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The Triangle Tribune

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Raleigh police chief credits action plan for decrease in crime

By Bonitta Best
editor@triangletribune.com

Unless you've been a victim of a crime, the Raleigh Police Department has some good news for you: Crime is down this year or unchanged compared to a year ago.

Raleigh Police Chief Rico Boyce made the announcement at a news conference last week. Boyce credits much of the decline to the institution of a Summer Action Plan 2025 that focused attention on greenways, parks and nightlife, and extra security at transportation hubs and the streets around clubs and bars.

"We're seeing continued progress in key categories," Boyce said. Some of those categories:

- * Homicides: unchanged from 2024
- * Robberies: 6% decrease
- * Aggravated assaults: 7% reduction
- * Motor vehicle theft: 27% decline
- * Residential burglary: 14% decrease
- * Larceny: 3% reduction
- * Commercial burglary: 3% rise

Boyce promised more involvement between the department and the community after his promotion last year. Officers

are walking the streets to build rapport and trust with residents.

Programs like "Cops on the Block" and "Raleigh Hoop Nights" encouraged community dialogue in non-threatening environments. The department also hosted 13 youth camps attended by almost 700 participants.

A Raleigh Community Police Academy will launch next month. Residents can learn what it's like in a cop's life.

The Summer Action Plan ended Aug. 31, but many of the programs will continue, Boyce said.



CITY OF RALEIGH

Raleigh Police Chief Rico Boyce talks to the media at a press conference.



COURTESY

Gianna Peterson, keynote speaker at the Black SEL Hub launch on Sept. 25.

First Black SEL Hub launches in Durham

By Freda Freeman
CORRESPONDENT

Hillside High School will soon be home to the first Black Social Emotional Learning Hub in the country. The Black SEL Hub will advance equity and the emotional well-being of Black students.

The unveiling of the Hub on Sept. 25 is not only historic for Durham but the nation, said Black SEL leaders.

"This groundbreaking hub will serve as a dedicated space for emotional liberation and healing through prevention and culturally responsive SEL, nurturing the resilience, leadership, and brilliance of Black youth and families. It's a declaration that we will no longer be reac-

tive, but we're building our own systems, building our own spaces and reclaiming the emotional freedom that we truly need in our community," Donya Trawick said.

Black SEL is built upon six pillars: Black self-concept, lived civics, inclusion of community stakeholders, civic engagement, critical consciousness and social responsibility.

Trawick said Durham is fertile ground for Black SEL.

"We're really nurturing our students. We're asking them, 'what's in your emotional and invisible backpack?' When they come into the room, we ask them to unpack that, and we discuss some of the things they're going through and work

through some of those emotions," Trawick continued. "We're really taking the time to understand them and equip them with the resources they need to really move in the world. We'll have speakers come in to talk about what it looks like to work against community violence, what it looks like to bring in resources to help other youth and what it looks like to be a leader."

The Hub's launch will include a full day of activities, featuring keynote speaker Gianna Peterson, Black SEL club president at Hillside High, and a panel discussion on innovative leadership and grounding.

Speaker Eric Moore, Black SEL

Please see **SEL/2A**



U.S. Education Department boosts funds for HBCUs, tribal colleges

By Shauneen Miranda

STATES NEWSROOM

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's administration said Monday it will redirect \$495 million in additional funding to historically Black colleges and universities as well as tribal colleges.

The U.S. Education Department's announcement came just days after the administration decided to gut and reprogram \$350 million in discretionary funds that support minority-serving institutions over claims that these programs are "racially discriminatory."

The department last week said it would cease funding for seven grant programs that go toward institutions that serve students who are Black, Indigenous, Hispanic and Asian, as well as initiatives for minority students pursuing science and engineering careers.


The agency argued that these programs "discriminate by conferring government benefits exclusively to institutions that meet racial or ethnic quotas."

Meanwhile, the department is also diverting \$60 million toward grants for charter schools and will award a total of \$500 million for these schools, which receive public funds and are a form of school choice. The umbrella term "school choice" centers on programs that offer alternatives to one's assigned public school.

The agency also said it's investing more than \$160 million total in American history and civics grants — a \$137 million increase in the funds Congress previously approved.

In its announcement, the agency said, "these investments will be repurposed from programs that the Department determined are not in the best interest of students and families."


Please see **HBCUs/2A**




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First Black SEL Hub launches in Durham

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research lead, will discuss the lived experiences of Black youth, their emotional and social needs, and what parents and teachers can do to make sure their voices are heard. "We have a responsibility for each other. It's about owning our own collective power as a Black community. We have our individual actions, but we also have our collective actions,

and that's how we make systemic change," he said. Moore said SEL helps Black youth navigate systemic racist systems and institutions. "A key reason why social emotional learning becomes really important is because the way we emotionally engage things impacts our ability to be successful; it's managing our emotions. Black SEL gives both youth and

adults a framework for how to engage and overcome," he said. The evening will culminate with a Dress to Defy Gala (Black Dandyism in the South) at the Durham Armory, 212 Foster St., and awards ceremony honoring community partners. For more information about Black SEL and to register for the gala, visit blacksel.org.



Trump's Project 2025 reshapes the nation

By Stacy M. Brown
BLACK PRESS USA

America is no longer drifting toward authoritarianism. It is living it. Project 2025 has been instituted, and the results are clear. Donald Trump has put forth racist policies that strip away protections, empower white supremacists, and turn Washington, D.C., into a militarized zone. His followers have taken the flag of racism and run wild with it, building whites-only communities and terrorizing Black neighborhoods under the cover of his administration.

The Thurgood Marshall Institute at the Legal Defense Fund warned last year that Project 2025 was "a direct, boundless, pregnant threat to the interests and well-being of Black people and our democracy." The Institute detailed how the plan would consolidate executive power, dismantle civil rights enforcement, suppress the Black vote, gut public education and eliminate safeguards against discrimination.

"Our democracy stands at a crossroads, a path of infinite promise towards a more inclusive, equitable, and durable democracy on the one hand, and one of immeasurable and irretrievable demise on the other," Janai S. Nelson, president and director-counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, said in

2024. "The assault on Black communities envisioned by Project 2025 will almost certainly condemn us to demise."

Since his return to office, Trump has turned the nation's capital into what residents describe as an occupied city. Military vehicles patrol neighborhoods, checkpoints dominate downtown, and police with expanded immunity operate with near total control. Trump has threatened to "clean out" cities like Chicago, Baltimore and Philadelphia, targeting majority-Black communities as justification for federal crackdowns.

Immigration raids have surged, ripping apart families across Black and Latino neighborhoods. The atmosphere exploded this week when CodePink protestors confronted Trump, Vice President J.D. Vance, and Cabinet members Marco Rubio and others. Standing within inches of Trump, they shouted "Free D.C. Free Palestine. Trump is the Hitler of our time" before being hauled away by security.

Across the country, the evidence of regression is mounting. In Rockdale County, Georgia, children walked into Honey Creek Elementary School to find "Whites Only" and "Colored Only" signs taped over water fountains and posted in the cafeteria. Officials claimed it was part of a history lesson about Ruby Bridges. Parents said

their children were traumatized. One mother recalled her son being mocked by classmates when he drank beneath a sign reading "For Colored Only" and said, "to me that's not a history lesson."

Trump's policies have also emboldened groups openly constructing whites-only settlements. In Arkansas, a compound called Return to the Land has built a 160-acre enclave restricted to people of European ancestry. Its leaders praise Adolf Hitler and the Ku Klux Klan while raising hundreds of thousands of dollars to expand into Missouri. "You want a white nation? Build a white town? It can be done. We're doing it," Eric Orwoll, Return to the Land co-founder, said.

"We don't need to get back to the Jim Crow era," countered Barry Jefferson, NAACP Arkansas State Conference president. "We've been through that before. I think no one should be discriminated against because of their skin color."

Trump has institutionalized racism at the highest levels of government, and his supporters are enforcing it on the ground. "This organization wants to return us to sundown town, and we are not that," said Susan Schmalzbauer, pastor of the United Methodist Church in Missouri. "There's really no place for hate. Hate divides, but love unites."

U.S. Education Depart. boosts funds for HBCUs

Continued from page 1A
Education Secretary Linda McMahon said her department "has carefully scrutinized our federal grants, ensuring that taxpayers are not funding racially discriminatory programs but those programs which promote merit and excellence in education," in a statement Monday. She added that the administration "will use every available tool to meaningfully advance educational outcomes and ensure every American has the opportunity to succeed in life." There was no breakdown made available Monday as to which programs or individual institutions would gain funding. Lodriguez V. Murray, senior vice president for public policy and government affairs at UNCF, which supports HBCUs, said the extra funding is "nothing short of a godsend for HBCUs," in a statement Monday. "We are grateful to have worked with the Trump Administration, Secretary McMahon, and her Department of Education team in achieving this one-time infusion of grant funding," Murray said. Murray noted that "HBCUs are currently and have been underfunded since their inception" and "while we are grateful for these funds, we are still underresourced."



General Major Joseph McNeil's memorial service at N.C. A&T State University.

NC A&T honors life of iconic Greensboro Four member

By Acron Sánchez-Guerra
WUNC

On Feb. 1, 1960, four Black teenage college students sat at a whites-only lunch counter and catalyzed the civil rights movement. Sixty-five years later, hundreds gathered at the very college campus where it all began, to honor the life of Gen. Maj. Joseph McNeil, who died on Sep. 4. He was 83.

The memorial service was held at Harrison Auditorium just a short walk away from Scott Hall at North Carolina A&T State University, where McNeil and the other Greensboro Four members — David Richmond, Franklin McCain and Jibreel Khazan — first thought of changing history forever by sitting down and refusing to move.

"Maj. Gen. Joseph McNeil, one of the A&T Four, whose faith and bravery at the Woolworth's lunch counter lit a flame of justice that still burns bright today," said Rev. Vicki McCain, pastor of Presbyterian Church of the Cross and Franklin McCain's daughter-in-law.

McCain said the service

was taking place on "sacred ground," as it was "a place where courage took root and changed the course of our nation's history."

In an open-casket viewing followed by a two-hour service that featured the A&T Fellowship Gospel Choir, McNeil was surrounded by his family and the families of the other Greensboro Four. He was praised for his courage and eulogized as an architect of the civil rights sit-in movement.

"His sitting was a major act of moral and spiritual protest," said Bishop William J. Barber II, who delivered the memorial's main eulogy. "For four young men to sit, because the weight of history and hand of God pushed them in those seats, it was a miraculous act, it had to be miraculous."

The ceremony began and ended with a presentation of the colors by the NCAT Air Force ROTC to honor McNeil's career as a decorated Air Force veteran.

It was his ROTC military training at A&T that is believed to have influenced his organizing and resilience in the Greensboro Four's planned sit-ins, as they endured being

shoved, spat o, and harassed while sitting at the Woolworth's lunch counter.

Franklin McCain Jr. reflected on how McNeil would now be joining his own late father, Franklin McCain, in heaven. "I am certain that Uncle Joe and daddy are united in heaven laughing, reminiscing and perhaps even planning another bold stand or sit-in from heaven," said McCain Jr. "Lord knows we need it, too. 2025 is starting to look a whole lot like 1960, if you ask me."

McNeil's son, Joseph McNeil Jr., read an obituary for his father. He referenced the Indigenous ancestry of his mother, Ina Brown McNeil, of the Hunk-papa Lakota people of South Dakota, where McNeil was once stationed in the Air Force.

"My father worked hard, very hard. We didn't see a lot of him," said McNeil Jr. "Now, we are the tools to seek that justice, to make this family, our family, your family, the family yet to come."

"We must make this heaven on earth. We must not wait until we pass on to make that heaven."

Trump intensifies campaign to rewrite American history

By Stacy M. Brown
BLACK PRESS USA

The Trump administration has intensified its campaign to rewrite how America tells its history, ordering federal agencies to remove exhibits and materials that emphasize slavery and racial injustice by Sept. 17. The directive, issued by Interior Secretary Doug Burgum, has set off a wave of protests, most prominently in Philadelphia, where activists gathered this weekend to defend the President's House site. That outdoor memorial, located steps from Independence Hall, documents the reality that George Washington enslaved nine people while serving as the nation's first president.

The President's House exhibit, formally titled "Freedom and Slavery in the Making of a New Nation," includes multimedia displays and detailed ac-

counts of individuals such as Ona Judge, who escaped to freedom. Panels like "The Dirty Business of Slavery," which describe the economics and human cost of bondage, are now targeted for removal under the administration's order. Community leaders warn that the directive is designed to sanitize history rather than confront it.

"Black history is American history, and we won't be silenced," said the Rev. Carolyn C. Cavaness of Mother Bethel A.M.E. Church, speaking to supporters at Saturday's rally.

Attorney Michael Coard, representing the Avenging the Ancestors Coalition, told attendees that federal officials set the deadline after months of pressure from Trump and congressional allies. "This place could be shut down," he warned, while outlining legal, political and activist strategies to keep the me-

morial intact. The fight over the Philadelphia site has become a flashpoint in a larger national battle over who controls the narrative of American history.

In March, Trump signed an executive order claiming the Smithsonian Institution was being influenced by a "divisive, race-centered ideology." The order specifically named the National Museum of African American History and Culture, once praised by Trump early in his first term, as "oppressive." It also empowered Vice President JD Vance to review Smithsonian programming and remove what the president has called "improper ideology." Historians and curators say the move represents a direct attempt to censor scholarship and erase evidence of systemic racism.

Other federal agencies have already scrambled to

comply. Earlier this year, the National Park Service briefly altered its Underground Railroad webpage to minimize the role of Harriet Tubman before restoring it under public pressure. The Department of Defense removed, then reinstated, information about baseball legend Jackie Robinson's military service and the Medal of Honor earned by Maj. Gen. Charles C. Rogers, one of the highest-ranking Black service members in Vietnam. Meanwhile, the mural at Black Lives Matter Plaza in Washington was demolished in March, in what critics say was another symbolic effort to erase visible reminders of the struggle for racial justice.

Trump's rhetoric has only sharpened. In recent weeks, he referred to museums as remnants of a "woke country" that dwell on slavery and racial injustice rather than celebrating

national achievements. At a White House event, he declared that Smithsonian institutions were filled with "divisive propaganda" and threatened to cut funding if changes were not made. His remarks represented an about-face from 2017, when he called his tour of the African American History Museum "a meaningful reminder of why we have to fight bigotry, intolerance and hatred."

Historians warn that the shift is part of a coordinated effort to control the country's historical narra-

tive. Chad Williams, a professor at Boston University, compared the administration's approach to the "Lost Cause" ideology promoted after the Civil War, when southern states sought to glorify the Confederacy while downplaying slavery as the cause of the conflict. "It sends a very dangerous message about how the government is seeking to control this country's narrative with a very narrow and propagandistic version of American history," Williams told a local news outlet.

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‘We Are Not Losers Yet’

Cosby talks prison life, NBC and media erasure

By Stacy M. Brown
BLACK PRESS USA

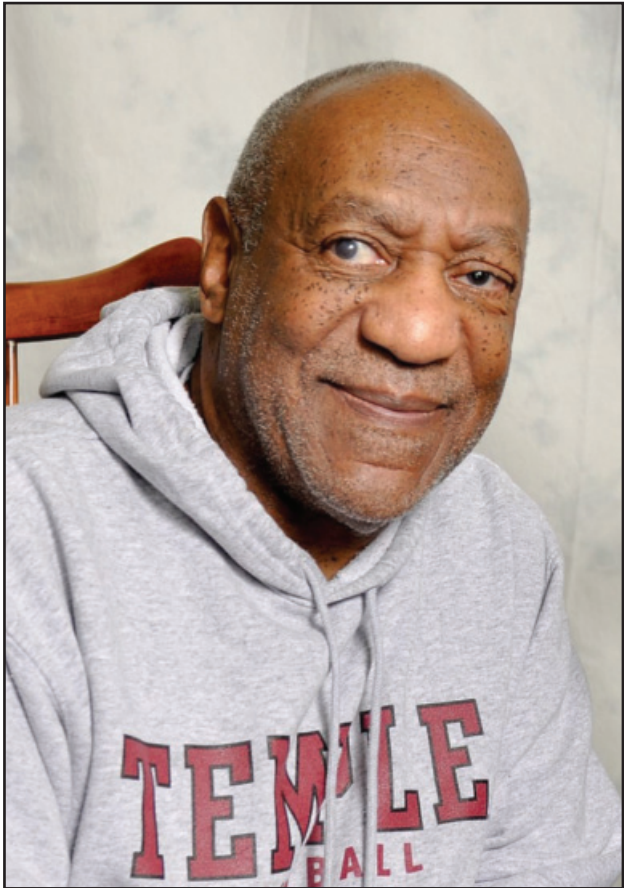
Bill Cosby said his widely criticized admonition that young Black men should “pull their pants up” was less about fashion and more about a system that profits from negative images of African Americans. “But what was it they used to say? They not only did that, but what got a lot of attention was the shoes, the untied laces and then the pants down around the crack. And if this is the attention, then it’s something put towards you like they would put drugs into the neighborhood. They would lace the marijuana. They are putting us under siege,” Cosby said during a candid interview on Black Press USA’s “Let It Be Known.”

The remarks came in Cosby’s first wide-ranging interview about his prison experience, the long-standing NBC rumor, the media’s portrayal of his life and the erasure of Black history.

Refusing to Sign Away Innocence

Cosby, famously known as “America’s Dad,” served nearly three years at Pennsylvania’s SCI Phoenix following a 2018 conviction on an aggravated indecent assault charge. In June 2021, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruled that his trial and conviction were illegal, ordered his release and barred any retrial. He said prosecutors offered him a way out — if he admitted guilt.

“My lawyer came to me and said, ‘the district attorney is offering you to sign a paper saying you did it, and that you would be, you wouldn’t have to do prison time,’” Cosby stated. “And I told my lawyer to continue with the trial, don’t stop the trial. I wasn’t signing any papers or anything.” Even in prison, Cosby said, the same deal



was dangled before him. “Sign the paper and go to these classes, and then we will let you go,” he said. “Well, my signature would be in a sealed envelope, and nobody could open it. So, anyway, it was all set up from way in the beginning.”

Life at Phoenix
Cosby recalled his first hours inside.

“When I entered Phoenix for the first time, I could not see,” he said. “And there were regulations such as taking off your clothes and switching to other things, and then the search for some things that you might have.” He said he was kept alone at first. Later, he was moved onto a unit with “convicts who really and truly had done some things like murder, rape and et cetera, et cetera.”

Inside, Cosby became a speaker at peer programs like “Mann Up” and “Men

of Valor.” Because the men talked so much about their faith and reverence of Jesus Christ, Cosby said, “As you leave this prison, whatever you go out and become... make Jesus smile.”

The Release
Cosby described being asleep in his cell when word came. “A resident... said, ‘Mr. Cosby, Mr. Cosby, you have to wake up. You can go home. You can go home,’” he said. A white female officer with the rank of major came to push his wheelchair out. “I said, This is not like driving Miss Daisy.

And she said, ‘Who’s Miss Daisy?’” Cosby recalled. He said as he was wheeled down the corridor, he heard applause from two levels of cells. “It was enough to have all of these fellows clapping,” he said.

Read the entire article on our website.



Stein orders COVID-19 vaccines available without a prescription

By Christine Zhu
NC NEWSLINE

North Carolina Governor Josh Stein signed an order last week allowing eligible North Carolinians to receive an updated COVID-19 vaccine without obtaining a prescription.

This includes senior citizens as well as adults over 18 who meet the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention list of high risk conditions, including asthma, COPD, diabetes, ADHD, heart disease and cancer.

“Right now, North Carolina is one of only a handful of states where people must get a prescription before they can get a shot at the pharmacy,” Stein said. “This is unnecessary red tape. It is time for North Carolina to get in line with other states across the country.”

Pharmacies may ask patients certain questions or ask them to attest to the conditions that would make them eligible, but medical documentation is not necessary.

The Medicaid program is paying for COVID vaccines for individuals who are beneficiaries, said Larry Greenblatt, state health director and chief medical officer at the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services.

“Vaccines are one of the most effective means available to prevent serious illness, hospitalization and death,” N.C. Health and Human Services Secretary Dev Sangvai said. “They help protect the health of children and adults, their families and the entire community from the spread of infectious disease.”

Following state law, immunizing pharmacists in North Carolina can administer those vaccines recommended by the federal Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, but ACIP has yet to give its recommendations for COVID-19 vaccines this season, NC Newsline previously reported.

ACIP is expected to release recommendations later in September, according to Stein’s office.

The governor’s office shared a list of retail pharmacies that have updated COVID-19 vaccine available to date: Brisson Drugs, Carlie C’s, Central Pharmacy of Durham, Costco, CVS Pharmacy, Food Lion, Hope Mills Pharmacy, Fairmont Drug Company, Ingles Markets, Med Smart Pharmacy, Med Source Pharmacy, Publix Pharmacies, Sam’s Club, Walgreens and Walmart.

Former Rep. Wiley Nickel running for North Carolina district attorney

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

RALEIGH — A former North Carolina Democratic congressman whose bid for U.S. Senate ended several weeks ago announced Tuesday that he is running to become the top prosecutor in the state’s largest county.

Ex-U.S. Rep. Wiley Nickel, who also served previously as a state legislator, said he wants to become the next Wake County district attorney. Current DA Lorrin Freeman said she will not seek another four-year term in 2026.

Nickel, a lawyer who also once worked as a White House staffer in Barack Obama’s administration, said in a news release that he’s running to bring his experience “back to the local level and drive real change for our criminal justice system.”

Nickel was elected in 2022 to the U.S. House from a Raleigh-area swing district. But he decided against seeking a second term in 2024 because he said the district’s redrawing by the General Assembly made it essentially impossible to win again. Nickel formally launched a 2026 U.S. Senate campaign this past April, but he stepped aside in late July the day after former Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper entered that race and Nickel endorsed Cooper.

Nickel’s kickoff statement Tuesday hit on national themes, accusing



President Donald Trump and “right-wing extremists” of “trying to take away our freedoms.”

“I’m running to increase support for police and first responders and to make sure our justice system is more fair, more accountable, and more focused on the real public safety,” Nickel said. “In this moment, we need a District Attorney who will stand up for our rights and freedoms, hold corrupt politicians accountable, and defend our Constitution.”

At least two other Democrats are running for the

post, including longtime Wake County DA office prosecutor Melanie Shekita and Sherita Walton, now a Raleigh city attorney who advises the police department.

The Wake County post may be the most high-profile local prosecutor in the state because the job often handles government corruption and election law violation cases. Party primaries will be held in March, with the general election in the Democratic-leaning county November 2026.

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Fall Yard Cleanup Tips from Lawn Care Experts

(StatePoint) Fall means school is back in session, football season's beginning, and your lawn is going to need some extra care to stay healthy through winter.

"With the change in seasons, your lawn care routine is also going to change to include less mowing and more dealing with leaves and debris," says Nick Heiser, product manager at Exmark. "And if you've got a lot of debris and material to get up and off your lawn, you're going to want to do that by bagging when you mow."

In "Lawn Mowing Tips for Fall Yard Cleanup," a video on Exmark's Backyard Life site, Heiser explains that doing so might require switching out the type of blade you have on your mower. While most mowers come standard with high-lift notch blades, which are good for many cutting conditions, for heavy bagging, you should be using an extreme blade. This will do a few things for you:


- It will create an aggressive lift that creates the vacuum and suction needed to pull up debris.
- It will evenly cut up, break down and compact everything on your lawn to help the bagging system do its job more effectively.

Once you've cleared most of the debris, you should switch back to mulching for the last few cuts of the season to put nutrients back into the ground and allow the lawn to retain moisture. A micro mulch system, which is an easy-to-use and easy-to-install lawn mower accessory, provides an extra set of blades to break down clippings to a fine mulch, then directs the area of deposit, so you control where the mulch lands.

Finally, fall is the best time for aeration for cool-season grasses. Aeration is essential to ensuring that the roots of your lawn get plenty of air and the nutrients they need before winter.

To view the video, visit Exmark's Backyard Life, a unique multimedia destination focused on helping homeowners improve their outdoor living spaces. There you can also download additional tips and view other Exmark Original Series videos.

Now that you're armed with these fall yard cleanup tips, you can head out to take care of your lawn with confidence.



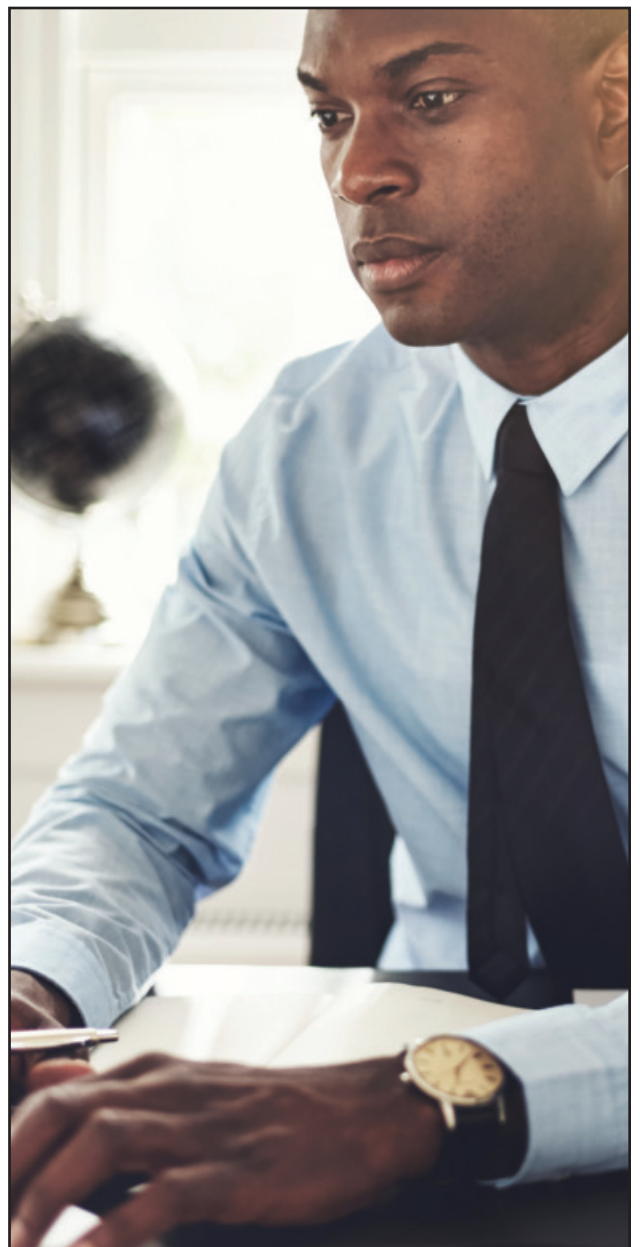
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GETTY IMAGES

Young worshippers in a church.

Survey: Millennials and Generation Z are going to church again

By Rev. Dorothy S. Boulware

WORD IN BLACK

According to a Barna survey, millennials and Generation Z are the most common churchgoers.

The data indicates the younger generation, attuned to social justice, also is longing for connection and are more willing to engage with the church community during weekdays.

It's become a familiar scene over the past few decades, particularly after the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown: Black churches that often have more empty pews than people worshipping in them on Sundays.

And the congregants singing from the hymnals are more likely gray-haired seniors than fresh-faced youngsters.

But a new report on the habits of churchgoers smashes that stereotype. It finds that millennials and Gen Zers — the hyper-connected, socially conscious young people born between 1997 and 2012, who live on TikTok and Instagram — now lead the country in church attendance.

Perhaps just as surprising, the report from Barna found that attendance

among baby boomers, long considered the Black church's backbone, has plunged. Adults born between 1947 and 1964 are more likely to sleep in on Sunday mornings. "The typical Gen Z churchgoer now attends 1.9 weekends per month, while millennial churchgoers average 1.8 times — a steady upward shift since the lows seen during the pandemic," the report states.

The upticks "are easily the highest rates of church attendance among young Christians since they first hit Barna's tracking," according to the report. "While overall church attendance trends have been flat in recent years, the return to church among the next generation stands out as a powerful sign of rising openness to faith."

COVID-19 forced many young people to deal with their mortality. Young adults are coming back to church with questions about the impact of faith and looking to ask questions generations prior didn't ask.

Churches who had contemplated hybrid worship were forced to immediately offer the option for mere survival. Those who couldn't respond quickly enough

were forced to shut their doors; some never reopened. But Black pastors credit the resurgence to young people considering their own mortality after the once-in-a-generation pandemic as well as abandoning old traditions to create their own.

"I've seen Gen Z numbers increase in places where they feel free to be their entire selves," New Macedonia Baptist Pastor Therm James Jr. said. He noted that Zoomers have come of age amid violence and trauma: the 9/11 terrorist attacks, mass shootings at schools, the murder of George Floyd.

"I've found that new faith interest is deeper than we understand because this generation has known trauma since birth," he says. Gen Z, he says, is searching for meaning and willing to learn — a challenge for the traditional Black church.

"The question is who is God, and why is God not revealing Godself in these present evils," James said. "The church must grapple with reteaching doctrine that speaks of who Jesus is in the presence of social ills and mental/emotional unrest."

Estate planning seen as survival for Black families

By Stacy M. Brown
BLACK PRESS USA

Constance Carter, the founder of California's largest independent Black-owned real estate firm and bestselling author, put the spotlight on the basics that protect Black wealth: life insurance, wills and living trusts.

"Estate planning isn't just paperwork. It's survival. It's power. And it's how we make sure that our children inherit more than just debt," Carter said during an appearance on Black Press USA's Let It Be Known.

She discussed how Black families continue to build assets, yet often leave those assets exposed because planning is delayed or skipped. "We are already behind the eight ball when it comes to building wealth," Carter said. "Historically, we were shut out of opportunities through redlining, predatory lending and systemic barriers. Ninety percent of wealth in this country is passed intergenerationally, and 80% of that is through real estate. Yet while we are trying to get our piece of the pie, we are not planning to pass it on like other communities."

Carter explained the difference between a will and a living trust, describing a will as instructions that can be contested in probate court. In contrast, a trust provides binding directives that transfer property



clearly and efficiently.

"A will is just instructions," she said. "There's a saying that a will, will be contested. With a trust, these are the directives. This is your legally binding instrument to pass property generationally."

She called on families at every income level to act. Trusts can cost between \$1,500 and \$3,000, but the protection, she said, is worth it even if there is only one property. To make planning more accessible, she created a \$25 eBook that walks through drafting a living trust, no-tarization and state-by-state recording requirements. "I try to make it as simple as possible," Carter said. "I see problems that Black people face, and I try to find solutions."

For new families, Carter listed life insurance as the first step.

"It is a sin before God for you to be having chicken dinners and GoFundMe accounts to bury your loved ones," she said. "A good man leaves an inheritance for his children and his children's children." She

added that avoiding conversations about death often leaves families divided. "Two things make people act funny: death and money," Carter said.

Without beneficiaries and directives, loved ones are left scrambling for account access and arguing over wishes that were never written down. Carter also described her work with the Net 7 Collective, a nationwide and international community of Black women building seven-figure net worths. "When you teach a man, you teach an individual. This is no diss to men, but when you teach a woman, you teach a nation," she said. "Black women, you give us something, we are going to multiply it."

She dismissed predictions that Black household wealth could hit zero by 2053 if nothing changes. "They did F around and they gave us the internet. They gave us the internet, AI, and we have each other," Carter said. "Nobody is coming to save us; we have got to be the ones. And the only way we can do it is together."

RECIPE OF THE WEEK



Give backyard barbecues a boost with this easy crowd-pleasing recipe

FAMILY FEATURES

Classic burgers and hot dogs might get the spotlight during backyard barbecues, but tasty sides and twists on tradition are what take your cookout to the next level.

Since no meal is complete without Bush's Baked Beans, chef James Briscione turns to these hearty Hamburger Baked Beans, which provide a twist on a cookout favorite with seasoned ground beef com-

bined with baked beans. Simply cook ground beef with onions, then add ketchup, mustard and baked beans, stirring everything together until heated through.

To complete your cookout and please potluck crowds with more delicious recipes, visit bush-beans.com.

Hamburger Baked Beans
Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 5 minutes
Servings: 4

1/2-1 pound ground beef
½-small onion, diced
2 tablespoons ketchup
1 teaspoon spicy mustard
28 ounces Bush's Original Baked Beans

In skillet over medium heat, cook ground beef with onion.

Drain fat. Add ketchup, mustard and baked beans. Stir together until heated through.

AROUND THE TRIANGLE

RALEIGH TOUR

The Big Bounce America 2025 Tour is Sept. 19-21, Lakeside Retreats, 4521 Mial Plantation Road. Tickets: thebigbounceamerica.com.

FOOD

The next Raleigh Foodie Fare is Sept. 21, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Moore Square.

FESTIVALS

* Mama Afrika Festival is Sept. 21, 1-5 p.m., SE Raleigh YMCA, 1436 Rock Quarry Road.

* Raleigh Tamale Festival is Sept. 27, 2-6 p.m., downtown Raleigh.

CONFERENCE

N.C. Affordable Housing Conference is Sept. 30-Oct. 1, Raleigh Convention Center. Register: nchousingconference.com. Deadline: Sept. 22.

FUNDRAISER

CASA's annual fall fundraiser is Sept. 25, 6:30-9:30 p.m., Raleigh Union Station. Tickets: www.casanc.org. Proceeds benefit affordable housing for homeless individuals.

READING DADS

Fathers of children ages 3-5 can participate in the ABC Craft and Learn event Sept. 27, 10:30-11:30 a.m., Richard B. Harrison Library, 1313 New Bern Avenue.

VETERANS

Women Veterans Support Services' annual Domestic Violence Luncheon is Oct. 1, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Hilton North Raleigh, 415 Wake Forest Road. Tickets: wvssnc.org/events.

CARY

COLLEGE FAIR
Sigma Tau Omega Chapter's annual HBCU College Fair is Sept. 27, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Cary Academy, 1500 N. Harrison Ave. Visit: www.sigmatuaomega-aka.com.

DURHAM

FESTIVAL
CenterFest Arts Festival is Sept. 20-21 in downtown Durham.

MARKET

The next Black Farmers' Market is Sept. 21, 1-4 p.m., Durham Tech, 1637 E. Lawson St.

OPEN HOUSE

A public meeting on how to improve safety on Duke Street/Gregson Street/Vickers Avenue is Sept. 23, 6-7:30 p.m., Walltown Recreation Center, 1308 W. Club Boulevard.

BLACK PARENTS

Empowered Parents in Community is hosting a community gathering for black parents Sept. 24, 6-8 p.m., location TBD. Visit EPIC-NC.org.

CONCERT

Singer Denitia will per-

form Sept. 24, 6:30 p.m., American Tobacco Campus, 300 Blackwell St.

TOWN HALL

Residents are invited to Arts Town Hall to discuss arts and culture Sept. 25, 6-7:30 p.m., Holton Career & Resource Center, 401 N. Driver St.

ROUNDTABLE

The next Community Luncheon Roundtable is Sept. 25, noon, Elizabeth Street UMC Fellowship Hall, Elizabeth Street.

THEATER

Faith-Based Service Network presents "The Funeral is Cancelled," Sept. 27, 5-7 p.m., Lincoln Community Health Center, 1301 Fayetteville St.

CELEBRATION

Emancipate NC is celebrating "50 Years of Resistance. 50 Years of Resilience" Sept. 27, 6 p.m., 1809 Chapel Hill Road.

SUMMIT

DPS's Back to School Emerging Leaders Summit is Sept. 27, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Staff Development Center, 2107 Hillandale Road.

CHAPEL HILL

FESTIVAL
2025 Diaspora Festival of Black and Independent Film begins Sept. 23, noon, Sonja Haynes Stone Center, 150 South St. Tickets: heel-life.unc.edu.

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Fallen officers honored at annual tourney

Jerome Hall just wanted to honor his mentor, Maryland State Police Corporal Edward M. Toatley.

Toatley was an undercover officer with the Drug Enforcement Agency in Maryland. He was shot in the head during an undercover sting operation in 2000.

What started as a one-man tribute has grown into a movement that seeks to bridge the divide between law enforcement and the communities it serves.

Twenty-five years later, Hall is still honoring Toatley and other officers tragically killed

on the job with his annual Battle of the Badges Law Enforcement/Public Safety Basketball Tournament.

This year's event is Oct. 3-5 at Wake Tech Community College - Northern Campus off

Louisburg Road. The three-day tourney will honor two of North Carolina's finest: Wake County Deputy Sheriff Ned Byrd, killed on duty Aug. 11, 2022, and Raleigh police officer Gabriel Torres, killed on duty Oct. 13, 2022.

"When he (Toatley) got killed, I said what can I do? I wanted to do something for his son because I coached him in high school basketball," Hall told me at the 2012 tournament. "I put the word out."

The tourney has since grown into a multistate initiative with events in Maryland, Delaware, Florida and Virginia, and copycat tourneys in the Dominican Republic, Georgia, New Jersey, New York City and Texas.

Besides memorials, Hall had another reason for creating the tournament: youth. Particularly Black males who have an acrimonious relationship with law enforcement, to say the least.

Hall can empathize. He's from the streets of Baltimore but got on the right track after enlisting in the U.S. Marines.

"When I grew up, we had a lot of respect for the police, even though they were doing a lot of bad things," said Hall who moved to Raleigh in 2002.

"This day and age, a lot of kids do not respect the police. Me working for the sheriff department puts me in contact with people from all walks of life, and I think God put me here to inspire Black males that come to jail.

Hall has fought his own battles, too. He left the Wake County Sheriff's Department in 2020 and joined the Durham Veterans Hospital as a federal police officer.

Two months into the job, he was diagnosed with multiple myeloma cancer, which forced him to go on leave without pay for three years. But the thought of ending the tournament never crossed his mind.

After receiving treatment and waiting out the pandemic, the Battle of the Badges is still pumping. To learn more, email: tristanjerome68@hotmail.com.

Durham Park Closures

Long Meadow and East End parks are closing this month. Both parks are getting a \$42 million makeover thanks to the \$85 million Parks and Recreation Bond voters approved last November.

At Long Meadow on Liberty Street, the playground, picnic shelter and basketball courts will close, however the baseball fields and adjacent parking lot will remain open which is good news for Triple Play Durham-Long Ball. The summer baseball league plays most of its games at Long Meadow and Scarborough fields.

At East End on Alston Avenue, portions of the park will close due to lead soil contamination studies and construction. The parking lot, and basketball and tennis courts will stay open.

The Triangle Tribune Sports

September 21-27, 2025 | 6A

HBCU FOOTBALL



North Carolina A&T coach Shawn Gibbs.



North Carolina Central coach Trei Oliver.

'Brother vs. Brother' in Aggie-Eagle Classic

By Bonitta Best editor@triangletribune.com

Two big CIAA matchups are on the horizon this weekend. Virginia State travels to Winston-Salem State, and undefeated Johnson C. Smith heads to two-time defending champ Virginia Union. All conference games are streamed on the CIAA Sports Network.

N.C. Central (2-2) vs. N.C. A&T (1-2) Teammates. Colleagues. Brother-in arms.

None of that will matter until the clock ticks 0:00 after one of the best college rivalries in college sports

concludes in Greensboro.

Eagles coach Trei Oliver and first-year A&T coach Shawn Gibbs played together at NCCU, coached together at NCCU, Grambling State and NCAT, and are best friends. "Brothers," they both are quick to say. But come Sept. 20, so what? "This is THE game. This is not just another game on our schedule. This is a rivalry," Gibbs said at his Monday press conference. "We're going to exceed their physicality, we're going to exceed their effort, and we're ready to go."

Not only are Oliver and Gibbs familiar with each other, but so are their coaching staffs. Gibbs

didn't let friendship get in the way of recruiting away two top NCCU assistant coaches: Courtney Coard and Tony McRae.

"Both schools hate each other," Oliver said half-jokingly on the MEAC weekly teleconference. "We just have to go out there and handle our business."

Before the Aggies' thrilling comeback win over Hampton in double overtime, this weekend's game may have been more symbolic than competitive. But after winning its first CAA game ever, and breaking a 12-game losing streak, Aggeland is fired up.

"We don't need any extra motivation to play NCCU,

but they did put 66 on us last year and told us to take it back to Greensboro. So, that's what we did; now we're back in Greensboro, we we're waiting," Gibbs said.

The Eagles returned to the winning side after a two-game slide. Redshirt senior quarterback Walker Harris earned national player of the week honors after completing 23 of 36 passes for 387 yards and three touchdowns, plus running for another score, against Fayetteville State.

"We needed it (win). Lord knows we needed it," Oliver said.

Please see BROTHER/7A

COLLEGE CORNER

Changes in N.C. Central basketball staffs

SIAC Commissioner Anthony Holloman has been named chair of the National Collegiate Men's Volleyball Committee.

The appointment is the first for an HBCU representative.

"He is well respected by his peers on the committee and throughout the men's volleyball community. I look forward to serving with him in guiding the committee during his term, beginning this month," said Ethan Walker, NCAA coordinator of Championships and Alliances.

The CIAA is using homecoming season to sell its basketball tournament in February.

Fans can get \$75 off general admission tickets with a promo code. Visit the website for more information.

WOMEN

N.C. Central

Tennis opened its fall season last weekend at UNC Greensboro. Alejandra Hidalgo Vega and Mariana Zottoli each won two singles victories against Campbell and Davidson.

Valeria San Miguel Soria and Sara Barbaric went undefeated in doubles against N.C. A&T and UNC Wilmington.

In volleyball, NCCU is on a five-match losing streak. The team travels to Radford on Monday and Elon on Wednesday before conference play begins Sept. 26 at home against Delaware St.

In basketball, coach Terrence Baxter cleaned house and hired a new staff.

Twenty-year veteran Tim Valentine comes from Alabama A&M, where he was associate



head coach. He also was an assistant at Northeastern and Hampton.

Wendell native Cassie King is the program's all-time leading scorer and second-leading re-

bounder. She is in the NCCU Alex M. Rivera Athletic Hall of Fame and led the Eagles to their first CIAA championship in 23 years in 2007. CC remembers

Please see NCCU/7A

Earvin 'Magic' Johnson sounds the alarm: The HIVcrisis isn't over for Black people

By Joseph Williams WORD IN BLACK

Having survived HIV/AIDS for more than 30 years, Earvin "Magic" Johnson worries that younger generations no longer believe the virus is serious enough to protect themselves and others — even though HIV/AIDS disproportionately affects the Black community.

Johnson's 1991 diagnosis rocked the sports world and made international headlines, back when infection was a death sentence. But the basketball Hall of Famer now has a viral load that's virtually undetectable. He beat long odds: Black people are infected, and die, at disproportionately high rates compared with whites.

Johnson wants to spread the word to Black Gen Zers, especially those who think HIV/AIDS is no big deal because an NBA legend like him has lived with it for more than three decades. Although it is no longer a death sentence, he says, it's still killing Black people and should be taken seriously.

By making it to his 66th birthday, "I was the curse and good for the disease," said Johnson during his keynote speech at the National Minority AIDS/HIV Conference in Washington, D.C. "They saw me, and then they saw that I had been living this long life. But then they said, 'Oh, if I get HIV, I'm gonna be good, because Magic is good.' And we can't look at it like that." The data backs up his



warning: Black people represent around 13% of the U.S. population but account for roughly 39% of all new HIV diagnoses. Four in 10 people currently living with HIV are Black, and 43% of all

HIV-related deaths are Black — more than any other racial/ethnic group in the U.S. And with President Donald Trump's proposed budget

Please see MAGIC/7A

‘Brother vs. Brother’ in Aggie-Eagle Classic

Continued from page 6A

The Aggie-Eagle Classic will be streamed on Flo-Football, a paid subscription.

NCCU travels to East Texas A&M next weekend, while A&T heads to University of Maine.

Shaw (0-2) vs. Lincoln (Pa.) (0-3)

It's a new season for both the Bears and Lions. Conference play kicks into gear with an even bigger prize on the line for teams.

The NCAA approved extending the Division II playoffs from 28 to 32 teams, thus giving both the CIAA and SIAC automatic qualifiers.

No more earned access or coaches sweating bullets watching the selection show hoping to see their name called.

"It's big for us (conference)," Shaw coach Lamar

Manigo said at his Tuesday press conference. "Having that automatic bid and even a possibility of a national championship. Many times, those big games at the beginning of the year knocked us out of the playoffs."

The Bears knocked themselves out of a game they "should have won," Manigo said. Shaw committed - or the officials called - 20 penalties for 126 yards, negating three touchdowns.

The Lions are allowing an average of 48 points per game while scoring 11.5 points. The Bears are in the same neighborhood, scoring a conference-worst 6.5 points per game while giving up 32.5 points.

"They're hungry for a win just like we're hungry for a win," Manigo said. "... We have to be disciplined in every facet of

the game."

Virginia Union comes to Durham County Memorial Stadium next weekend for a 1 p.m. matchup.

CAA

Hampton has to regroup fast to prepare for arch-rival Howard this weekend in the Battle of the Real HU/Truth & Service Classic. The Pirates have won the last five matchups against the Bison.

Hampton quarterback Isaiah Freeman is coming off a monster game against the Aggies: 12 of 24 passing for 153 yards and two touchdowns, and 20 carries for 129 yards and one TD.

Team of the Week Aggie Pride!

It took two overtimes, but N.C. A&T ended a 12-game losing streak to earn its first CAA win ever.

Earvin ‘Magic’ Johnson sounds the alarm on AIDS

Continued from page 6A

cuts, drugs like the ones that kept Johnson alive could be harder to get for low-income Medicaid patients.

Black people must be careful, Johnson said, because the virus "is out here in a big way in our community."

In a half-hour talk that was part sermon, part call to action, and part locker-room pep talk, Johnson recounted his journey from what he considered a terminal illness to his longevity.

Strolling into the audience with his microphone, Johnson discussed the need to fight misinformation in the Black community, how he intends to continue advocating for funding to fight the virus and keep the public engaged.

An NBA Hall of Famer, five-time world champion, Olympic gold medalist and wealthy businessman, Johnson is perhaps the highest-profile person liv-

ing with AIDS since the virus emerged as a public health threat in the 1980s. His diagnosis, however, literally changed the face of the disease, transforming it from a disease that was typically associated with white gay men — and that carried a lot of stigma. Johnson put a famous Black face on a disease that was devastating communities of color but received relatively little attention.

The epidemic was already shifting — cases among white gay men were slowing. But infections among Black women and heterosexual Black men, particularly in the South, were climbing fast.

Three decades later, science has transformed HIV into a chronic condition that can be managed with medication. But for Black communities, the burden remains out of proportion.

"It's definitely changed. We still have obstacles," said Johnson, noting that, when he began treatment,

there were few Black patients, even fewer doctors or clinicians, and a lot of misinformation in the Black community. But along with improved drugs and growing awareness, "I hadn't seen this many minorities [fighting the virus]. What a blessing that is, absolutely."

Still, Johnson predicts tough times lie ahead, particularly given President Donald Trump's funding cuts to Medicaid, Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s hollowing out of the nation's public-health apparatus, and the Trump administration's general hostility to science and medical research.

"It's only going to get harder because [Trump] is trying to cut the funding," he said. "But we've got to stay together, we've got to work together. We've got to pool our resources together and continue this fight. And we've got to keep it at the forefront."



Anthony Holloman

Changes in NCCU staff

Continued from page 6A

King well. The ladies were unstoppable in those days.

Paris Kea leaves Wake Forest as its video coordinator and assistant director of basketball operations. Kea played at Vanderbilt and North Carolina.

Shaw

Volleyball hit a two-game skid after its season-opening win. The team lost to Lenoir-Rhyne and Catawba. The ladies head to Barton College Sept. 23 before opening CIAA play Sept. 25 against Johnson C. Smith at Spaulding.

Soccer won its first match last weekend against Pfeiffer. The ladies are 1-2-1, but they started

slow last season and ended up two-time champions.

MVSU

In a sign of the times, Mississippi Valley State has canceled the remainder of the women's soccer season due to "unforeseen health and safety concerns within the program."

"The health and well-being of our student-athletes remain the highest priority for MVSU," director of athletics Alecia Shields-Gadson said. "This was not an easy decision to make, but it was a necessary one."

MEN

N.C. Central

The tennis team is in

College Park, Georgia, this weekend competing in the HBCU National Tennis Championships.

In football, coach Trei Oliver had CC laughing at his Monday press conference. As the meeting ended, Oliver quipped that the media thought he was going to give them some bulletin board material.

He didn't have to this time. A&T coach Shawn Gibbs' press conference was fiery enough for the both of them.

And in basketball, Wes Pifer rejoins the coaching staff. Pifer was an assistant from 2010-13 under LeVelle Moton. He previously was head coach at Western Oregon University.



Congratulations to Howard alumna McKenzie Smith on making the Atlanta Falcons Cheer Team for the fourth straight year.

COVID-19 IN THE SCHOOLS

Hi Everybody! How many of you remember in 2021 how widespread the Delta variant strain was in the United States? It was the most contagious form of Covid and many people died from it. Since Covid is not going away, students, parents and schools must be prepared to still deal with it.

PROTECT AGAINST COVID-19

Some people who have been vaccinated may experience "breakthrough infection", which means some people who are fully vaccinated may still get infected with the virus. Students and families should continue to do the following to protect against Covid:

- *Continue to wear well-fitted masks.
- *Stay up to date on vaccines.
- *If you become infected, stay away from others for at least 5 days.

IF YOU NEED TO SELF-ISOLATE ...

The World Health Organization (WHO) gives advice on self-isolation. You should self-isolate if you have any of these symptoms. Isolation means:

- *Separate room with separate facilities and utensils
- *Separate and do your own laundry
- *Clean frequently touched areas
- *Avoid touching people
- *Cover skin outbreaks
- *Open windows for good ventilation
- *Maintain at least 1 yard of distance from people
- *Avoid physical contact with people and pets
- *Encourage others to frequently wash their hands

TELL THE TRUTH

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

_____ The Delta variant was widespread in 2021.

_____ COVID-19 is no longer considered contagious.

_____ Some people who have been vaccinated may experience "breakthrough infection".

_____ Do not touch others when self-isolating.

_____ WHO stands for World Health Organization.

_____ Self-isolation means you only have to move to the other side of the room.

CALL THE DOCTOR!

Circle the one symptom where you **DO NOT NEED** to call the doctor.

-Trouble breathing

-Confusion

-A scrape on the leg

-Coughing and wheezing

ANSWER KEY

TELL THE TRUTH!

T

F

T

T

F

F

ONE MINUTE MADNESS!

eFver

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DOCVI-19

slaioitno

kMsa

CALL THE DOCTOR!

A scrape on the leg

COVID-19 IN THE SCHOOLS, 9/21/25 #221 WWW.JOEYOUNG.ORG KEMET ACTIVITY SHEETS © 2025 BY JOE YOUNG



Municipal primary early voting begins in Durham County

STAFF REPORTS
DURHAM - Early voting for the 2025 municipal primary election runs Sept. 18 through Oct. 4. All city of Durham residents are eligible. Unlike Election Day, when eligible voters must vote at their home precinct, city residents can cast their ballot at any of the five early vot-

ing sites listed below:
* North Regional Library, 221 Milton Road
* East Regional Library, 211 Lick Creek Lane
* South Regional Library, 4505 S. Alston Avenue
* Durham County Board of Elections, 3825 S. Roxboro St.
* NCCU Turner Law Building, 640 Nelson St.
Residents who are not

registered voters can complete a same-day registration at any of the early voting sites with proof of residence. People who need to update their name and/or address information can also do so during the early voting period. For more information, visit dcovotes.com.

Triangle nonprofit leaders chosen for United Way initiative

STAFF REPORTS
DURHAM - United Way of the Greater Triangle has selected its fourth cohort for the "10 to Watch" program, welcoming 10 dynamic, mission-driven leaders who are driving transformational change across the Triangle region. The announcement comes with continued support from GFiber, which has contributed \$40,000 toward the 2025 cohort. This year's 10 to Watch are:
* JaNell Henry, Black Farmer's Market
* Angela Thorpe Mason, Pauli Murray Center for History and Social Justice
* Keiyonna Dubashi, Pro-found Ladies
* Leslie Covington, The Caring Place Inc.
* Donna Carrington, Community Empowerment Fund
* Yvette Holmes, South-

east Raleigh Promise
* Monica Daye, StandUp-SpeakOut NC
* Dosali Reed-Bande, The West End Community Foundation, Inc.
* Christine Cotton, PORCH Communities
* Marlon Torres, North Carolina Arts In Action
Launched in 2018, the 10 to Watch program identifies, supports, and amplifies underrepresented nonprofit leaders and the high-impact organizations they lead. The initiative addresses a critical gap by providing partnership, early-stage investment, access to resources, and expanded networks to help scale community-driven solutions. "We believe in the power of people, especially the visionary leaders who are building the solutions their communities need most," said Crystal Wilson, chief outreach officer for United

Way of the Greater Triangle. "These leaders aren't waiting for permission or validation, they're doing the work. What they need is partnership and investment to scale their vision." GFiber has served as a continuous supporter of 10 to Watch since the program's launch, recognizing the initiative's potential to build a more just and equitable Triangle region for all residents. "We're proud to continue our partnership with United Way of the Greater Triangle and the 10 to Watch program," said Jess George, GFiber's head of government and community affairs for the East Region. "These leaders are creating real, measurable change in their communities, and we believe in investing in homegrown solutions that strengthen the Triangle region for everyone."

Exploremores Girl Scout sandwich cookie joins nationwide lineup

STAFF REPORTS
RALEIGH - Girl Scouts-North Carolina Coastal Pines announced that Exploremores, a rocky road ice cream-inspired sandwich cookie, will join the lineup for the 2026 Girl Scout Cookie season. Filled with delicious flavors of chocolate, marshmallow and toasted almond-flavored crème, Exploremores reflect the spirit of exploration at the heart of every Girl Scout. Girl Scouts across the country will offer the Exploremores cookie nationally, both online and in person at local booths, alongside fan favorites like Thin Mints and Caramel deLites. As entrepreneurs, girls master the ability to set goals, make decisions, manage money, develop people skills and learn business ethics. Every purchase of Exploremores — and the entire lineup of iconic Girl Scout Cookies — helps girls unbox a world of possibilities, one cookie at a time. With each cookie box sold, consumers are



supporting Girl Scouts as they learn, grow and thrive through all of life's adventures. All proceeds from cookie sales stay local with Girl Scout councils and troops to help fund life-changing programs, experiences and learnings all year long. Girl Scout Cookie season is recognized nationally from January through

April, with our local program kicking off on Jan. 17, 2026. Visit girlscoutcookies.org to sign up for updates on when Exploremores and other cookies will be available in your area, and text "Cookies" to 59618 to get the latest news. Girl Scout troops are also forming now; join today at www.girlscouts.org/join.

2025 40 UNDER 40

North Carolina Central recently celebrated an evening recognizing some of the university's most outstanding alumni. This year's cohort helped raise more than \$33,000 to support NCCU and showed what "Eagle Pride Amplified" truly means.



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