

Bull City Express Track Club surprised with gift from Academy Sports + Outdoors and N.C. athletics



Wake Young Women's Leadership Academy wins over skeptic

WAKE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

RALEIGH - When it came time for middle school, Kenya Moore-Kerr wanted her daughter, Taylor Kerr, to attend Wake Young Women's Leadership Academy. It's a sixth to 12th grade Early College school in downtown Raleigh where juniors and seniors take classes at Saint Augustine's University.

"My husband and I wanted a smaller school setting, without the distraction of middle school boys," says Moore-Kerr, a Vandra Springs Elementary assistant principal. "We wanted her to be focused on academics. And she's such a natural leader, we just wanted her to be able to hone those leadership skills."

Taylor was open to the idea, but with one fairly common reservation: the uniforms. "She loved to pick out her clothes ever since she was little," her mother recalls with a laugh. "I told her, 'This way you don't have to worry about clothes at all. Don't worry about it, just try it. If you don't like it, you can go back to your base school.'"

Taylor says: "I ended up loving it when I got there. I could get dressed in five minutes, which meant I got to sleep more. And then, starting in 11th grade, I could go back to wearing what I wanted since we were taking classes on (St. Augustine's) cam-

Please see **ACADEMY/2A**



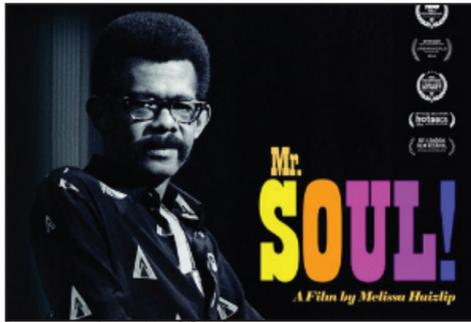
The Pope Family in Raleigh cir. 1900s.



Raleigh teens celebrate Juneteenth in 2019.



Sweet Honey in the Rock



Documentary: Mr. SOUL!

Business hub comes to SE Raleigh

By Lori Roberts

JLT COMMUNICATIONS

Southeast Raleigh native and longtime developer James Montague's F7 International Development, Inc. will mark the start of construction of a \$4 million entrepreneurial hub with a groundbreaking ceremony the community is welcome to attend and celebrate.

The 16,000-square-foot Montague Plaza will house small businesses, and a program Montague created to offer hands-on training opportunities to give area students a competitive edge in moving toward global business.

Rain or shine, the ceremony will be June 17, 11 a.m. to noon, at 2718 Rock Quarry Road, next to Southeast Raleigh High School. Demolition of the two structures, once a gas station and the boyhood homestead of Raleigh developer Bill Goodwin, is planned for July 31.

Montague will host the groundbreaking, joined by special guests Mayor Mary-Ann Baldwin; Raleigh City Councilor Corey Branch; Wake County Commissioner James West; Bobbitt CEO Brian Denisar; Global Xperts CTO and F7 Technology Partner Neil Kumar; Rene Daughtry of Aisymmetry; F&M Bank President Steve Fisher; Opportunity Zone Representatives Wilson Lester and Napoleon Wallace; and Raleigh City Councilor Stormie Forte.

Montague purchased the land and announced plans for Montague Plaza last year amid the COVID-19 pandemic, hoping to inspire the community he grew up in, often gripped by disparities in everything from education and health care to affordable housing and economic development.

"It symbolizes for my family the next step of what we envision for our community," said Montague, 50. "Southgate is right there, and that's the neighborhood where we started. Being able to contribute and give back to our community is priceless for us. We're very excited about it and ready to get started. Now, we have to internalize that excitement and turn it into meaningful action."

The property is in an Opportunity Zone, an avenue Montague applauds to encourage investors to contribute to projects that affect people and communities often overlooked and rarely impacted.

Montague's footprint in commercial and residential real estate began in

Please see **HUB/2A**

Triangle-wide Juneteenth celebrations

By Bonitta Best
editor@triangletribune.com

Many churches celebrate "Watch Night" on New Year's Eve. It was invented on Jan. 1, 1863, as enslaved and free African Americans in Confederate states gathered in churches and homes awaiting news that the Emancipation Proclamation had taken effect. Their prayers were answered at the stroke of midnight.

However, not everyone was freed. Because the state of Texas was still under Confed-

erate control, and didn't have to abide by the Proclamation, over 250,000 enslaved people were not freed until June 19, 1865. It took over 2,000 Union troops to arrive in Galveston Bay, Texas, and announce that they were free at last! Thus, Juneteenth was born in Texas on June 19.

A plethora of activities and celebrations will be held around the Triangle in honor of the holiday in some states. With last year's cancellations and the current racial unrest,

this year's celebrations have taken on a more important significance.

FUQUAY-VARINA

* June 18, 5-7 p.m. and June 19, 12-2 p.m. - email manifest-fuquay@gmail.com for more information.

RALEIGH

* June 16, 7 p.m. via Zoom - a panel discussion by N.C. Museum of History curator Earl Ijames and education section chief Chrystal Regan. Visit

ncmuseumofhistory.org.

* June 18-20 - A Celebration of Emancipation with the Pope Family at Pope House Museum, the historic home of Dr. Manassa T. Pope - one of Raleigh's first licensed Black physicians - and family:

- June 18, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.: guest speaker, award-winning children's author and 2021 Piedmont Laureate Kelly Starling Lyons

- June 19, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.: the Pope House Museum, in

Plase see **JUNETEENTH/2A**

Day 2 Day Dads program helps men be better fathers

By Freda Freeman
CORRESPONDENT

RALEIGH - Marquee Yarborough, 30, of Zebulon, is working each day to be a better father for his three children: Ja'Zaivin, 7; Nevaeh, also 7; and Ja'Kye, 5. One way he's doing that is through fatherhood programs run by the Family Resource Center South Atlantic.

Yarborough was incarcerated when he found out about the Family Resource Center's Day 2 Day Dads program through other inmates who recommended he sign up for the classes. Released on bail in September, after serving 26 months, he continues to take classes.

Yarborough, who shares joint custody of his children, said he wants to be a steady presence in their lives.

"I said I'm going to take this class serious and really be there for my kids. Growing up, I didn't have a father figure in my life, so by me having three kids, I was away a lot because I was working so much and then the jail thing



Marquee Yarborough with two of his three children: Nevaeh and Ja'Zaivin.

happened, so it was like I'm missing too much time with my kids," he said.

The Family Resource Center in Raleigh has provided support services for families in 15 counties, primarily in Eastern North Carolina and the Triangle area, for 25 years.

In addition to the Dads program, the organization holds

annual fatherhood conferences with workshops and featured speakers. "We provide fatherhood programs, we work with families who have children with special needs, we work with middle and high school students on bullying and provide sexual avoidance

Please see **DADS/2A**

Many kids head to summer school

By Carolyn Thompson
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

With her three teenagers vaccinated against COVID-19, Aja Purnell-Mitchell left it up to them to decide whether to go back to school during summer break. The decision was unanimous: summer school.

"Getting them back into it, helping them socialize back with their friends, maybe meet some new people, and, of course, pick up the things that they lacked on Zoom," the Durham County mother said, ticking off her hopes for the session ahead, which will be the first time her children have been in the classroom

Please see **COVID/2A**

Triangle-wide Juneteenth celebrations

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collaboration with the Southern Historical Collection at the UNC Chapel Hill's Wilson Library, will feature the original 1851 Certificate of Freedom papers belonging to Dr. M.T. Pope's father, Jonas Elias Pope, for one day only. Special guest Michael Conner will perform "The Foreshadowing of a People: Reflections from the Past."

* June 18-20, N.C. Museum of Art Juneteenth weekend of activities:

- June 18, 7:30 p.m.: Sweet Honey in the Rock live concert, Theater in the Museum Park

- June 19, 10 a.m. to noon: Liberation Station Live!, Museum Park; noon-1:15 p.m.: A Conversation with Linda Simmons-Henry, author of "Culture Town," East Building; 2-4:30 p.m.: screening of "Wilmington on Fire," East Building; 8:30-10:30 p.m.: screening of "Mr. SOUL!" Museum Park

- June 20, 3-7:30 p.m.: Celebrating Black Music Month with DJ Thoro, Museum Park

* June 19, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - C3 at The Venue and the African American Dance Ensemble presents "Celebrating Freedom," 5299 Capital Blvd.

* June 19, 5-9 p.m. - a diverse group of teenagers will celebrate Juneteenth at 1032 Creek Farm Drive

* June 19, 9 a.m. to noon - Visit the State Capitol grounds at 1 E. Edenton St. while chalk artist Kiara Sanders creates line drawings on the sidewalks of the Juneteenth flag and portraits of freedmen and freedwomen whose lives intersected with the State Capitol. Attendees can help color in the portraits and write names of other ancestors who lived in slavery. A Capital City Juneteenth Celebration at Dix Park will follow. Visit www.juneteenthraleigh.org.

DURHAM

* June 17, 2 p.m. - N.C. Central's Shepard Memorial Library, virtual panel discussion moderated by Andre Vann. Register at nccu.webex.com.

* June 18, 3-9 p.m. -

Hayti Heritage Center, 804 Old Fayetteville St.

* June 19, 1-10 p.m. - Spectacular Magazine's 16th annual Juneteenth, East Main Street, downtown.

* June 19, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Stagville State Historic Site where over 1,000 slaves were freed. Register at www.ncdcr.gov/juneteenth.

CHAPEL HILL

* June 18-19 - inaugural Chapel Hill-Carrboro Juneteenth Celebration. Most events are virtual, with a few in-person or hybrid:

- June 18, 7 p.m. - performances by poets laureate CJ Suitt and Fred Joiner, and country music singer Rissi Palmer. Author Annette Gordon-Reed will discuss her new book "On Juneteenth."

- June 19, 4 p.m. - residents are invited to decorate vehicles and join the motorcade through historic Black neighborhoods. Other performances, both online and in-person, during the two-day event. Visit chapelhillcarrboro.juneteenth.com.

Day 2 Day Dads program helps men be better dads

Continued from page 1A

education. We help parents of preschoolers prepare for school readiness, we help families with juveniles involved in the juvenile justice system," said Derrick Byrd, a co-founder and executive director.

The FRCSA received a five-year \$5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources in 2015 to establish the Day 2 Day Dads program serving Wake, Durham, and Edgecombe counties. Although the grant ended in September, the Center, which receives state and federal funding, will continue to provide the program with support from Wake County Human Services.

"There is such a void when it comes to programs that are specific to dads, so we were very excited because we were the only ones in North Carolina to receive a grant to be able to institutionalize some infrastructure that would be available to dads throughout the Triangle area. Throughout the years, we've been able to provide a number of different services to dads. We've served close to a thousand fathers in five

years," Byrd said.

The program, which is free, is based on a 12-session curriculum that includes Inside Out Dad for fathers who are or have been incarcerated; 24/7 Dad for fathers in the community; Love Notes for young fathers ages 16 to 24; and Strengthening Families Program for fathers and their families. The program also provides information about domestic and family violence, teen dating violence, child abuse and neglect, child support, visitation, job readiness skills, and job placement assistance. There are group sessions, one-on-one training, and a fatherhood support group that meets monthly.

"We talk about many different topics in the curriculum. We talk about what it means to be a man, co-parenting, grief and loss and anger, child and adolescent development, men's health. One of the things we've found is that usually by the fourth session the guys are really engaged and into it. What it does is help to create a very safe space for men and fathers to be able to share and understand that they are not alone in some

of the challenges and barriers that they are experiencing," Byrd said.

Yarborough said the classes are helping him improve his parenting skills and learning how to relate to each child individually. "I've learned we're all going to make mistakes in life. Your kids are going to always look up to you, they're going to always be there watching the things that you do, so it made me reevaluate myself. I kind of turned everything that was a negative into a positive," he said.

Yarborough recommends the program to other fathers who may be struggling or facing challenges. "The people there are really willing to help you no matter what issues you have," he said.

The FRCSA will hold its annual N.C. Fatherhood Conference on June 19. The virtual conference is from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. There will be guest speakers, informative workshops, and the father of the year will be recognized.

Youth over 13 may attend. For more information, go to nccfatherhood.com or frcsa.org.



An artist's drawing of the new \$4 million entrepreneurial hub in SE Raleigh.

Business hub brings entrepreneurs home

Continued from page 1A

1998 when he and his wife Wanza started F7. His portfolio includes Statue Side Business Park at Rock Quarry Road; Elder's Peak independent living community on Creech Road; and cultural commerce centers on Rock Quarry Road, and in Apex, Fayetteville, and Greensboro.

F7 also is completing its own affordable housing project off Raleigh Boulevard, and has partnered with Saint Augustine's University's CDC to develop Falcon's Point, a mixed-use development on Tarboro

Road. Montague also is a minority business leader with the project team for the \$2.2 billion Downtown South project in the South Saunders Street and I-440 corridor.

The design and construction of Montague Plaza will be overseen by Bobbitt, a Raleigh-based general contracting firm known for its work across the Carolinas, including several projects already in the F7 portfolio. Bobbitt also will lead hands-on, laboratory-style training for youth in the trades of carpentry, brick

masonry, plumbing, and electricity.

Several local businesses have already committed to open shops in the plaza. Among them are an educational STEM program for students and young adults; Einnaf Cosmetic, offering sales and marketing training; Crowned by Luxury; Ism Music Studio; KCSSU; Griffis Barbershop; Outerskin2; Phoenix Physical Therapy; Jerk Masters Jamaican Restaurant; Dr. A. Shepherd Concierge Service; and University Luxury Rental Cars.



Kenya Moore-Kerr

Wake Young Women's Leadership Academy wins over skeptic

Continued from page 1A

Getting over that one stumbling block proved to be fortuitous. Due to her strong academic performance and the many opportunities WYWLA has provided, Taylor received the prestigious Dovey Johnson Roundtree Scholarship to Spelman College in Atlanta. It is a full four-year scholarship worth \$178,240. (She was also offered a full scholarship to N.C. Central University, the Cheatham-White scholarship. In all, her scholarship offers totaled \$387,354.)

"Taylor is not only a leader," says dean of students Katie di Carlo. "She is a creator and innovator. She has held nearly every leadership position at our school, served as the first editor-in-chief of our yearbook, and founded one of our service clubs, Junior Civitans."

When I think of an OWL (our mascot is an OWL: Outstanding Woman Leader), the first student I think of is Taylor."

On top of that, Taylor has

found time to work at McDonald's (where she was named employee of the month) and Kohl's, as well as at The Gifted Arts, Inc. as a social media marketing intern. Through her school, she also has had the opportunity to participate in mentorship programs at Cisco and at a small nonprofit, CliniSpan, that conducts clinical trials.

Oh, and thanks to a few AP courses and numerous courses taken at SAU, Taylor will head to Spelman with 42 college credit hours already completed. When asked if it was intimidating to sit in classes with college students, Taylor said, "I felt like WYWLA overprepared us. I felt like my high school classes were harder than my college classes. The professors sometimes expect more from us even than the regular college students. When we go on campus, we are there to represent our Early College."

Taylor will head to Spelman intending to study

psychology. Ultimately, she would like to become a psychiatrist who works in the criminal justice system. She and her mother both recognize the many ways WYWLA set her on this path, and they both recommend any female student in Wake County consider applying. "I would say just try it," Taylor says. "If I would have never tried it, I would have never had some of these amazing opportunities that I have had or been able to earn all of these college credits."

Moore-Kerr has the added advantage of being an educator herself, giving her a unique perspective on all the benefits of the school.

"To see it through an educator lens and a parent lens, for us it was the perfect scenario for Taylor," she says. "I always tell them, we did our work as parents, and they really, really had the same vision for her, and they pushed her to just become better. It really is a gem of a school."



Aja Purnell-Mitchell, background, with her three children: Cartier, 14; Kyra, 15, and Kyla, 13, at a local food hub in Durham.

Another COVID side effect: Many kids head to summer school

Continued from page 1A

since the outbreak took hold in the spring of 2020. Across the U.S., more children than ever before could be in classrooms for summer school this year to make up for lost learning during the outbreak, which caused monumental disruptions in education. School districts nationwide are expanding their summer programs and offering bonuses to get teachers to take part.

Under the most recent federal pandemic relief package, the Biden administration is requiring states to devote some of the billions of dollars to summer programs. The U.S. Education Department said it is too early to know how many students will sign up. But the number is all but certain to exceed the estimated 3.3 million who went to mandatory or optional summer school in 2019, before the pandemic. "It's an understatement to say the needs are greater this year," said Kalman Hettleman, an education policy analyst in Maryland.

In North Carolina, Purnell-Mitchell's children will have access to five or six weeks of full-day programs that include academics and activities like sports or music. Districts also will provide transportation and meals, thanks to the influx of federal spending. Under a unanimously passed North Carolina law, the nearly 1 in 4 students deemed to be in danger of falling behind — about 200,000 students statewide — are being given priority for summer school, with extra slots open to others who want them. Some districts are inviting all of their students.

School systems must devote some of the federal funding to deal with COVID-19's disproportionate effect on students from poor families, those whose first language is not English, members of minority groups and those who are homeless or in foster care. The expanded programs around the country have greatly increased the need not only for teachers but for bus drivers, custodians and cafeteria employees.

Some North Carolina teachers will get a \$1,200 bonus. There are also bonuses for teachers in certain grades whose students show improvement in reading and math. Elsewhere, a district in Anderson, South Carolina, has nearly doubled teachers' summer school pay to \$60 an hour.

Purnell-Mitchell said her children had different reasons for wanting to go to school this summer. Her older daughter, Kyra Mitchell, who has autism, missed the one-on-one interaction with teachers that helps her learn, while Kyla Mitchell did well remotely but wasn't able to make new friends and socialize. Her son, Cartier Mitchell, said he had had enough time off and was ready to go back.

"I think it's going to give them some of the milestone markers that they might have missed and give them a better outlook for going into the doors" in the fall, Purnell-Mitchell said, "instead of feeling like they've lost a year and a half of knowing what they're doing."

Triangle real estate market explodes in wake of pandemic

By Jennifer Bringle
CAROLINA PUBLIC PRESS

One of the most unexpected effects of the COVID-19 pandemic has been its impact on housing in the United States. Shortages of homebuilding materials due to factory shutdowns and other supply chain disruptions have made the price of lumber and other supplies soar to record highs — if they're available at all. And a shortage of available housing, coupled with high demand, means it's a seller's market, with homes staying on the market for a short period and often going for more than the asking price.

Given the dramatic shift in inventory because of the pandemic, some buyers are left wondering if the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine and people moving about more freely with many of the pandemic safety protocols being rescinded could mean another shift in the North Carolina real estate market. The short answer: It looks unlikely to change anytime soon. While COVID certainly has made an impact, the current market is the product of a long-brewing stew of factors, real estate agents say.

"I think the housing market is hot because of issues that have been growing for years," said real estate agent Jason Bragg, who is an agent with Leonard Ryden Burr Real Estate. "We haven't been building enough housing in recent years; they didn't build enough housing during the recession, and it's going to take a long time to build up enough homes to meet the demand."

What's driving that demand? One factor is the growing popularity of North Carolina as a relocation destination. Cities like Charlotte and Raleigh routinely show up on lists like

U.S. News & World Report's Best Places to Live, ranking No. 6 and No. 11, respectively, for 2021. And while those lists can be arbitrary, data from moving companies backs up the hype. North Carolina ranked No. 6 among the top states for inbound moves, according to the study. A similar study conducted by Atlas Van Lines ranked North Carolina at No. 2 for inbound moves.

Announcements about companies like Apple and Google moving some operations to the Triangle are expected to drive up housing costs in markets where affordable housing is already limited. And, in the wake of COVID, the flight of people from densely populated cities in states like New York and New Jersey has been fueled by fear of virus transmission, as well as newfound flexibility thanks to work-from-home policies. For those who've transitioned to permanent work-from-home status, the freedom to ditch high rents or mortgage costs in major cities for more affordable locales like North Carolina has proved tempting.

"For a lot of people, the idea of retiring to the beach was something they'd have to wait on, but if you have the right job, you can still retire 20 years down the road, but you can live where you want to be right now," said Mark Bushnell, senior vice president of external affairs for the N.C. Realtors Association. "And Wilmington, not coincidentally, is one of the hot spots for that."

While the pandemic triggered spikes in unemployment and financial ruin for some, those whose jobs weren't negatively impacted are finding themselves with more cash to spend after a year off from travel, dining out and spending money on concerts and other events. "It's



been a tale of two economies," said Brett Bushnell, Realtor and owner, Tri Local Realty LLC in Chapel Hill. "Folks who work in the service industry got decimated in the last 15 months, and those who didn't work in service, their personal balance sheets seem to be in better shape. So, even if they start to spend money again on travel, they may have been able to pay down some debt during the pandemic."

For those who've been able to reduce debt or save during the pandemic, that means more available funds for down payments and above-asking offers — a good determinant of the stability of a hot real estate market. "The amount of the average down payment we're seeing is 22% to 23%, which is one of the strongest in the country," Bushnell said. "That makes the market here less susceptible to downturning because of the equity position."

While builders can't anticipate their costs, homebuyers know they can secure mortgage loans for some of the lowest rates in recent history. But with the

threat of rate increases later this year, it's possible buyers will be less likely to take the plunge at a higher interest rate.

With the fall and winter generally bringing a slowdown in home listings and sales, that, combined with a mostly vaccinated population ready to travel and see loved ones, could spell a cooling of the real estate market as the year wears on. But until material shortages are worked out and homebuilding can return to a more normal rate, real estate agents said don't expect to see a significant change in the home market in North Carolina.

"In the short term, this fall and winter, we might see some people being distracted with getting back to holiday activities and going to see grandma and stuff like that," Bragg said. "There may be a little bit of a slowdown this fall, but nothing that would slow the market down enough to keep prices from staying in the range they're in now. I think we're going to be like this for a while because there are so few homes on the market."

GOP lawmakers can't join NC voter ID lawsuit

By Gary D. Robertson
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

RALEIGH — A judge didn't step over the line when she refused to let North Carolina's legislative leaders formally defend the state's latest photo identification voting law with other state government attorneys, a federal appeals court ruled Monday.

A majority of the 15 judges on the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld 2019 decisions by District Judge Loretta Biggs preventing House Speaker Tim Moore and Senate leader Phil Berger from becoming defendants in a race-bias lawsuit filed by the state NAACP and several local chapters. Barring a reversal by the U.S. Supreme Court, lawyers for legislative leaders who helped pass the 2018 law won't be able to argue for it at a trial set to begin next January.

Nine of the judges agreed that Biggs didn't abuse her discretion with her decision. Biggs found no evidence that lawyers from Attorney General Josh Stein's office — representing State Board of Elections members, the named defendants in the lawsuit — were inadequately defending the law on their own.

Writing the majority opinion, Circuit Judge Pamela Harris said that the lower court properly followed federal rules in determining whether Berger and Moore should be allowed to intervene. The legislators' "purported interest in defending (the law) on behalf of the state of North Carolina was adequately represented already by the State Board of Elections and attorney general," Harris wrote.

Republicans have said they should be allowed to

defend a law they approved. They've also pointed to Stein's previous opposition to a voter ID law and his office's defense of the current law in a similar state court lawsuit in April as proof GOP legislative leaders need to get involved. There's been no verdict in the state lawsuit.

Harris wrote that Stein, a Democrat, expressing views at odds with the law in the past "is no ground for a federal court to infer that he would abdicate his official duty to the state by subterfuge, mounting a sham defense of the statute."

The entire appeals court, based in Richmond, Virginia, agreed to hear the arguments after a majority on a three-judge panel declared last summer that Biggs hadn't scrutinized the matter properly and told her to try again. The NAACP's lawyers asked that the full appeals court weigh in. The civil rights group is pleased with Monday's decision, state NAACP president the Rev. Anthony Spearman said in an emailed statement. In such legal matters, "there is an attorney general elected by the people and assigned by the constitution to perform this duty," he added.

The six dissenting appeals court judges wrote three opinions among them. Biggs failed to consider a North Carolina law that requests a federal court allow both the legislative and executive branches to participate in lawsuits challenging a state law, Circuit Judge Marvin Quattlebaum wrote. "Although federal courts need not completely defer to that public policy decision, the district court cannot fail to give the state's

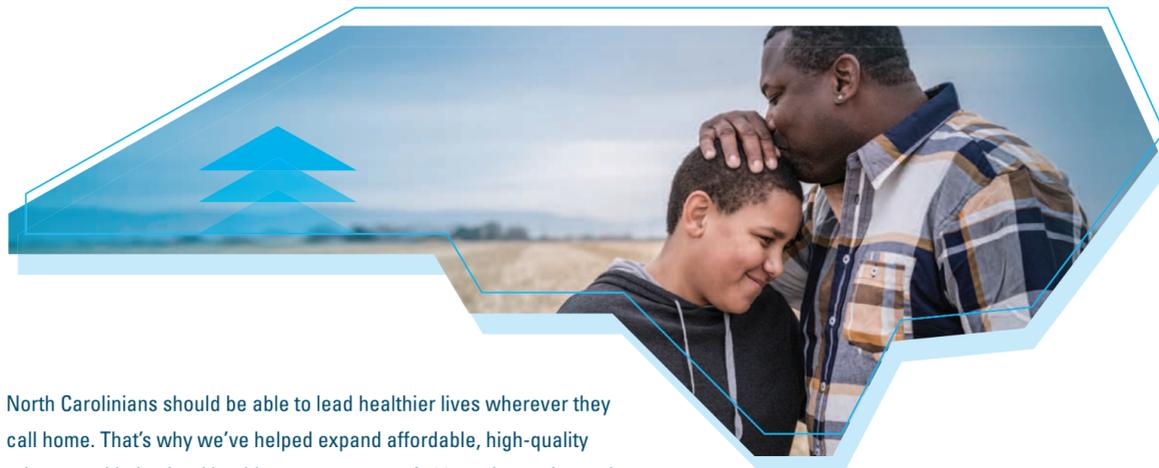
Please see **LAWSUIT/5A**

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100

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Overturn Dylann Roof's death sentence — for me, not for him

By Sharon Risher
RELIGION NEWS SERVICE

The most famous person currently on federal death row is in the news again. Last week, lawyers for Dylann Roof, a white supremacist who murdered my mother, two cousins and six others in the Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina, because they were Black, argued the first appeal of his conviction and death sentence.

Six years after the shooting, we're talking again about a racist mass killer, hearing his name over and over. Here are the names we should be remembering: the Rev. Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, Dayne Middleton Doctor, Cynthia Hurd, Susie Jackson, Ethel Lance (my mother), the Rev. Clementa Pinckney, Tywanza Sanders, the Rev. Daniel Simmons and Myra Thompson.

I have no complaint that our legal system requires that every death sentence be extensively reviewed, even when there is no question about the killer's guilt. Appeals are vitally important because we must make sure that we get it right. God only knows how many times we've gotten it wrong, not only about actual guilt, but

about culpability. Mental health is a valid concern, and I know that the man who killed my mother is not of a sound mind.

But for a few days now I have been returned to a space of heavy lament. I didn't understand at first exactly why I was feeling so awful, but for survivors, appeals turn out to be the worst torture imaginable. Every time this case is in the news, I am brought right back to that terrible day and the searing pain of the weeks, months and years that have followed. It is awful.

Despite this pain and the damage done to my family, and possibly because of it, I reject the death penalty. I am aware that racism and other unfairnesses taint the criminal legal system in the United States; there are many other reasons to oppose capital punishment. But I know I am called to this work of ending it because these years of appeals can only be shortened if we abolish the death penalty altogether.

Without a death sentence, as I understand, there is just one appeal, after which we never have to hear the killer's name again. With a death sentence, it is as if the victim's family is on death row, too. We do not deserve to live in limbo, waiting decades instead of

just a year or two for finality in the criminal proceedings for the person who killed our loved ones.

Whatever happens legally, I know that this killer will never be free. For me that is enough. As a Christian, I also know what my faith teaches and I am grateful for the strength I get from Jesus. After wrestling with it for several years, I forgave him. In doing so, I was able to release myself from the outrage and hatred that was consuming me with a desire for revenge. Now I wish our government would also give up on revenge. We're only on the first round of appeals. How much longer will this go on?

I want his death sentence to be overturned, not for him, but for me. We can be safe from people who hurt and kill others without executions. I know not all will agree with me, but from my perspective, ending the death penalty is the best thing we can do to help murder victim families heal.

The Rev. Sharon Risher lives in Charlotte, and is a leading spokesperson with Death Penalty Action, which is working to pass HR262/SB582, the Federal Death Penalty Prohibition Act of 2021.



COURTESY

Acapella rendition of Black national anthem released for Black Music Month

By Bill Carpenter
SPECIAL TO THE TRIBUNE

Pop-Gospel group Brandon Camphor & One Way have recorded a brilliant acapella rendition of the Black national anthem, "Lift Every Voice and Sing," in celebration of Black Music Month. "It's not only an anthem," says Camphor. "It's also a prayer of thanksgiving to God for His faithfulness and our freedom. That's what inspired us to record it."

Three of the Washington, D.C.-based foursome of Julia McMillan, Fred Cleveland, Angela Marie Jones, and group leader, Brandon Camphor, have been singing the song since their days as students at the Duke Ellington School for the Performing Arts. "Angela and I were in the school choir together, Fred

was in the theater department," Camphor recalls. "We sang that at almost every school concert."

The audio and a music video of the 2-minute rendition was released to Apple Music, iTunes, and YouTube on June 4. "After the great response to our acapella 'Happy Birthday, Jesus' Christmas song last year, we realized that people really liked hearing us deliver acapella music," Camphor adds. "It's also a way to showcase the group's vocal ability, harmony, and style."

The song was composed by James Weldon Johnson as a poem in 1900. His brother, J. Rosamond Johnson, set it to music in 1905 in recognition of Abraham Lincoln's birthday. In 1919, the NAACP proclaimed it the Negro national anthem. Over the

years, the song has resonated with new generations.

It's referenced in Maya Angelou's 1969 autobiography, "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings." Motown legend Kim Weston opened the WattStax concert film with her take on it. Branford Marsalis' rendition was featured in Spike Lee's 1989 film, "Do the Right Thing." Melba Moore commandeered an all-star version in 1990 with a host of R&B stars. Beyoncé performed it at Coachella in 2018.

Over the last decade, the group has earned four Billboard Top 30 chart hits with the songs, "God of Mercy," "His Name," "You Are God," and their biggest hit yet, "I Choose You," which peaked at No. 21 on the Gospel Airplay chart in 2015.

GOP lawmakers can't join NC voter ID lawsuit

Continued from page 3A

choice any weight," Quattlebaum wrote, adding that Biggs also set the bar to intervene too high.

GOP Sen. Danny Britt of Robeson County said in a news release that the legislature "has zero confidence" in Stein to defend the law in court and that Republicans will monitor closely Stein's actions in the case going forward. Stein spokesperson Nazneen Ahmed said the attorney general's office "will continue to vigorously defend the state in every matter we handle in accordance with the law."

Quattlebaum and Harris were on another three-judge panel that declared unanimously last December that Biggs wrongly blocked the 2018 voter ID law from being carried out before the trial because she said there was a strong likelihood that the NAACP's lawsuit would be successful. Those appeals judges decided Biggs erred when declaring the photo ID mandate was tainted by racial bias largely because a 2013 voter ID law had been struck down on similar grounds. The 2018 law was enacted a month after voters agreed to add a voter ID provision to the state constitution.

AROUND THE TRIANGLE

RALEIGH

PLAY

Radio Golf, a play by August Wilson, will be performed June 11-27, Pure Life Theatre, 3801 Hillsborough St. Visit purelifetheatre.com.

FESTIVAL

NC Hops Festival is June 12-13, State Fairgrounds, 1025 Blue Ridge Road. Tickets at shoplocalraleigh.org.

FORUM

Livable Raleigh will host a virtual forum on Tax Incremental Grants June 14, 7 p.m. Register on Zoom.

REGGAE

Rhythms of Reggae & Rum Punch tasting is June 16, 6:30-9 p.m., The Wright Village, 420 Hubert St. Register on eventbrite.com.

PLAY

Mike Wiley will perform Howard Craft's new play, "The Fire of Freedom," June 18-20, Theatre Raleigh, 6638 Old Wake Forest Road. Visit theatreraleigh.com.

BLOCK PARTY

BlackDollarNC will host its second Shopper's Block Party 2021 June 19, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., corner of Blount and Cabarrus streets.

CONFERENCE

NC Fatherhood conference is June 19 virtually. Visit ncfatherhood.com.

CAMPAIGN

Poor People's Campaign will hold a hybrid mass assembly June 21, 5:30 p.m., Halifax Mall, 300 N. Salisbury St. Visit www.3rdReconstruction.org.

FOOD

NCDHHS will extend its food assistance program through the summer. Visit www.ncdhhs.gov/PEBT.

CARY

GRANTS

CCME Foundation is accepting applications from nonprofits in the health care field for one-year grants. Visit online.foundationsource.com. Deadline: June 15.

DURHAM

DANCE:

* Empower Dance Studio will host a Dance is Life Recital June 15, 6 p.m., Historic Durham Bulls Athletic Park, 500 W. Corporation St. Tickets at www.eventbrite.com.

* American Dance Festival will host two evenings of dance, film and music June 15-16, 7:30 p.m., Durham's Mystic Farm & Distillery, 1212 N. Mineral

Springs Rd. Tickets at americandancefestival.org.

HBCUS

North Carolina Legislative Black Caucus Foundation will host its annual HBCU scholarship event virtually on June 17, 5-7 p.m. The theme is "HBCUs: Continuing to Pave the Way." Register on www.eventbrite.com.

FESTIVAL

Nappy Luv Festival is June 18, 9 p.m. to 2 a.m., 506 E. Ramseur St., Suite 4. Register at eventbrite.com.

WHEELS

Bull City Reels on Wheels is June 18, 8-11 p.m., Durham Co. Memorial Stadium. Tickets at www.dprplaymore.org.

JUNETEENTH

Most City of Durham offices will be closed June 18 in honor of Juneteenth.

MISC.

SCHOLARSHIPS

* American College of Education is offering two full education scholarships to HBCU graduates for a master's and a doctoral degree. Contact: Jacqui.cook@ace.edu. Deadline: June 20.

BOOK

AMERICA ON FIRE
By Elizabeth Hinton
Liveright Publishing,
\$29.95 HC

What began in spring 2020 as local protests in response to the killing of George Floyd by Minneapolis police quickly exploded into a massive nationwide movement. Millions of mostly young people defiantly flooded into the nation's streets, demanding an end to police brutality and to the broader, systemic repression of Black people and other people of color.

To many observers, the protests appeared to be without precedent in their scale and persistence. Yet, as the acclaimed historian Elizabeth Hinton demonstrates in "America on Fire," the events of 2020 had clear precursors and any attempt to understand our current crisis requires a reckoning with the recent past.

Even in the aftermath of Donald Trump, many Americans consider the decades since the civil rights movement in the mid-1960s as a story of progress toward greater inclusiveness and equal-

ity.

Hinton's sweeping narrative uncovers an altogether different history, taking us on a troubling journey from Detroit in 1967 and Miami in 1980 to Los Angeles in 1992 and beyond to chart the persistence of structural racism and one of its primary consequences, the so-called urban riot.

Hinton offers a critical corrective: the word riot was nothing less than a racist trope applied to events that can only be properly understood as rebellions - explosions of collective resistance to an unequal and violent order. As she suggests, if rebellion and the conditions that precipitated it never disappeared, the optimistic story of a post-Jim Crow United States no longer holds.

Black rebellion, "America on Fire" powerfully illustrates, was born in response to poverty and exclusion, but most immediately in reaction to police violence. In 1968, President Lyndon Johnson launched the "War on Crime," sending militarized police forces into impoverished Black neighborhoods. Facing increasing surveillance and brutality, residents threw rocks and Molotov cocktails at officers, plundered local businesses, and vandalized exploitative insti-

tutions. Hinton draws on exclusive sources to uncover a previously hidden geography of violence in smaller American cities - from York, Pennsylvania, to Cairo, Illinois, to Stockton, California.

The central lesson from these eruptions - that police violence invariably leads to community violence - continues to escape policymakers, who respond by further criminalizing entire groups instead of addressing underlying socioeconomic causes. The results are the hugely expanded policing and prison regimes that shape the lives of so many Americans today. Presenting a new framework for understanding our nation's enduring strife, "America on Fire" is also a warning: rebellions will surely continue unless police are no longer called on to manage the consequences of dismal conditions beyond their control, and until an oppressive system is finally remade on the principles of justice and equality.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Hinton is associate professor of history and African American studies at Yale University and a professor of law at Yale Law School. The author of "From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime," she lives in New Haven, Connecticut.

MOVIE REVIEW

'In the Heights' showcases Latinx community

By Dwight Brown
NNPA NEWS WIRE

Once upon a time, in Nueva York, the streets of Washington Heights were paved with Latinx residents who dreamed of a better life. That's the premise of the Tony Award-winning Broadway musical "In the Heights" by Lin-Manuel Miranda. That same spirit propels this over-the-top screen adaptation. It's entertaining, jubilant but doesn't exhibit the same absolute genius of Miranda's Ham-

ilton.

Director Jon M. Chu, who blew the roof off "Crazy Rich Asians," helms this tricky project, which bridges stage and screen. Subtlety is not his thing. Expect the streets of gritty Washington Heights to glisten with sunshine that beams down on extras dancing, bobbing and weaving on cue like in any music video. Add in a scene that uses animated images of golf clubs and baseball bats. Toss in a plethora of subplots with various characters trying

to reach their goals and the shenanigans get a bit hectic. Oddly, the film's most striking moments are the smaller ones: a couple dancing on a building or a beloved character transitioning. Whether you prefer the MTV garish or the personal, there is plenty for everyone.

Usnavi (Anthony Ramos, Hamilton) owns De La Vega's bodega. He squirms away every dime he can to follow his dream of returning to the Dominican Republic to open a bar. He runs the shop with

his younger cousin Sonny (Gregory Diaz IV). Usnavi's best friend Benny (Corey Hawkins, BlackKkLansman) is the dispatcher at a car service company run by Kevin Rosario (Jimmy Smits, L.A. Law).

Benny is in love with his boss' daughter Nina (Leslie Grace), who has just returned from college. And one of her best buddies is Vanessa (Melissa Barrera, TV's Vida) who longs to be a fashion designer. Now she's a manicurist in a hair salon run by Daniela (Daphne Rubin-Vega, Wild

Things), who's moving to the Bronx for cheaper rent. That change has upset her customers. Daniela is incredulous: "Our people survived slavery, conquistadors and genocide and you mean you can't survive the D train?!" (Love the social humor.)

So many people. So many dreams. So many storylines. It's easy enough to decipher, but further complicates a kinetic atmosphere. More emphasis on the center story of Usnavi's personal drama, career ambitions

and shy romances would hook the audience's attention even more. Instead, viewers have lots of distractions. The most touching subplot involves the community matriarch Abuela Claudia, as richly played by Olga Merediz, who was also in the Broadway version. She is the grounding force of the entire production. Scenes where neighbors gather at her home are heartwarming.

Somebody give the casting director a bonus. These are brilliant choices!

Saga of a HBCU coaching vacancy filled

The following is a true story. The names have been changed to protect the innocent.

A certain championship winning basketball coach - let's call him John - was going about his usual business. One day out of the blue, he gets a call from an athletic director at a Division I program, asking if he'd be interested in their men's basketball opening.

John knew about the vacancy but really had no interest. This program hasn't finished above .500 since the 2011-12 season and doesn't look to be getting any better.

B-U-T, when an AD calls you, instead of the other way around, you got to listen, right?

Of course, the first question John asks is, "what type of financial package are we talking about?" The answer surprised and intrigued him.

It was worth a consideration of uprooting his family from the south to the north. Then the AD asked him to fill out an application.

John balked at that. "I don't apply for jobs," he replied. "Besides, you called me."

The AD explained that since they were a state institution, it was required and just a formality. The job was his if he wanted it. Still intrigued by the package deal and a chance to coach on the DI level, John agrees.

As with any coaching vacancy, a slew of candidates applied. And when it's a HBCU job, familiar names always pop up.

One, I'll call James, has either head coached or assistant coached at about 20 HBCU schools. Every place he's gone, he's either left under "can't talk about it" circumstances or just plain run out of town for sticking his nose in everybody's business.

James is out of coaching right now, but is inching to get back in. When he heard that John was the frontrunner (there are no secrets among coaches), he was on the phone pitching his skills for an assistant's spot. Sucking up is what I call it.

Another applicant, I'll call Judas, because he was ready to betray his employer after a year.

Judas was fired from his previous coaching job, was hired by a lower-level division school as head coach but has yet to coach a game due to the pandemic.

However, he still received a full paycheck and should be grateful. Instead, all he talks about is having ONE winning season so he can "get back to Division I" - a place he couldn't win when he was there.

I want to tell on him so bad, but I made a promise.

Meanwhile, John is moving up the chart. He is now one of three finalists for the job and is set to meet the university president. The AD has practically assured him the gig is his. Word is getting around. Colleagues are calling to congratulate him on the move. "James" is still pushing for a spot on his staff.

Then, suddenly, the climate changes. John still hasn't met with the president and now another name on the list appears to be the frontrunner. This candidate has none of the experience or championships John has, but he and the prez are "friends."

The congratulations stop, the AD stutters every time she talks to him. (Definitely a bad sign.)

Even James has stopped his brown-nosing. What was once a done deal is no deal at all.

John is more annoyed than angry. After all, he still has a job at a place that he enjoys working at, and they came after him instead of vice versa. No harm, no foul.

A couple of weeks later, the announcement is made official on the other guy. Oh yeah, James calls. He's been in contact with the new guy in hopes of getting on staff.

Never a dull moment in HBCU sports.



BONITTA BEST

Sports

Bull City Express Track Club surprised with monetary gift

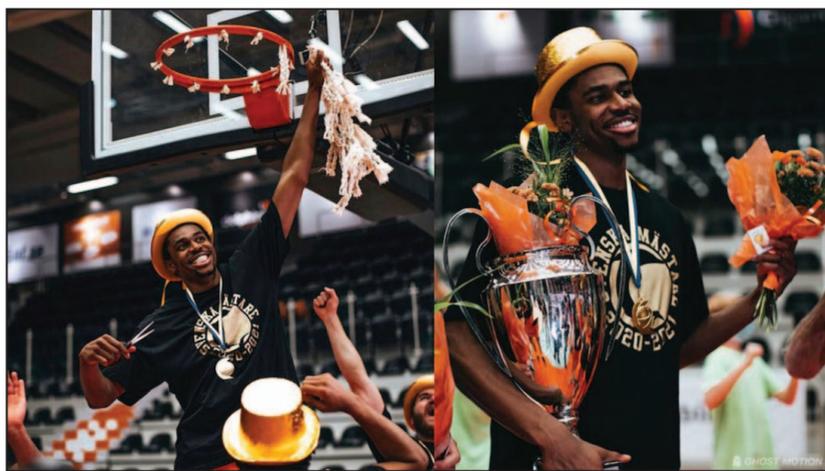


Academy Sports + Outdoors and North Carolina athletics recently partnered to provide Bull City Track Club with a \$500 gift card. The track club provides training opportunities with a focus on improving fitness and goal setting in a team environment. Academy Sports + Outdoors is the official sporting goods and outdoor retailer of the MEAC.

COLLEGE CORNER

FLORIDA A&M ATHLETICS

CONTRACT EXTENSION



Morgan State alumnus Phillip Carr.

St. Augustine's loses coaching legend; FAMU rewards coaches

The losses just keep coming in HBCU sports.

St. Augustine's former golf coach Lawrence Coleman's funeral was Tuesday. Coleman took over the golf program in 1972, one year after he graduated, and retired in 2009.

Along the way, he guided the Falcons to six HBCU national championships, including

five Division II titles and

seven CIAA championships.

In 1993, SAU defeated Jackson State by one stroke to win the HBCU championship. The win earned Coleman and the team an invite to the White House and a meeting with President Bill Clinton.

Coleman is in the National Black Golf Hall of Fame and CIAA Hall of Fame.

More summer camps
St. Augustine's men's basketball will hold a team camp June 19, 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., for grades nine to 12. Contact coach MarQuis Johnson.

* A 7-on-7 football camp is June 24-25 at 9 a.m. for grades nine to 12. Contact

coach David Bowser.

FAMU rewards coaches
Florida A&M coaches Willie Simmons, Robert McCullum and Sharon Pillow were given contract extensions.

Simmons led the Rattlers to a 9-2 football record and a 2019 HBCU national championship. It was FAMU's first winning season since 2011. Football opted out of last season.

McCullum was named the 2020-21 MEAC men's basketball coach of the year after guiding his team to the MEAC Tournament.

Pillow was hired last summer and has yet to coach a game since the

Please see SAU/7A

TENNIS



Queen Hargrove

Tennis classic honors Raleigh legend

RALEIGH TENNIS ASSOCIATION

Softball was Queen Hargrove's best sport until a bet by a friend that she couldn't hit a tennis ball. She may have lost the bet, but tennis was the big winner that day.

Hargrove dedicated herself to mastering the game of tennis after that. Years later, and you can still find her on the courts having fun with a goal to not just hit the ball but demolish it.

As Hargrove's interest in tennis grew, so did her desire to get more involved in the growth of tennis in Raleigh. Her focus became helping the youth on the southside, more specifically at the Ebony Racquet Club, where the funding was limited yet there were accomplished, skilled, and capable youth. Her passion was to showcase those kids and to help develop their future progress.

"Queen is the backbone and role model for the Club, which continues to provide a safe haven for all kids of color and in the Raleigh tennis community," says Bernice Kelly, USTA league captain.

Billy Battle, a former Club president and mentor to Hargrove, introduced her to the operational details and functions of the Ebony Racquet Club. "He was always there, guiding all that would listen to the knowledge that he was so willing to share and promote for the good of the Club," says Hargrove.

Regarding her own children, Hargrove says she has found that it was much easier to work, be a wife and mother if she taught her kids to play tennis instead of softball or baseball. Her children easily incorporated their mother's passion for tennis into their own game and then took that passion to another level, "as if they were the Williams sisters." Hargrove attributes her children's success on the court to both John Smith and Cy King, as they were instrumental in her kids' tennis etiquette and correct developmental skills.

"Queen exemplifies what tennis really is: a fun mix of competition, skill, smarts, sportsmanship, and humor. And a whole lot of love," says Nancy King, a teaching profession at Millbrook Tennis Center. "Every person who steps on the court with her is happier when they see her... some not as happy after she beats them. But even the defeated are glad to be on a court with her."

The Raleigh Tennis Association hosted a King of the Court Pro-Am fundraiser last weekend as part of the inaugural Cy King Summer Classic at the Raleigh Racquet Club and North Hills Club. Proceeds will go to the Cy King Community Tennis Fund, which provides grants for local youth tennis programs in underserved areas.

King is a tennis legend in the Raleigh community. He spent 30 years as the tennis director of the Raleigh Parks & Recreation Department and opened the sport up to everyone, no matter their economic status.



Barrington



Waterman

St. Augustine's loses coaching legend

Continued from page 6A
women's program opted out of the season. She played under legendary Tennessee coach Pat Summitt.

ASU's Barrington turns pro

Albany State baseball player Malik Barrington has signed a contract to play for the Birmingham Bloomfield Beavers in the United Shore Professional Baseball League.

Barrington played in 27 games for ASU, allowing 116 hits and 72 runs, while striking out 168. He is the 38th ASU player to sign a professional contract.

"I am so proud of Malik and what he has been able to accomplish. This is a great example of hard work paying off as Malik has been our hardest worker and most dedicated player the last three years, and it has truly paid off for him by signing a professional contract," ASU coach

Scot Hemmings said.

Swedish title
Morgan State alumnus Phillip Carr is getting a championship ring. Carr is a member of the Norrköping Dolphins who recently won a Swedish championship.

Carr certainly did his part, recording 28 points, five rebounds, two blocks and a steal in the final game. "It took awhile, but I finally won my first championship and it feels amazing," Carter wrote on Twitter.

Del. State hires coaches
Delaware State has filled its women's and men's basketball coaching vacancies.

Yonda "E.C." Hill takes the helm of the Lady Hornets. The former WNBA player was an assistant coach at Towson University the last two seasons. Hill replaces Dave Caputo whose contract was not re-

newed.
On the men's side, Stan Waterman replaces Eric Skeeters whose contract also was not renewed. Waterman has been a high school coach in Delaware for the past 30 seasons. This is his first head coaching college gig.

Aggie Pride
North Carolina A&T's track program tacked on a couple of prestigious awards last weekend. Coach Duane Ross was named U.S. Track and Field Cross Country Coaches Association men's and women's Southeast Region coach of the year.

Fifth-year senior Trevor Stewart earned the region's men's athlete of the year and sophomore Cambrea Sturgis was voted the women's athlete of the year.

Not to be outdone, Ron Garner got the men's assistant coach of the year.

BODYARMOR STATE GAMES

Jamian Johnson wins silver

STAFF REPORTS

The 2021 BODYARMOR State Games summer events kicked off last weekend with sand volleyball, sporting clays, track and field, and a youth baseball qualifier taking place throughout the Raleigh-Durham area.

Jamian Johnson, with the Jacksonville Track Elite Club, won the silver medal in the 11-12 boys javelin throw with a throw of 29.10 meters. The 12-year-old encourages more kids his age to start throwing the javelin.

"I was 10 when I started throwing the javelin," said Jamian. "It is really fun to do, and it helps get your arm strength up for other sports like baseball, football, and basketball. It also makes you feel like a Spartan warrior, which is really cool."

Jamian is a first-time BODYARMOR State Game



Jamian Johnson

participant.

"My experience has been great so far," he said. "I'm definitely going to keep throwing. I'm already looking forward to coming back next year."

Jamian also competed in the 100- and 200-meter dash, where he placed fourth with a time of 13.97 and fifth with a time of 29.42.

Competitive swimming opens new doors

BLACK KIDS SWIM

At 23 years old, Naomy Grand'Pierre has reached many milestones as a Haitian American swimmer. The Canadian-born, American-raised Olympic athlete has used her platform to inspire many young Black swimmers to participate in the sport, including fellow Haitians.

Grand'Pierre was first introduced to swimming after her mother witnessed her struggling in the water at a pool party when she was young. Sadly, three of her cousins drowned because they didn't know how to swim, and her mother didn't want her to share the same fate. Just a day later, Grand'Pierre's mother put her and her four younger siblings in swimming lessons as a safety precaution and eventually swimming became a family sport.

Grand'Pierre spoke with Black Kids Swim about her journey as a swimmer and why she decided to represent the country in the 2016 Olympics. "There was no official swim team back [in Haiti] in 2016," Grand'Pierre said. "So I was like, not only would I be able to pursue my dreams and go to the Olympics, but also be able to make a huge impact in my family's country and introduce swimming to the country."

"Now, I'm happy to say, four years later, swimming is a huge part of the culture and people are talking about it. There's this discussion around it. A lot of people are understanding that there are more ways to represent Haiti, not just through football but also through swimming."

The history-making



Grand'Pierre

swimmer also said it was a surreal experience representing Haiti in the Olympics internationally. "It was just awesome to represent an entire country, especially since it is often portrayed negatively in the media," Grand'Pierre said. "To get to represent Haiti in a way that was positive and uplifting meant the world to me because it meant that I was able to help other people that are struggling with their identity as being Haitian and show them there's nothing wrong with being Haitian."

Grand'Pierre says she is happy that more conversations are being held surrounding the awareness of drowning numbers and statistics in Haiti. The country is collectively working towards improving sports development but also safety surrounding the sport.

Now the star athlete is using her platform to help

the next generation of Haitian swimmers and athletes achieve their dreams through her #RoadtoTokyo project. She has teamed up with the Haitian Federation, and they're working to provide more support for the athletes and prepare them for what it's like to represent an entire country. Her YouTube channel and Vlog, The Undercurrent, is a resource for swimmers looking for encouragement and advice on hair and skin care for swimmers.

Through her work, Grand'Pierre hopes to serve as a role model, pioneer and a leader for those who want to follow in her footsteps. She aims to continue to use her platform, naomygrandpierre.com, to encourage sports development and expose more people to the plethora of opportunities that are out there in the world.

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Summer learn kickoff honors retired educators

A Summer to Learn Kickoff was held at Robert's Parks on Martin Street. The event was to get students excited about summer school and to recognize retired African American educators.



Members of the North Carolina Elite Youth Foundation, a nonprofit that is centered around the advancement of youth through athletics, academics, art and community outreach.

BOOKS

Book Harvest last month held its fourth annual Book Babies graduation celebration. The Book Babies Class of 2021 was the program's largest class yet, with 47 graduates from Durham County.

Prior to the virtual celebration, Book Harvest staff and volunteers drove to the homes of the graduates and hand-delivered graduation boxes containing a diploma, books, learning activities, and art supplies. Graduates donned caps and gowns for this very special delivery.

Launched in 2013, Book Babies partners with families of Medicaid-eligible newborns to develop their child's early language and literacy skills over five years.

Book Babies literacy coaches build rich, collaborative relationships with participating families and provide them with new, age-appropriate books during quarterly literacy coaching sessions. In ad-



In addition to 100 books by kindergarten, they give parents the information and resources they need to develop a strong foundation for their children's school readiness and school success. Book Babies is enrolling newborns year-round; Durham County residents can apply at www.book-harvest.org/book-babies.



Founder Santisha Walker, left, has created a fitness line for the body, mind and soul.

Durham nurse launches premium fitness line

By Bonitta Best
 editor@triangletribune.com

As a nurse, Santisha Walker's life was turned upside down by COVID-19.

Walker saw the impact the mysterious disease had on the people around her and how their lives were forever changed. She witnessed the stress, anxiety and turmoil suffered by colleagues and other health care workers during the height of the pandemic. That's when an idea was formed to share the knowledge of her own wellness living that kept her healthy and sane.

"Working in health care has allowed me to witness firsthand the daily struggles, insecurities, and challenges people face, as well as what makes them happy, brings them joy, and helps them keep their spark for life," said Walker, a Wake Forest native who lives in Research Triangle Park. "I don't take for granted the opportunity to serve patients, clients, families, and the community in today's tumultuous times. Now, more than ever, with life's many stressors, it's imperative to intentionally take out time to improve our health and

strengthen our total wellness. I am delighted to be able to put my health care and wellness knowledge to work through The I AM Experience."

Walker says I AM is not just another fitness apparel line but a wellness journey for the mind, body and soul. The complete line consists of apparel, wellness products like a workout mix, wellness kit and a private group for encouragement. Nike is the sponsor.

"The I AM Experience is a

safe haven where you can be yourself, where your I AM matters. I AM is exactly who you are, what you are, and what you tell your environment to consist of. The I AM Experience is for those who want to get started living a fit and well life, those who want to indulge more in a fit and well lifestyle, and those who want to take their fitness and wellness to the next level."

Visit www.theiamexperience.shop.



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| | | | | |
| Genee Dalton Teacher | James Perry Head Custodian | Maria McMullin PE Teacher | Jason Berube Facilities Manager | Shelawn Burton ASEP Site Coordinator |
| | | | | |
| 1SG Jeffery Clendenin JROTC Instructor | Tawanda Hunt Bus Driver | Jeff Atwell Teacher Assist/Bus Driver | Joan Powell Math Teacher | James King Teacher |

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NCSchoolHeroes.com

The North Carolina Education Lottery proudly raises money to support and grow education in our state.

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