, care and collective responsibility."

As the winner, Walker will spend the 2026-27 school year traveling the state as an ambassador for the profession, with financial support from Wells Fargo and DPI. She will receive a mobile device from Lenovo, an engraved award, a gift from the Carolina Hunger Initiative, and a custom-made N.C. Principal of the Year signet ring from Jostens, the release says. She will also be able to participate in the Trust Leadership Institute.

AROUND THE TRIANGLE

RALEIGH MARKET

The next Black Farmers' Market is May 24, 1-5 p.m., Montague Plaza, 2718 Rock Quarry Road.

GALA

Omega Scholars 2026 Scholarship Gala is May 29, 7 p.m., Wake Chapel Life Enrichment Center, 3805 Tarheel Club Road. Tickets: iotaiota1944.com.

OLYMPICS

Volunteer registration is now open for the 2026 Special Olympics NC Summer Games May 29-31. Contact: Susan Doggett at sdoggett@sonc.net.

SWIMMING

Beta Lambda Sigma chapter is hosting a free Swim 1922 Wet & Dry Clinic for ages 5-16, May 30, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., SE Raleigh YMCA, Rock Quarry Road. Register: www.raleighsgrho.org.

FAMILY DAY

Mental Wellness Family Fun Day is May 30, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Roberts Park, 1300 E. Martin St. Open to the public.

DURHAM CELEBRATION

Sacred Fire: A Durham Pentecost Celebration is May 24, 5 p.m., Durham Central Park, 501 Foster St.

ROUNDTABLE

The next Community Luncheon Roundtable is May 28, noon, Elizabeth Street United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall, 1209 N. Elizabeth St.

CONFERENCE

She's THAT Girl! Empowerment Conference is May 30, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Community Family Life & Recreation Center. Tickets: www.curatedspace.org.

CHAPEL HILL DISPOSAL

A shred-a-thon and medication takeback is May 29, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Seymour Center, 2551 Homestead Road.



The next Black Farmers' Market is May 24, 1-4 p.m., 2718 Rock Quarry Road

NAACP calls for boycott of South schools

By Matt Brown
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — The NAACP and Congressional Black Caucus are calling on Black athletes and fans to boycott the athletic programs of public universities in states that are taking steps that the nation's oldest civil rights group says are restricting Black voting rights.

Launched on Tuesday, the NAACP's "Out of Bounds" campaign urges current and prospective Black athletes, their families, alumni and fans to "withhold athletic and financial support" from major public universities in states that "have moved to limit, weaken or erase Black voting representation."

If Black athletes participate in the boycott, it could deplete rosters for powerhouse football and basketball programs across the Southeastern Conference and Atlantic Coast Conference.

The NAACP's campaign calls out Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas and South Carolina as states to boycott, arguing that the athletic programs of those states' major universities are especially reliant on Black athletic talent and should protect Black political interests.

The ACC, SEC, Florida State University, Alabama, four HBCU conferences — the SWAC, MEAC, SIAC and CIAA — and chapter members of the National African American Athlete Alliance in both Texas and Florida did not return The Associated Press' request for comment.

The NAACP is among groups responding to a wave of gerrymandering in the aftermath of a U.S. Supreme Court ruling that winnowed a key provision of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Johnson repeatedly noted that Black athletes have been a core engine of the college sports business, which drives billions in TV deals, revenue and reputational prestige.

"Black athletes should not be asked to generate wealth, prestige, and power for state institutions while those same states strip political power from Black communities," Johnson said.

"We will fight with all we have in solidarity with the Congressional Black Caucus to ensure that we have representation, or if we don't, we will withhold the talent that plays on the football field or on the basketball court, be they male or female," Johnson told reporters.

The boycott is part of a coordinated effort by Black political leaders and civil rights activists to dissuade Republican-led states from redistricting longtime majority-Black congressional districts. Civil rights activists have mobilized across the South to protest moves by state legislatures to change their maps, while voting rights groups and Democratic lawmakers have filed lawsuits seeking to block potential changes to the districts.

The timing of the initiative comes at a moment in the college athletic calendar that might make it difficult for it to have any immediate impact. The transfer portals for the high-profile Division I sports of football and basketball are all closed until 2027.

There may be an opportunity to influence prominent high school recruits who are still weighing their college prospects for the fall of 2027 and beyond. While many schools have received non-binding verbal agreements from football and basketball players, those agreements won't become official until late fall at the earliest.

The signing window for basketball opens in mid-November, about a week after the midterm elections, and the 72-hour early signing period for football arrives in the first week of December.

There is a chance that re-

Please see **NAACP/7A**

The Triangle Tribune Sports

May 24-30, 2026 | 6A



DIG MAGAZINE

Raymond Alexander Johnson

Former Howard football player tackles dental school

What started as a backup plan to athletics became a calling in dentistry

By Sholnn Z. Freeman

THE DIG

As a child, Raymond Alexander Johnson had a fascination with teeth, often noticing subtle differences in other people's smiles.

"I was always staring at people's teeth and noticing the differences," Johnson said. "I would notice if something was different about one person's teeth

compared to someone else's."

That early curiosity carried him to the top of his graduating class at Howard University College of Dentistry and into a U.S. Navy oral and maxillofacial surgery residency. "I always enjoyed going to the dentist," Johnson said. "I just knew I could sit down and look at teeth for a living and be OK with that."

That early curiosity didn't translate into a direct path to a career in dentistry. Johnson played football all four years and later attempted to play professionally. At the same time, he was trying to position himself for dental school, but dental school admissions proved difficult. His focus on football left him with lackluster grades and Dental Admission Test

scores.

"My mom always told me to have a backup plan in case football didn't work out," Johnson said.

Johnson applied twice before getting into the Howard University College of Dentistry. The school is the nation's fifth-oldest dental school and admits fewer than 75 students each year

Please see **FORMER/7A**

COLLEGE CORNER

HBCU family suffers tough month of May

Whew! It's been a tough month for the HBCU sports family.

First, legendary sports broadcaster Charlie Neal passed last week at the age of 80. Neal helped usher in HBCU sports on a national stage, starting at BET for 23 years. ESPN hired him in 2005 to cover its HBCU broadcasts, but that's just the tip of the iceberg of his legacy.

Former Virginia Union football student-athlete William Davis took his life at just 22 years old. Davis played at VUU from 2022-

24 before transferring.

"This one hurts deeply," VUU coach Alvin Parker wrote on X. "William Davis was more than a player to me, he was family. A young man I loved and was proud to coach."

And, before we could exhale, longtime Fayetteville State educator and administrator Peggy Green died after a long fight with cancer. The CIAA Women's Coach of the Year Award is named after Green.

Please see **HBCU/7A**



NC Courage legend Crystal Dunn is Ring of Honor inductee

STAFF REPORTS

CARY — The North Carolina Courage will induct women's soccer legend Crystal Dunn into its 2026 Ring of Honor.

Dunn, who retired from professional soccer earlier this year, will be celebrated July 11 following the Courage match against the Washington Spirit.

Dunn will be on hand for the match, starting with a pre-match autograph session and a meet-and-greet in FanFest. Exact details on the timing will be shared later.

She will then be officially inducted into the Ring of Honor in a post-match ceremony on the field. All fans are encouraged to move to the west-side stands following the final whistle to watch the ceremony.

Dunn played for the Courage from 2018-2020, helping the team to back-to-back doubles of NWSL Championships and NWSL Shields in 2018 and 2019. She was a member of

the NWSL Best XI in 2018, helping the Courage establish one of the greatest single seasons in league history, setting then-records for most wins, most points and most goals scored.

"We are elated to enshrine Crystal Dunn into our Ring of Honor and celebrate all she contributed to our club and community. Crystal's talent, work ethic, passion and demeanor helped establish the Courage way. She deserves our club's highest honor and her permanent place in our club's history," Courage CEO and Chairman Steve Malik said.

Dunn was a standout performer at University of North Carolina, earning the 2013 Hermann Trophy while leading the Tar Heels to a national championship, before a legendary career for both club and country.

She played in 167 professional matches across six clubs, spanning three countries, including four NWSL sides. She began her career



NC COURAGE COMMUNICATIONS

Crystal Dunn runs with the ball during the 2019 season.

with the Washington Spirit before a stint with Chelsea. She returned stateside with her iconic run with the Courage before stints with the Portland Thorns and Gotham FC. She finished her club career with Paris

Saint-Germain. Dunn netted 45 goals in her club career.

Dunn will join Sam Mewis (2024) and Jessica McDonald (2025) as the third member of the exclusive Ring of Honor.

Former Howard player tackles dental school

Continued from page 6A
to its flagship Doctor of Dental Surgery program.

Something finally clicked. The same discipline and intensity he brought to football could be applied in the classroom. Johnson describes the turning point simply: he had to "lock in."

That meant structuring his life around consistency — studying daily, maintaining routines and prioritizing long-term goals over short-term distractions. When he arrived at Howard in 2022, he built a schedule centered on academics, rest and fitness. "I was really studying all the time: weekends, everything," he said. He said the early work-

outs and long practices on the football field taught him repetition, accountability and the importance of doing things you don't always want to do.

"Discipline will take you really, really far," Johnson said. "You're doing things every day to prepare. You might not like it in the moment, but you still do it."

That mindset eventually paid off. In his third year at Howard, Johnson secured funding from the Health Professions Scholarship Program through the U.S. Navy, which covered tuition and provided a stipend. Following graduation this month, Johnson will begin a four-year oral and maxillofacial surgery residency at Walter Reed National Medi-

tary Medical Center. The training will prepare him to serve as a Navy oral surgeon, fulfilling the service commitment tied to his scholarship.

That mindset also carried him to the top of his class, where he will graduate No. 1 in the same DDS program he once had trouble getting into.

Johnson is proud of how far he's come, wearing the title of first in his family in several areas, including his education, professional and service to his country.

"I'm the first military, first doctor, first college grad, all of that," he said. "Discipline and consistency will take you as far as you want to go."



COURTESY

N.C. A&T men's track and field team.

HBCU family suffers tough month of May

Continued from page 6A

"Dr. Peggy Green was a trailblazer, mentor, and champion for everything Fayetteville State athletics represents," director of athletics Anthony T. Bennett said. "Her impact is immeasurable — not only in the success of our programs, but in the lives of the student-athletes, coaches, and administrators she guided along the way. She helped build the foundation we stand on today, and her legacy will continue to inspire future generations of Broncos."

WOMEN

N.C. Central
The ladies won the most medals in the Division I era at the MEAC Outdoor Track Championships with a fourth-place finish and 104 points, their best point total in DI.

Tia Lucas and Laila Jackson led the way with gold medals in the high jump and 1,500 meters, respectively.

Howard won its fifth straight championship, followed by Morgan State and Norfolk State.

In softball, the program is looking for another head coach after the departure of Now-Allah James. After finishing .500 in the MEAC last season, NCCU regressed to 6-15 and 8-40 overall. The team missed qualifying for the MEAC Tournament.

Shaw

The Bears finally have a head coach, and it's the first female in program history. Hard to believe, isn't it? But before Jacques Curtis' 25-year run, there was



COURTESY

NCCU runner Aaron Alukunyang

Bobby Sanders who was the head coach when CC arrived in 1998.

We had a big laugh reading Shaw's press release announcing Ebony Tanner. It took a couple of paragraphs before it mentioned Tanner was coming from Elizabeth City State. Understandable. If we had a 13-39 record in two seasons, we wouldn't want it to be at the top of the list either. Anyway, alumni and supporters can greet both Tanner and men's basketball coach Wykevin Bazemore at a press conference May 27.

Hampton

Led by senior Brianna Charles, the Pirates finished second at the CAA Women's Outdoor Championships. Elon was first.

Charles won both the 100- and 200-meter dashes to earn CAA track athlete of the meet. N.C. A&T was fourth.

MEN

N.C. Central
The Eagles have a pipeline at Brunswick Community College. Point guard Darius Kane is another transfer from the college. Also joining Eagle-

land is guard Ryan Archey from Clinton, Maryland.

In track, the men tied with Howard for fourth place, their highest point total in DI era. Aaron Alukunyang won three gold medals in all three distance events. He also was named most outstanding men's track athlete.

Norfolk State won its fifth straight title, followed by South Carolina State and Delaware State. The NCAA East Regional is May 27 in Lexington, Kentucky.

N.C. A&T

The Aggies are starting to dominate in track and field. The men claimed their second straight CAA outdoor track title, easily outdistancing second-place Northeastern by almost 30 points. Hampton was fourth.

"This one is different," head coach Allen Johnson said. "The first one, you get really excited about because it's the first. This one is different and feels different because this one says we have established our mark on this conference. We came here and did what we were supposed to do."

NAACP calls for boycott of Southern programs

Continued from page 6A
cruits could attempt to put pressure on flagship institutions in the targeted states by threatening to sign somewhere else.

The reality, however, is that the pockets of those schools run deep, and asking a teenager to factor politics into a decision that could produce a life-altering financial windfall before they are even old

enough to vote could prove tenuous.

Brandon Copeland, CEO of Athletes.org, the emerging college players association that aims to represent student athletes, told reporters that opposition to the SCORE Act and redistricting efforts are linked.

"It's really a control mechanism," Copeland said of the SCORE Act's

proposed changes. "That same tool is being used to suppress our voices, suppress our votes," he said. Copeland, a former professional football player, said his organization will "stand tall alongside our athletes, but also alongside our mothers, our uncles, our aunts, our cousins, and everyone in this nation who deserves a voice."

Hillside boys track team



COURTESY OF DPS

Congratulations to Hillside High varsity boys' track and field team after winning the regional championship.

BLACK CELEBRATION OF MEMORIAL DAY

Hi everybody!

Happy Memorial Day, especially to all the veterans out there! This American holiday is always observed on the last Monday of May. Memorial Day honors the men and women who died while serving in the U.S. military. Like my father King Zusa, they bravely fought to protect the homeland.

TELL THE TRUTH!

Print the letter T on the line if the statement is True or F if the Statement is False.

___ Memorial Day is always celebrated on the first Monday in May.

___ The First Decoration Day was later known as Memorial Day.

___ The 85th MA Infantry was the first Black American Union regiment.

___ Blacks celebrated the First Memorial Day in May 1865.

WORD SCRAMBLE

MEMORIAL DAY

The first letter is in bold.

e**A**mrcai _____

a**F**lg _____

d**F**reom _____

r**H**eeso _____

ay**M** _____

o**M**riemal _____

BLACK HISTORY BEHIND MEMORIAL DAY

Today, Memorial Day honors veterans of all wars, but its roots began with the Civil War. It was originally called Decoration Day, which was founded in 1865 by a group of Black Americans who wanted to honor the soldiers that died in the Civil War. Three thousand Black school children carried bouquets of flowers, marched and sang that day. Members of the famous 54th Infantry Regiment and other Black Union Regiments attended the ceremony. The birth of the "First Decoration Day" was born. Americans began to see this holiday as not just one for Civil War Veterans but for veterans of all wars, so it was renamed "Memorial Day".

WAYS TO CELEBRATE MEMORIAL DAY

- Attend a Memorial Day event.
- Plan a family picnic to celebrate.
- Decorate the outside of your home with flags.
- Send a letter to families of fallen troops.
- Listen to the Hamilton soundtrack. The edited version is a great history lesson for all ages.
- Watch the movie "Glory".
- Color your own flag.
- Make a red, white and blue dessert.

POPUP: DID YOU KNOW?

The 1989 movie "Glory" told the story of the 54th Massachusetts Infantry.

54TH MASSACHUSETTS INFANTRY REGIMENT

This regiment is famous for having fought in many battles as part of the Union Army during the American Civil War. The 54th, along with the 1st Kansas Colored Volunteer Infantry Regiment, were organized in the northern states during the Civil War. The courage and sacrifice of the 54th Infantry is remembered and honored today. The most famous enlistees in the 54th were Charles and Lewis Douglass, two sons of the abolitionist Frederick Douglass.

HAPPY MEMORIAL DAY

LET US NEVER FORGET OUR SACRIFICES

ANSWER KEY

WORD SCRAMBLE

America
flag
freedom
heroes
May
memorial

TELL THE TRUTH!

F
T
F
T

MEMORIAL DAY, 5/24/26, #255 WWW.JOEYOUNG.ORG KEMET ACTIVITY SHEETS © 2026 BY JOE YOUNG

SCHOOL NEWS

'Ava The STEM Princess' in Fav Student competition

DURHAM COUNTY
Ava N. Simmons, 13, also known nationwide as "Ava The STEM Princess," is once again putting Durham and the Triangle in the national spotlight. This time Simmons is one of only 18 finalists in the 2026 America's Favorite Student competition after advancing through seven nationwide voting rounds that began with over 24,000 students.

Simmons is one of North Carolina's most recognizable youth STEAM advocates, entrepreneurs and philanthropists. A Durham native and Spring Valley Elementary alumna, Simmons transformed her own experiences with dyslexia and dysgraphia into a growing educational movement that now reaches children nationwide through hands-on STEAM learning, literacy advocacy, educational media and toy design.

Most recently, Simmons and her organization, Team Genius Squad, launched a major community initiative donating 15,000 STEAM experiment kits and lab coats to Title I schools throughout the Research Triangle Park region to help expand access to science and literacy education for underserved students. With AI on the rise, there will be a 1 million deficit in individuals to complete STEAM jobs by 2037. This is why it's so important to engage early learners now.

ORANGE COUNTY
LaThanya Campbell of Scroggs Elementary was named the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools



COURTESY

Ava N. Simmons



COURTESY

LaThanya Campbell

teacher of the year. Campbell is a pre-kindergarten teacher with 27 years of teaching experience. She joined CHCCS in 2021 and serves on the district's Superintendent's Teacher Advisory Council.

"As a pre-K teacher, you have the power to make children love school or hate school," Campbell said when asked about what inspires her to teach.

"To mold them into lifelong learners and someone who wants to learn is my driving force every day. Knowing that every day I am teaching and showing love to future generations gives me a sense of pride. Helping a child overcome a challenge or learn something new gives me confidence in my teaching journey."

Chick-fil-A New Bern awards scholarships



FACEBOOK

I'm incredibly honored to award \$26,000 in scholarship money to 19 incredible individuals from my restaurant team. Investing in people and helping them pursue their future goals is one of the most rewarding parts of what I get to do. I'm extremely proud of each recipient and grateful to play a small role in their journey.

Today, we had the opportunity to celebrate our 2026 Chick-fil-A Remarkable Futures Scholarship recipients.

We are incredibly proud of these 19 team members and honored to be a small part of their journey to help support their educational goals and future dreams.

At Chick-fil-A New Bern Avenue, we believe in being a lighthouse in our community, and investing in the next generation of leaders is one of the greatest ways we can do that. Congratulations to each recipient on this well-deserved achievement.

— Donovan Carless Jr. (blue shirt) and Nikki Hobbs Carless



COURTESY

An artist's rendition of the new building

NC SBI breaks ground on new headquarters and campus development

STAFF REPORTS

RALEIGH — The North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation broke ground Tuesday on a transformative campus development project at 3320 Garner Road.

The ceremony celebrated the launch of construction for two new SBI facilities — a new headquarters building and a separate Logistics building — as well as significant renovations to the existing headquarters. Together, these projects represent nearly 100,000 square feet of new and improved space designed to support the future of the SBI.

Once complete, the campus will house SBI administration, Information Technology, the North Carolina Information Sharing

and Analysis Center, statewide specialized programs, and the Criminal Information and Identification Section. The campus will also feature training classrooms, conference spaces, and a fitness center to support employee wellness and professional development.

"This project represents a significant investment in the future of the SBI and the public safety of North Carolina," director Chip Hawley said. "By bringing our teams together in a modern, purpose-built environment, we are strengthening our ability to serve our law enforcement partners and the people of this state."

The groundbreaking marks Phase One of a four-phase campus plan — the

first major transformation of the site in more than 50 years.

This phase includes construction of the new headquarters building, the first phase of the Logistics building, major site improvements and a new connection to Tryon Drive.

Planning for the project began in late 2022. By summer 2024, SBI personnel relocated to a temporary headquarters to allow construction to begin. Since that time, crews have completed demolition, site preparation and utility installation — laying the foundation for this next phase of development.

Construction will be completed in late 2027, with SBI personnel moving into the new facilities in early 2028.



NCCU School of Law alumna Regina Rodgers Parker '92 has been appointed by Governor Josh Stein to the Superior Court for Judicial District 2, serving Beaufort, Hyde, Martin, Tyrrell and Washington counties.

A longtime public servant and member of the judiciary, Parker's appointment reflects NCCU Law's impact on the bench and in the legal profession. More than 170 NCCU Law alumni serve as judges across North Carolina.

MOVERS AND SHAKERS

CIVIL RIGHTS MUSEUM
The International Civil Rights Center & Museum will honor Durham's Virginia Williams with a 2026 Sit-In Participant Award July 18 in Greensboro. The award recognizes the brave persons who took part in the sit-in protests against African American exclusion and racial discrimination in commercial



Williams



Muhammad

establishments otherwise open to the public. Williams remains engaged in preserving and disseminating this history. Through Durham Cares, she continues to share the story of the Royal Seven and educate others about Durham's civil rights legacy.

BLACK CHAMBER
Anjail R. Muhammad is the Black Chamber of Raleigh's new sponsorship and fundraiser coordinator. Muhammad will help the Chamber raise funds for its annual \$1,000 grant initiative for Black-owned businesses. She is co-founder of Science and Vocational Education, a nonprofit expanding STEM access to underserved youth. Muhammad is completing her MPA at N.C. State University.

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



thetriangletrib



Triangle Tribune



thetriangletribune!



@triangletribune

triangletribune.com