



SPORTS

UNC Sports Medicine and NFL Flag Football partner for safety



COMMUNITY FOCUS

Barnes & Nobles hosts a book signing for local Black authors

The Triangle Tribune

THE TRIANGLE'S CHOICE FOR THE BLACK VOICE SINCE 1998

"Serving Raleigh, Durham and Chapel Hill"

VOLUME 27 NO. 27

Week of June 29 - July 5, 2025

\$1.00

Chapel Hill apartment residents vow to fight displacement

'So high that we can't live here'

By Alex Bass

alex.bass@triangletribune.com

CHAPEL HILL - Horace Johnson Jr. is OK with being the "bad guy" to cite what he calls the potential for "extinction level gentrification" in the historic Elliot Woods Apartments.

Johnson - son of Horace Johnson, Hillsborough's first Black mayor - says both homeowners and landlords need tax assistance to mitigate rising costs, including rental fees, for those dependent upon affordable housing.

For Elliot Woods families, and those in its sister

Chase Park community - both established as integrated communities in 1974 - it is a matter of dollars and cents, no matter the owners.

"Where are you going to go and live?" Johnson asked.

Elliot Woods residents like Salima Smith have heard about people being relocated to hotels during a renovation of buildings.

Everyone in her has seen an example of that happening and people not being able to come back," said Smith, a resident since 2012.

Residential Properties Management has started a contractually bound process to sell both Elliot Woods and Chase Park to Elliot Chase Housing Partners.

Residents of both communities were informed of the potential sale in a May 13 letter from RPM. Smith and on-site property manager Tamu Graves Coleman provided matching copies of this letter.

"That has been the only communication that has been given thus far," Coleman said. "This way, nothing is taken out of context

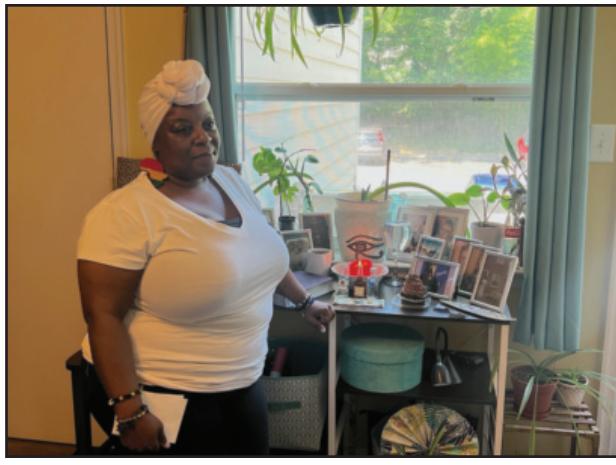
or misinterpreted."

Coleman, also an Elliot Woods resident, said tenants have her telephone number for needs during and after business hours.

Smith shared a May 13 document from ECHP that she said was posted on their mailboxes. Current and future rental rates were included with the statement:

"The proposed increase is needed to secure financing to conduct a significant renovation of the Project (pending sale). Higher rents will be needed to cover as-

Please see CHAPEL/2A



ALEX BASS

Salima Smith is a resident of Elliot Woods Apartments.



Prestwick and Huxley communities in Apex.

COURTESY



Why school has more Black kids thinking about suicide

By Quintessa Williams

WORD IN BLACK

In November, a Jacksonville, Florida, mother watched her 16-year-old son unravel. Already the target of racist bullying at school, he was one of many Black students across the country who received racist text messages after the presidential election. It hit hard: the teenager became withdrawn, afraid to return to school and was overwhelmed by a feeling that he didn't belong.

He eventually returned a few weeks later, but much like the bullying, the school never addressed it publicly. The school and the world, his mother said, "just moved on from the story." But the situation almost cost him his life.

"He told me later that he didn't want to go back to school and that the reason he gave me his phone was that he had been thinking about ending his life," said his mother, who asked Word in Black to remain anonymous to protect their privacy. "And that's when I just broke down."

The mother's story is not an anomaly. Black K-12 students across the country are battling a growing mental health crisis that experts say is connected to their school environments.

According to a new report from The AAKOMA Project, a nonprofit organization that helps address the mental health needs of youth of color, more than 40% of Black youth ages 13-17 seriously considered suicide in the past year. At the same time, 38% self-harmed in some way, and more than 16% attempted suicide at least once.

"The fact that this is not a national crisis with all hands on deck trying to solve it is unconscionable to me," said Dr. Alfee Breland-Noble, a clinical psychologist and founder of The AAKOMA Project. "That the needs of so many Black youth have gone unnoticed — and remain sorely under-addressed — is devastating."

From disproportionately high discipline rates to biased teachers, experts say systemic racism in schools chips away at a young person's sense of safety and self-worth. In AAKOMA's 2025 State of Youth Mental Health report, 21% of Black youths reported suffering racial trauma from teachers and other school employees. Nearly 30% said they experienced racial discrimination at the hands of school police.

The report also found that three-quarters of Black youth say they feel like a burden to others, and about as many reported feeling as though they don't belong — feelings commonly linked to suicidal ideations.

Breland-Noble adds that society, schools included,

Please see SUICIDE/2A

Wake County online dashboard access for measuring fair housing progress

By Alex Bass

alex.bass@triangletribune.com

RALEIGH - Lorena Dione-McDowell, having served six years as Wake County's director of the Department of Housing Affordability and Community Revitalization, knew housing data was available.

As of last May, nearly a year after Dione-McDowell's departure, that data is accessible via a new [wake.gov](#) online dashboard for housing.

"If all of a sudden, a whole area is more educated, less

upon the community land trust model.

"It's contributing to members of the community," RALT CEO Kevin Campbell said. "They might even work for the municipality itself."

Campbell said reducing long commutes so employees can live among the communities they serve is beneficial for all.

The identical Apex units - available for residents earning below 80% of area median income - will be shared among

Prestwick and Huxley communities. The three-story townhomes include three bedrooms, two-and-a-half baths and a two-car garage.

Campbell said RALT has received approximately 15 inquiries and is planning additional homebuyer information sessions in the coming months.

"We don't like to say 'No,'" Campbell said of aspiring home-

Please see MODEL/2A

said. "We shape the future by choosing to act - right now."

DaQuanta Copeland, Raleigh Fair Housing Hearing Board vice chair and a Wake County community engagement coordinator, said the data can be organized into various layers for diverse stakeholders.

"It definitely is a model and a tangible resource to municipalities in the county," she said. "A lot of organizations utilize that data to track their measurable metrics."

Please see WAKE COUNTY/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

© 2025 The Triangle Tribune

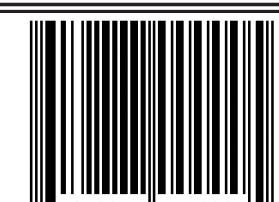
Publisher: Gerald O. Johnson

Managing Editor/Sports Editor: Bonita Best

Advertising: Linda Johnson

info@triangletribune.com

www.triangletribune.com



Chapel Hill residents vow to fight displacement

Continued from page 1A

associated costs."

Elliot Woods' current rent for a two-bedroom apartment was listed as \$1,249.

"My rent has been \$725 for at least the last three years," Smith said.

Coleman confirmed the rental scale as \$700/\$725/\$775/\$900 for apartments with one, two, three and four bedrooms, respectively.

The same document included a \$301 increase at the RPM-ECHP closing that would yield a \$1,550 rental fee - 114% more than \$725.

The letter from RPM also stated, "Please know that no immediate action is required on your part at this time."

Residents, however, have a different mindset.

"We're actually the lunch," said Laila Bradford, an Elliot Woods resident since 1997. "That's why we're not sitting at the table."

Smith, Bradford and others scoff at the notion that low income means low standards.

Bradford has been honored by Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools as its classified employee of the year.

"I'm good enough to go run the board meetings, but my pay is not going to be good enough to live here," she said. "I know we're paying, but I don't know what we're paying for."

Coleman said there is no timetable for the proposed sale, which includes De-

partment of Housing and Urban Development details, too.

The tenants, while seeking open communication with Town of Chapel Hill and Orange County officials, along with any parties involved in the prospective sale, have their own lingering questions.

"What do you want your future generations to know about how you handled supporting a crisis," Smith said.

"Did you actually support it? Did you stand by idly? Did you do nothing? Did you oppose it?"

"I don't know what they plan to gain from it. But I understand what they plan to lose."

School has more Black kids thinking suicide

Continued from page 1A

often compounds the racial trauma by minimizing (and at times flat-out ignoring) the emotional hurt associated with the daily microaggressions and bias they experience.

"Black youth need to feel seen, heard and valued for exactly who they are," she said. "But many of them are growing up in schools that ignore their reality and deny their pain."

Despite the warning signs, many Black students still aren't getting help.

According to the AAKOMA report, nearly 1 in 3 Black youth who needed mental health care didn't receive it. For Black boys, the picture is even more alarming: they are among the least likely to receive care and are more likely to view mental illness as a weakness.

Breland-Noble says that belief is shaped by cultural stigma and a lack of safe spaces to express vulnerability.

"Mental health is a foundational aspect of the educational experience, and parents, teachers and caregivers are the gatekeepers of that care," Breland-Noble said. "So, when stigma still exists in our schools and communities — especially around our youth needing help — it prevents access before it even begins."



Housing model binds generational wealth

Continued from page 1A

owners. "Maybe they're not ready yet, but how can we keep working with you to get to that place?"

The time and place for another anticipated RALT project - the Cottages of Idlewild - is on course for a July groundbreaking. Campbell anticipates the paperwork being finalized within the next couple of weeks. The Cottages, including 17 dwellings, will serve residents earning 30% to 80% AMI.

Desmond Dunn, a south-east Raleigh native and a member of the project working group for redesigning the former Department of Motor Vehicle site on New Bern Avenue, sees unique opportunities in applying the Community

Land Trust model in south-east Raleigh.

"People need to be able to graduate out of those rentals into affordable homeownership. This kind of bridges that gap," he said.

The CLT model allows homeowners to lease their land from the trust, which acts to ensure the home's resale value remains affordable from one buyer to another. Land leases may be transferred in estates, and thus, offer upwardly mobile homeownership across generations.

"We should layer services on top of that to help them get from affordable housing into other programs: education, child care, job skills," Dunn said. "They can work on their credit and all of that, and then, get into homeownership."

like SE Raleigh.

"There are things that exist in our communities that don't exist in other communities," he said. "The buyer looks different. The land looks different. The deals look different."

Smaller businesses, he continued, can help add not only affordable residential units, but build ongoing partnerships to provide another continuum of care for meeting people, as Campbell said, wherever they are on their homeownership journeys.

"We should layer services on top of that to help them get from affordable housing into other programs: education, child care, job skills," Dunn said. "They can work on their credit and all of that, and then, get into homeownership."

Don't cut our health care to give tax breaks to the rich

By Debbie DeWeese
BEACON MEDIA

makers in our state to expand Medicaid.

Since the expansion in 2023, more than 650,000 people have enrolled. Many of them have health care for the first time in their lives. Over the years, I'd seen how important Medicaid was for working families and how difficult it was to access. Today, roughly 1 in 4 North Carolinians, or nearly 3.1 million people, use Medicaid to cover their medications, doctors' visits, hospital stays and home care. Almost a third of those folks are seniors.

I didn't know then that I'd be one of them one day. In 2023, after years spent helping others suffering from domestic abuse, threats from my husband forced me from my home. Suddenly, I was on my own with very little income. Thankfully, as a disabled senior, Medicaid supplements my Medicare coverage, which made it possible for me to rebuild my life at an independent living community.

Now, I'm worried that the Medicaid system will be stripped so bare that I might become a financial burden to my children, who are working hard to support themselves. The Senate Finance Committee, which Tillis sits on, released its measures to cut Medicaid that would surpass the House bill's plans to slash \$1.1 trillion from Medicaid and SNAP, just to give \$1.1 trillion in tax cuts to people making over \$500,000 a year.

Earlier this year, members of Down Home NC met with Tillis' staff on Zoom, including me. They told us that no "deserving person" would lose cover-

age and that this was all about "making things more efficient." They pointed to the so-called work requirements in the bill.

I wasn't fooled by their slick talk, and you shouldn't be either. These new restrictions will effectively be a job loss penalty. Whenever someone loses their job, they'll also lose their health care. Additionally, by forcing states to verify that recipients are working every month, they're hoping to bury folks in so much paperwork and red tape that they won't be able to access the health care they need. So much for efficiency.

As one researcher put it, these restrictions are really about "kicking people out of the program who are mostly eligible."

As for deserving, I think about all my social work clients. They were good people looking for help when they needed it most. I think of my friend Nancy, who was a drug addiction counselor. Even after she was diagnosed with cancer, she was forced to keep working, even as she got sicker and sicker, because she couldn't afford to quit. And I think of myself. I'm a disabled senior who has spent my whole lifetime working hard to contribute to my community.

Now, I need my community to have my back. All of us deserve a government that makes life manageable for us instead of giving handouts to the rich.

Debbie DeWeese is an activist, former victim advocate, grandmother and dual beneficiary of Medicare and Medicaid living in High Point.



Lorena Dione-McDowell is CEO of Balance Community Advisors.

ALEX BASS

Wake County online dashboard for housing access

Continued from page 1A

Dione-McDowell said the fair housing industry often has been in "catch up" mode concerning technology integration, and data gathered from systems tracking homelessness should not be misconstrued as indicative of progress in fair housing opportunities. "Look what happened 10 years later," she said. "See where they went."

Without that, she continued, it never will be known to what degree that more access to affordable, upwardly mobile housing - per the 1968 Fair Housing Act - is being realized from one locale to another.

She said residents in adjacent zip codes could have a different life expectancy by 10-plus years, and the median Black family household's wealth is just 15% of white family's

wealth.

Legal Aid of North Carolina's Fair Housing project now must address rule changes in which sexual identity different from an individual's birth certificate no longer is grounds for filing a discrimination complaint. The Trump administration's April executive order directs the Department of Housing and Urban Development and others to avoid "disparate impact liability" claims.

"We have advocacy at every level with those who have the professional experience to move the needle," Copeland said.

Kelly Clarke, Legal Aid's outgoing Fair Housing Project director, said accessing and engaging human resources must be reimaged because of Legal Aid's shrinking staff.

"We really want to rely on our private attorneys to

volunteer, and they can get informative resources from us to work on cases to file those complaints," she said.

Clarke's successor Hope Williams is excited to pursue additional grants and engage in a forthcoming partnership in Durham. Williams could not reveal specifics since she did not have clearance for such discussions.

Dione-McDowell encouraged attendees to embrace grassroots opportunities in continuing education that begins and ends with the data.

"Host 'Know Your Rights' clinics. Partner with schools and churches. Talk to landlords, developers, lenders and realtors about their roles in these efforts. Continue to demand better data," she said. "If they don't measure it, then they cannot effectively address it or change it."

BUSINESS BRIEFS

GRADUATION

Durham Business & Professional Chain Vocational Pre-Apprenticeship Graduation Ceremony is June 28, 3 to 5 p.m., Phoenix Event Center, 810 Fayetteville St., Suite 101. Registration is at www.eventbrite.com.

HOLIDAY CHEER

Hilton Durham presents with S.H.I.F.T. Event Rentals Christmas in July holiday cheer, July 10, 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. RSVP by July 1 to Brevard.templeton@hiltondurhamnc.com.

OPENINGS

* Del Taco is expanding with its first location in Durham at 4716 NC-55 highway. Hours will be for late nighters till 3 a.m. and 4 a.m. Friday and Saturday. Visit deltaco.com/careers.

Send business briefs to info@triangletribune.com.

Turn the house you want into the home you own



Our **Community Homeownership Commitment**¹ can help. Get up to **\$17,500** when combining down payment and closing costs grants.
(Restrictions apply.)

\$10,000

Up to \$10,000 toward your down payment when combined with our 3% down mortgage^{2,4}

+

\$7,500

America's Home Grant[®] covers up to \$7,500 in eligible closing costs³

Learn more at
bankofamerica.com/homeowner

What would you like the power to do?®

PROUD TO SUPPORT

BANK OF AMERICA



You are invited to apply. Your receipt of this material does not mean you have been prequalified or preapproved for any product or service we offer. This is not a commitment to lend; you must submit additional information for review and approval.
¹ Down Payment program and America's Home Grant program: Qualified borrowers must meet eligibility requirements such as being owner-occupants and purchasing a home within a certain geographical area. Maximum income and loan amount limits apply. Minimum combined loan-to-value must be greater than or equal to 80%. The home loan must fund with Bank of America. Bank of America may change or discontinue the Bank of America Down Payment Grant program or America's Home Grant program or any portion of either without notice. Not available with all loan products; please ask for details.
² Additional information about the Down Payment program: Down Payment program is available with our mortgage product. Program funds can be applied toward down payment only. Borrowers cannot receive program funds as cash back in excess of earnest money deposits. Down Payment Grant program may be considered taxable income and a 1099-MISC will be issued; consult with your tax advisor. May be combined with other offers. The Bank of America Down Payment Grant program may only be applied once to an eligible mortgage/property, regardless of the number of applicants. Homebuyer education is required.
³ Additional information about the America's Home Grant program: The America's Home Grant program is a lender credit. Program funds can only be used for nonrecurring closing costs including title insurance, recording fees, and in certain situations, discount points which can be used to lower the interest rate. The grant cannot be applied toward down payment, prepaid items or recurring costs, such as property taxes and insurance. Borrowers cannot receive program funds as cash back.
⁴ Maximum income and loan amount limits apply. Fixed-rate mortgages (purchases or no cash out refinances), primary residences only. Certain property types are ineligible. Maximum loan-to-value ("LTV") is 97%, and maximum combined LTV is 105%. For LTV >95%, any secondary financing must be from an approved Community Second Program. Homebuyer education may be required. Other restrictions apply.

America's Home Grant, Bank of America Community Homeownership Commitment, Bank of America and the Bank of America logo are registered trademarks of Bank of America Corporation. Bank of America, N.A. Member FDIC. Equal Housing Lender. ©2025 Bank of America Corporation. Credit and collateral are subject to approval. Terms and conditions apply. This is not a commitment to lend. Programs, rates, terms and conditions are subject to change without notice. MAP7627169 | AD-BAAM3703100

The
Triangle Tribune
Classifieds

June 29-July 5, 2025 | 4A

HOME IMPROVEMENT

BATH & SHOWER UPDATES in as little as ONE DAY! Affordable prices - No payments for 18 months! Lifetime warranty & professional installs. Senior & Military Discounts available. Call: 1-833-776-0111

Leafy Filter GUTTER PROTECTION

Spring showers may bring costly home repairs

Spring rain can overwhelm clogged gutters, leading to overflow causing damage to your home.

CALL 1-877-649-1190 TO SCHEDULE YOUR FREE INSPECTION

Promo Code: 285

*\$250 discount (no cash value) is for same-day signing only. This offer cannot be combined with any other promotion or offer. No obligation estimate valid for 1 year. Expires: 6/30/25. See website for all license and registration numbers.

MISCELLANEOUS

WATER DAMAGE CLEANUP & RESTORATION: A small amount of water can lead to major damage in your home. Our trusted professionals do complete repairs to protect your family and your home's value! Call 24/7: 1-833-928-1861. Have zip code of service location ready when you call!

HEARING AIDS!! High-quality rechargeable, powerful Audien hearing aids priced 90% less than competitors. Tiny and NEARLY INVISIBLE! 45-day money back guarantee! 888-970-4637

Denied Social Security Disability? Appeal! If you're 50+, filed SSD and denied, our attorneys can help! Win or Pay Nothing! Strong, recent work history needed. 877-553-0252 [Steppacher Law Offices LLC Principal Office: 224 Adams Ave Scranton PA 18503]

We Buy Houses for Cash AS IS! No repairs. No fuss. Any condition. Easy three step process: Call, get cash offer and get paid. Get your fair cash offer today by calling Liz Buys Houses: 1-888-247-1198

Get a break on your taxes! Donate your car, truck, or SUV to assist the blind and visually impaired. Arrange a swift, no-cost vehicle pickup and secure a generous tax credit for 2025. Call Heritage for the Blind Today at 1-855-869-7055 today!

Replace your roof with the best looking and longest lasting material – steel from Erie Metal Roofs! Three styles and multiple colors available. Guaranteed to last a lifetime! Limited Time Offer – up to 50% off installation + Additional 10% off install (for military, health workers & 1st responders.) Call Erie Metal Roofs: 1-855-585-1815

We Buy Vintage Guitars!

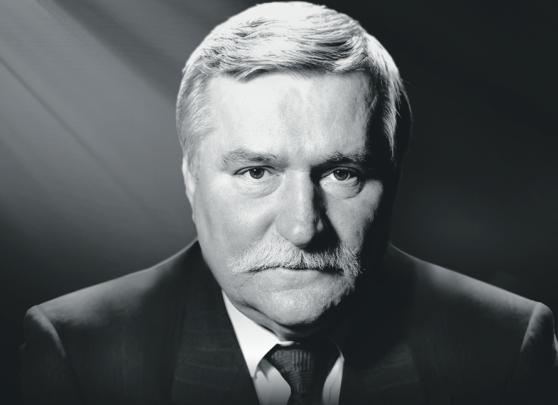
Looking for 1920-1980 Gibson, Martin, Fender, Gretsch, Epiphone, Guild, Mosrite, Rickenbacker, Prairie State, D'Angelico, Stromberg. And Gibson Mandolins / Banjos. These brands only!

Call for a quote: 1-833-641-6577

THE GREATEST CHALLENGES OF OUR TIME

**—AN EVENING WITH PRESIDENT—
LECH WALESZA**

USA & CANADA LECTURE TOUR | AUGUST 31 – OCTOBER 30, 2025



Meet the Nobel Peace Prize winner and one of the world's greatest leaders. Lech Wałęsa will take you behind the scenes of one of history's greatest turning points – and into the future we must build together.

REGISTER NOW: www.HistoryExplorer.com

THE CHARLOTTE POST
PUBLISHING COMPANY

...
CELEBRATING 141 YEARS OF
EXCELLENT JOURNALISM &
PRINT MEDIA SERVICES



MISCELLANEOUS

Windows that save you money up-front and year-round.

Insulated Your heat stays in – the cold stays out
Money-saving Pay less every month for utility bills
Affordable Up-front discounts & easy payment plans

Buy 2 Windows, Get 2 FREE!

Offer ends 6/30/25. Schedule your FREE quote! 833-638-0762

The Bath or Shower You've Always Wanted IN AS LITTLE AS A DAY

\$1000 OFF*
OR
\$1500 OFF when financing with remodelingloans.com™ OR **0% Interest For 18 Months***

BATH CONCEPTS INC
CALL NOW (855) 932-7733

*Includes labor and product; bathtub, shower or walk-in tub and wall surround. This promotion cannot be combined with any other offer. Other restrictions may apply. This offer expires 6/30/25. Each dealership is independently owned and operated. *Third party financing is available for these customers who qualify. Participating dealers only. See your dealer for details. ©2025 BC.

SAVE \$350 when you transform your patio into an outdoor oasis.

SunSetter
America's #1 Awning

- Instant shade—at the touch of a button.
- Enjoy more quality time with family and friends.
- Up to 10-Year Limited Warranty.

Call 1-866-735-0123 now to SAVE \$350 TODAY!

America's #1 Awning!

DENTAL Insurance
Great coverage for retirees.

Get your FREE Information Kit

Ask about the Premier Plan – our most popular option!

1-844-496-8601
Dental50Plus.com/NCpress

Physicians Mutual Insurance Company

Product/features not available in all states. Contact us for complete details about this insurance solicitation. To find a network provider, go to physiciansmutual.com/find-a-dentist. This specific offer not available in CO, NV, NY – call 1-800-969-4781 or respond for a similar offer in your state. Certificate C254/B465, C250A/B438 (ID: C254ID; PC: C254PA); Insurance Policy P154/B469 (GA: P154GA; OK: P154OK; TN: P154TN). 6347-0125

SALE

Get DISH Satellite TV + Internet! Free Install, Free HD-DVR Upgrade, 80,000 On-Demand Movies, Plus Limited Time Up To \$600 In Gift Cards. Call Today! 1-877-920-7405

TIME SHARE

Wesley Financial Group, LLC Timeshare Cancellation Experts. Over \$50,000,000 in timeshare debt and fees cancelled in 2019. Get free informational package and learn how to get rid of your timeshare! Free consultations. Over 450 positive reviews. Call 844-213-6711

THE CHARLOTTE POST Publishing Company

The Triangle Tribune is qualified as defined in NC G.S. 1-597 to publish legal notices to creditors, foreclosures, notices for bids, etc. www.triangletribune.com



**The Triangle
TRIBUNE**

**CLASSIFIED
ADVERTISING RATES**

Display \$15.00
Verbiage - \$1.25/word

Legal Notices \$12.00

**Deadline:
Wednesday @ 5pm
Prior to
Sunday's Edition**

**BE SURE
TO FOLLOW
& LIKE US**



[facebook.com/
TriangleTribune](http://facebook.com/TriangleTribune)



twitter.com/tritribune

Visit us online
www.triangletribune.com
919/688-9408



STOCK

How congregations become targets for child abuse and neglect

By Teresa Huizar
SPECIAL TO THE TRIBUNE

A recent Washington Post investigation uncovered how a Virginia youth minister allegedly used his position to abuse young boys for decades. Despite repeated allegations, churches failed to act, allowing him to move from congregation to congregation and continue preying on new victims.

This isn't an isolated incident. It's part of a systemic problem that persists because too many faith communities lack clear, consistent policies to protect children. Media scrutiny and reforms have focused primarily on priests or head ministers. To effectively prevent abuse, churches must account for others with access to children.

Many youth ministers are chosen for their charisma and passion for working with kids, not their background in child safety. One survey of 30,000 churches found that 40% don't perform adequate background checks on youth ministers, volunteers and staff.

The Post investigation highlights how abusers take advantage of these loopholes. The youth minister built trust with families, gaining access to children under the guise of mentorship and spiritual guidance. Interactions escalated over time. Casual conversations turned into questions about sexual habits. Routine meetings

became overnight trips, private "Coke dates" in parked cars and, eventually, sexual abuse.

It's a familiar pattern. Child sexual abuse is almost always preceded by grooming behavior. In a study of over 1,000 victims, perpetrators employed an average of 14 tactics per case - from gift-giving and casual touching to isolating children.

Seeking to talk about sexual desires with children is a major red flag. Such conversations are six times more common in instances of child sexual abuse. Yet, in many churches, wanting to discuss "sexual sin" with youth ironically may be viewed as a positive qualification for a youth minister. Churches need to be proactive. Comprehensive background checks, fingerprinting and reference verification should be non-negotiable for anyone with access to children. Minimizing one-on-one adult-child interactions is one of the most effective ways to prevent abuse. Routine activities should be observable, interruptible and supervised by multiple adults.

Churches must require that staff and volunteers report suspected abuse directly to law enforcement. Involving trained professionals immediately avoids any conflicts of interest. Unfortunately, predators often remain in positions of trust even after allegations surface. Many exploit

the Christian ethic of forgiveness to persuade religious institutions that they're reformed and deserve a second chance.

Predators don't stop because one door closes.

They move to the next unsuspecting community. When an employee or volunteer leaves amid allegations, churches should respond to reference checks as candidly as the law allows.

Families have an equally vital role to play. Parents need to be comfortable talking honestly with their children about sex and personal safety. Predators take advantage of silence. If children aren't comfortable asking questions at home, they'll seek answers elsewhere - possibly from adults with bad intentions. If a child is uncomfortable talking to their parents about their body or relationships, it becomes harder to ask for help when they need it.

Youth ministers are an important part of many churches. But religious institutions must close the loopholes that abusers exploit. That will ensure religious spaces can remain places of refuge, rather than hunting grounds for predators.

Teresa Huizar is CEO of Washington, D.C.-based National Children's Alliance, the nation's network of nearly 1,000 Children's Advocacy Centers.

AROUND THE TRIANGLE



July 4th on the Roof at 4 p.m., The Durham Hotel.

GARNER
MINI MARKET
Pedal to Petal mini market's community event is June 29, noon to 4 p.m., 122 E. Main St.

DURHAM
FUN CARAVAN
Durham Parks & Recreation's Fun Caravan will visit five parks in July. The first is July 2, 9:30-11 a.m., Forest Hills Park. All children must be supervised.

CELEBRATION
July 4th on the Roof at 4 p.m., The Durham Hotel, 315 E. Chapel Hill St.

JUNETEENTH
2025 Juneteenth Boys of Color Essay Contest is open to grades 6-12, private or homeschooled students in Wake, Durham or Orange counties. Visit www.bit.ly/2025Essay Contest. Deadline: July 4.

COOKOUT
Official Blue & White Cookout is July 4, 1-5 p.m., Pineywoods Park & Recreational Center, 400 Woodcroft Parkway. Tickets: www.zeffy.com.

DANCE
Afrofusion Dance Class is July 5, 4-6 p.m., Triangle

Dance Studios, 2603 S. Miami Boulevard. Tickets at Eventbrite.com.

MENTAL HEALTH
Community Health Coalition presents "Talkback Tuesdays" on youth mental health July 8, 6-7 p.m., Durham Main Library, Room 3214, 300 N. Roxboro St. Register at 919-470-8680.

VOLUNTEERS
Thomas Mentor Leadership Academy is seeking mentors. Contact: TMLA-academy.org.

Inflation causing families to identify their priorities

STATEPOINT

If you've been watching your wallet, you're not alone. As Americans continue to navigate inflation, 76% report cutting back on spending, up from 67% in 2024, according to the second annual Wells Fargo Money Study.

Most Americans also say they are making tough financial choices to navigate their lives, including delaying plans with hefty price tags, such as travel, homeownership, education, marriage and retirement.

"There is a clear social narrative surrounding the question: 'do I, and will I, have enough?' The fact that these questions are being asked is positive because we know the earlier people focus on their money behaviors, the more time they have to course correct to achieve their goals," said Michael Liersch, head of Advice and Planning at Wells Fargo.

An overwhelming 90% of those surveyed responded they feel "sticker shock" in one or more areas of common spending, including eating out, attending a concert, buying a bottle of water or downloading a video game, and say actual costs are between 55% and 200% higher than what they expect.

"Spending is one of the most important factors to staying on track," Liersch said. "I would encourage people to align their spending with what matters most to them."

Nearly all Americans (94%) acknowledge that they want to do just that: align money choices with their values, and 86% want

to be more intentional and thoughtful about spending.

Money can be an emotional topic, at times inciting envy, anxiety and secretiveness. While 87% of Americans say it makes no difference to them how much money another person has, 56% keep how much they have secret, and 32% of them say it's because they are trying to avoid people judging them.

Americans also spend time thinking about how much money other people have and wishing they could have more themselves. Forty-seven percent said they often feel envious of how much money other people have, 37% admit to obsessing about getting rich, 34% admire social media millionaires, and 23% admit to sometimes overspending just to keep up with people around them.

"Americans appear comfortable with other people being authentic about their financial situation, which is encouraging," Liersch said. "So now it's time to overcome self-judgment and reset the frame of reference from others to one's

own personal benchmark."

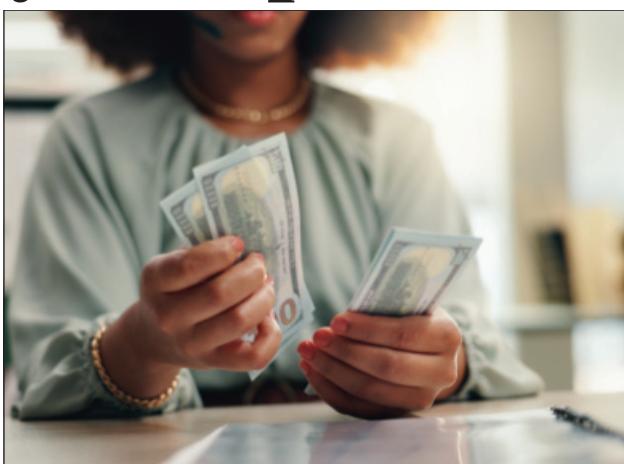
Eighty-six percent of respondents say they have a clear picture of what they want their money to do for them. And the vast majority are optimistic about how to do it: 87% say now is a good time to save and 65% say now is a good time to invest.

Yet 61% say they need a mental reset, and are being held back by difficulty changing habits, a lack of financial knowledge and other financial responsibilities.

To overcome these challenges, Americans are seeking more financial advice year over year. Last year, 24% said they were seeking more advice from others; this year it's 36%. Looking across generations, the desire for more advice is higher among teens (54%), Gen Z adults (61%) and millennials (46%).

At a time when many are feeling cash-strapped, learning new ways to think about and manage money can help you take control of your financial future.

For the full report, visit sites.wf.com/wfmoneystudy-2025.



STOCK

RALEIGH CHAMBER | 

PERSPECTIVES 2025

Strategies for Workplace Success

Join changemakers across industries to explore how different perspectives, experiences, and leadership styles fuel stronger teams, smarter strategies, and long-term success.

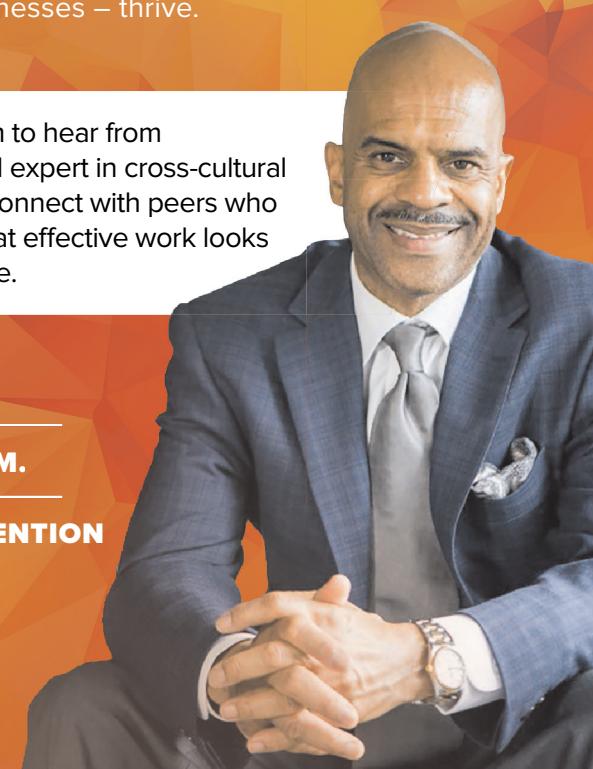
From workplace wellness to risk management and collaborative leadership, this conference will offer actionable insights to build workplaces where people – and businesses – thrive.

Bring your team to hear from **Al Vivian**, global expert in cross-cultural leadership, and connect with peers who are redefining what effective work looks like across our state.

JULY 29, 2025

8 A.M. – 3:45 P.M.

RALEIGH CONVENTION CENTER



Scan Here or Visit

RALEIGHCHAMBER.ORG/EVENTS

to Register Today!

St. Aug's officially out as a CIAA member

One of the best college sports rivalries - in any division - is officially dead.

The CIAA is dropping St. Augustine's from its membership. The conference made the decision at its annual spring meeting earlier this month.

The Falcons' athletics program initially was suspended for the 2024-25 season as the university attempted to get its financial affairs in order. Fat chance of that happening. And it didn't. If anything, SAU is in worse shape now than a year ago - with several lawsuits filed by former coaches and unpaid vendors.

We knew football wasn't ever coming back, but apparently neither are any of the other sports. Thus, the Shaw-SAU rivalry is now in the history books. Let. That. Sink. In.

SAU's accreditation hearing is June 27, which will say a lot about its future. Will the administration file an appeal? Will it go a different route?

Whoever thought it would come to this? And yet, folks are still walking around free as a bird when they should be behind bars.

Welcome Back

The conference lost a member but regained a sport. Baseball is coming back!

The sport was dropped after the 2017 season due to cost and declining interest. Schools that kept baseball either played an independent schedule or joined another conference as an associate member.

Four teams currently sponsor baseball: Bluefield State, Claflin, Lincoln (Pa.) and Virginia State.

HBCU baseball overall is gaining in popularity. The HBCU Swingman Classic in July showcases the top 50 student-athletes during Major League Baseball All-Star Week.

The 2025 Minority Baseball Prospects HBCU All-Star Game was held last month in Kannapolis. It highlighted the top 44 student-athletes.

The conference office also hinted at other future championships for non-sponsored sports. One that immediately comes to mind is men's tennis. Time will tell.

Miscellaneous

Other news from its spring meeting:

* A contract extension with Under Armour as the exclusive apparel company through 2029. "Under Armour continues to be a powerful partner in our journey, elevating the look, feel and performance of our student-athletes while reinforcing our identity across the national stage," CIAA Commissioner Jackie McWilliams Parker said. "We are proud to move forward together with a shared commitment to innovation and impact."

* An updated 2025-2030 strategic plan that outlines three priorities:

- Conflict Management Programming: workshops and training for student-athletes and coaches.

- Sports Scheduling & Alignment Review: increasing postseason competitiveness. (CIAA needs to get out of the Atlantic Region or it will NEVER win another championship.)

- Sports Sponsorship Analysis: self-explanatory.

* The CIAA Basketball Tournament probably has found its permanent home. After a rocky start and several trials and errors, Baltimore is a welcoming host. And, as the saying goes, "Go where you're wanted, not where you're tolerated."

"Baltimore has proven to be more than a host city; it's a partner in progress," McWilliams Parker said. "We are proud to move forward together with a shared commitment to innovation and impact."

The Triangle Tribune Sports

June 29-July 5, 2025 | 6A



RF COMMUNICATIONS

Youth flag football is as popular with girls and women and it is with boys and men.

UNC Sports Medicine partners with NFL Flag Football Elite

By Bonitta Best
editor@triangletribune.com

A partnership between the UNC Sports Medicine Institute and NFL Flag Football Elite will expand safety access for Triangle youth.

Flag Football Elite is the nonprofit brainchild of NFL Pro Bowler Cedric Peerman to provide training and competition in a safe and

fun environment.

Hagar Elgendi, a physician and vice president of the NFL Wives Association, is tasked with ensuring safety and skill development are met.

"As a league operator, physician and VP of the NFL Wives Association, I'm proud that our partnership brings together NFL-level experience and cutting-

edge sports medicine," she said. "Our priority is creating a safe, fun and inclusive environment where young athletes can develop skills and confidence while minimizing injury risks."

Studies have shown that flag football is safer than tackle, with lower injury rates among young athletes.

The sport has gained in

popularity over the years, especially among girls and women, and will debut as an Olympic sport at the 2028 Los Angeles Games.

"We are thrilled to collaborate with Football Elite to provide comprehensive injury prevention education and clinical support for young athletes," UNC

Please see FLAG/7A

COLLEGE CORNER

CIAA football returns to Durham

The SWAC announced at its annual spring meeting that it was opting in to the House Settlement. Also, the conference is lifting scholarship caps on all sports.

"This is undoubtedly a significant moment for the SWAC and our 12 member institutions," Commission Charles McClelland said. "As we move forward into a new era of intercollegiate athletics, the SWAC remains steadfast in our commitment to provide our membership with the resources needed to positively impact our student-athletes academically and athletically."

CIAA football returns to Durham this year, starting with the annual Football Media Day July 16 at 9 a.m. Coaches will host a free youth football clinic for grades three to eight July 15, 6-

7:30 p.m. at Hillside High. Hope the temperatures drop by then.

WOMEN
N.C. Central
The Eagles are in the house! The RDU house that is. NCCU merchandise can now be bought at Raleigh-Durham Airport at Hudson retail shops throughout Terminal 2.

In track and field, Melanne Sutton and Sa'Niya Fowler were named to the College Sports Communicators Academic All-District Team. Student-athletes must be at least a sophomore and carry a 3.5 cumulative GPA.

Norfolk State
CC is such a fan of graduate forward Diamond Johnson, and we're pulling for her in profes-

Please see NCCU/7A



North Carolina Central merchandise has expanded.

COURTESY

Antwain Banks building Johnson C. Smith basketball 'brick by brick'

By Herbert L. White
THE CHARLOTTE POST

CHARLOTTE - Johnson C. Smith basketball coach Antwain Banks, who led the Golden Bulls to a 15-13 season in an interim role last season, was surprised by the result despite a short window to build a roster.

"I had a lot to do coming into the door in a short amount of time," he said.

Banks, who was promoted last month to permanent coach, led the Golden Bulls to a 15-13 record on an interim basis.

Among those wins was a victory in the CIAA tournament - the program's first since 2020. In an interview with The Post, Banks discussed succeeding CIAA Hall of Fame coach Steve

Joyner, constructing a roster on the fly and fashioning a winning campaign. Responses are edited for brevity and clarity.

Building a winning record as interim coach:

I had a lot to do coming into the door in a short amount of time. I had to get acclimated with the roster. First of all, I had to figure out what roster I actually had when I got here.

There were some guys in the portal, lost a young man (guard Ezekiel Cannedy) that was all league, Division II Black college All-American. So, going into it thinking I was going to have one roster and actually getting here realizing that the



Antwain Banks is walking behind big shoes at Johnson C. Smith.

COURTESY

Please see SMITH/7A

Reading is fundamental Good reads are essential

Several local authors, including Karen Togba, were part of a book signing at Barnes & Noble at Triangle Town Center.



MATHIAS BISHOP



SCHOOL NEWS

Fusion Academy opens in prime Chapel Hill location

STAFF REPORTS

Fusion Academy, the national leader in 1-to-1 education for students with learning, social or emotional differences, opened its doors June 16 in Chapel Hill.

The opening marks the 82nd Fusion Academy location nationwide.

The Chapel Hill campus launches with a team of experienced educators ready to deliver Fusion's signature personalized learning approach. Designed specifically for students who thrive with individualized attention, Fusion offers a fully customized education experience, making it an ideal fit for students with ADHD, dyslexia, anxiety or those who need a more flexible school environment like student-athletes, artists and gifted learners.

Students can explore their creativity through di-



COURTESY

verse art offerings, develop essential life skills through personal development courses, including personal finance, and expand their intellectual horizons with engaging humanities electives. The campus also features a music recording studio, providing students with professional-grade equipment and instruction.

"We're incredibly excited to have opened our doors and welcomed our first students to a completely new kind of educational experience," head of school Jenna Cheney said. "At Fusion, we don't just adapt to each student's learning style, we celebrate it."

Visit www.fusionacademy.com to learn more.

Urban Ministries of Durham to lay off staff, reduce costs

STAFF REPORTS

DURHAM - Urban Ministries of Durham, a leading nonprofit organization dedicated to serving individuals experiencing homelessness and poverty, announced last week a series of difficult cost reduction measures, including staff layoffs, in response to financial pressures.

Rising costs, increasing demand for services, and reductions in federal funding have strained the nonprofit organization's financial resources.

The UMD Board decided to reduce its budget by 10% to prioritize essential

programs and continue meeting the urgent needs of the community.

"These are some of the hardest decisions we've had to make in our 41 years," executive director Sheldon Mitchell said.

"The team members affected by these layoffs have given so much to our mission. We honor their contributions with immense gratitude and deep respect. This moment is heartbreaking, yet necessary, for the financial health of the organization and the continuity of our core services."

The organization will continue to offer food,

shelter and support services at present levels despite the staffing reduction in staffing.

"We are committed to serving our neighbors experiencing homelessness and hardship," board chair Brian Vosburgh said.

"Their needs haven't changed and neither has our dedication. We have made hard calls about where to cut back, and we need the community's support at this challenging time more than ever."

To learn more about how to contribute or volunteer, visit www.umdurham.org.

Space and Time: Quilting Afrofuturism

Kindred Spirits sponsored "Space and Time: Quilting Afrofuturism" showcased the legacy of Black quilters last week at the Durham Convention Center. Vendors also lined the hall with authentic African merchandise.



BONITA BEST



RECIPE OF THE MONTH



Sweet, easy recipes to solve warm-weather hunger

FAMILY FEATURES

Watermelon Ice Pops

Recipe courtesy of National Watermelon Promotion Board

1 watermelon
chunks of fresh fruit like grapes, strawberries or kiwi.

Puree watermelon and pour into ice pop molds.

Drop in chunks of fresh fruit, insert caps and place in freezer.

Serve when frozen.

Watermelon Salad with Feta and Mint

1/4-cup lemon vinaigrette
4 cups cubed water-

melon
1/2-English cucumber, cut into 1/4-inch half moons
1/2-small red onion, thinly sliced
1/4-cup crumbled feta cheese
2 tablespoons fresh mint, roughly chopped

Drizzle vinaigrette in bottom of large canning jar. Layer with watermelon, cucumber, red onion, feta and mint.

Cover tightly with lid and shake to combine. Keep refrigerated until ready to serve.

Substitution: Use Greek dressing in place of lemon vinaigrette.