

THE VOICE

A Trusted Voice From The Community's Perspective



KING HOLIDAY WRAP UP

PICTORIAL: COLD WEATHER DIDN'T STOP THE CELEBRATIONS PAGES 7-9



Growing Black Female Suicide
High Profile Incident Brings Attention
Page 3

Rock the Block's 100th Home
New Home: New Year
Page 6



Volume 31, No. 2 · communityvoiceks.com · Friday, January 19, 2024

PRSRRT STD
US POSTAGE PAID
WICHITA KS
PERMIT NO. 560

Change Service Requested

The Community Voice
P.O. Box 20804
Wichita, KS 67208

THE VOICE

VOLUME %EDITION%, NUMBER 2
FRIDAY, JANUARY 19, 2024

LOOKING AHEAD

You're Missing a Lot if You're Not Following Us Online. We're posting stories daily on our website, many of which never make it onto the pages of The Community Voice print edition. Plus, you can read many of the stories from our print edition before they appear in our print edition. So consider stopping by CommunityVoiceKS.com on a regular basis to see what's news.

Sign Up for Our Weekly Newsletter: If you don't have time to stop by the website on a regular basis, sign up for our weekly newsletter. Once a week, we'll send you a newsletter summarizing our top five stories of the week.

CONTACT US



Stop Looking for a Print Edition of The Community Voice: You can read editions of The Community Voice on our website. Not just current and recent issues. You can read issues dating back several years. Go to www.CommunityVoiceKS.com, click on "e-editions." Plus, our archive is searchable. If there's a particular story you're looking for, just enter a defining word for the story in the search box.

OFFICE HOURS
WITH *Bonita*

**YOUR OPPORTUNITY
TO DISH WITH THE EDITOR**

1ST FRIDAYS OF THE MONTH
NOON TO 12:30 P.M.

SIGN-UP ON OUR WEBSITE
COMMUNITYVOICEKS.COM

THE VOICE... DELIVERING MORE



Editor-in-Chief
The Community Voice

**SHARE YOUR
STORY IDEAS,
ISSUES AND
OPINIONS.**

More Stories to Read Online:

Sports
Jackson County Executive Frank White vetoed an ordinance Thursday that would have put a 3/8th-cent sales tax renewal on the April ballot to fund sports stadiums for the Kansas City Chiefs and the Kansas City Royals. Want to know what was in the ordinance he vetoed. Read our story.

Chiefs & Royals Stadium Projects in Question After Frank White Veto

Wichita
City Announces Additional Homes for Sale
Open House dates set for additional public housing units being sold

Kansas State News

Passenger Train Route Set to Return to Kansas

Gov. Laura Kelly announces project funding with planned stops in several Kansas cities.

Arts & Culture
Telfar: Creating New Rules for Luxury Handbags



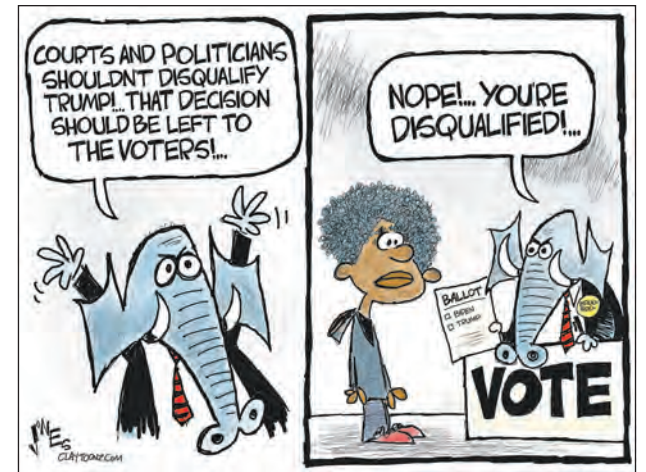
Telfar Bags, by Black designer Telfar Clemens, are the new "IT" bag.

The bags have been worn by everyone from Beyoncé and model Bella Hadid to US Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.

Claytoonz: So Many Good Ones, We Just Couldn't Choose One.



Another Haley History Lesson



Disqualified Voters



Wimpy Warmonger



Fake Immunity

THE COMMUNITY VOICE

PO Box 20804 | Wichita, KS 67214
316.681.1155 | ISSN 1090-3852
www.communityvoiceks.com

The contents of each issue of The Community Voice are copyrighted. Articles appearing in The Community Voice may not be reproduced without written permission of the Editor. All rights reserved.

ADVERTISING RATES:

Email: Oswald@tcvpub.com

EDITORIAL: Readers with story or photo ideas, tips, criticisms or suggestions on coverage are urged to contact the Editor. All submissions to the paper, letters and columns are subject to editing for length, style, taste and legal considerations.

CORRECTIONS:

The Community Voice strives for accuracy and fairness. Readers who believe a story or headline is inaccurate or misleading should contact the Editor.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: Published BiWeekly
\$27.95/yr. Sedgwick County
\$35.95/yr. Outside Sedgwick County
\$73.99/yr. Outside Kansas

CONTACTS:

Editor-in-Chief/Press Releases
Bonita Gooch
Wichita | press@tcvpub.com
KC | cvoicekc@tcvpub.com

Publisher:
Kurt Oswald | oswald@tcvpub.com
Press Releases: press@tcvpub.com
Advertising: adcopy@tcvpub.com

Contributing Writers:

Thomas White | kansas-city-white@tcvpub.com
P.J. Griekspoor | wichita-griekspoor@tcvpub.com

Advertising Sales:
Cornell Hill | hill@tcvpub.com

Office Administration:
Elaine Guillory | guillory@tcvpub.com

MUSIC COMES TO **LIFE!**

NINA SIMONE FOUR WOMEN

**FEB 13
THRU
MAR 3**

COPAKEN STAGE

**KCRep.org
816.235.2700**

Experience the **soul-stirring** journey of Nina Simone's iconic music and the powerful stories of four extraordinary women in this **captivating and moving** play featuring **Nina's music performed live.**

STARTS SOON — TICKETS GOING FAST!

Order **TODAY** to get the **best seats.**

By **CHRISTINA HAM**

Directed by **MALKIA STAMPLEY**

Co-Produced with **MILWAUKEE REPERTORY THEATRE**

Mark Clements, Artistic Director

Chad Bauman, Executive Director

Lead Sponsor: **H&R BLOCK**

Additional Support provided by:
HERB & BONNIE BUCHBINDER

KCRep is the professional theater in residence at UMKC



Suicide Among Black Girls, Women on the Rise

Lincoln University administrator's death calls attention to growing problem in Black community

By **Bonita Gooch**
Voice Editor in Chief

Key Points:

- Suicide among Black girls and women is a growing problem.
- Lincoln University administrator's suicide highlights workplace harassment and bullying.
- Major factors are driving this increase that can be addressed



Rates of suicide among Black girls, women is on the rise

aged 25–27 years, suggest that this age may be a developmental period for Black women with particular need of additional support," the study suggested.

What's Behind the Increase?

In brief, Patrice Harris, MD, a Black woman and the chief health and medical editor for "Everyday Health" writes about five key factors.

Social Media

Social media can make people feel pressure that can negatively affect one's sense of self-worth, identity, and sense of belonging, especially among young people.

Harris says that cyberbullying is an increasingly common form of bullying experienced by Black adolescents.

Mental Health Stigma in Black Community

This stigma has had myriad consequences for Black communities, including preventing many Black people from seeking the help they need, causing them to repress their symptoms instead. It has also perpetuated the false notion that Black people do not experience mental illness or suicide.

"Young Black girls often hear the message of the strong Black woman, and young Black boys often hear the message that if they seek help, they are weak."

Limited Access to Treatment

Harris says, there are access problems in the Black community including lack of access to quality medical

Dr. Antoinette Candia-Bailey was by all means a superstar. With over 20 years of higher education and two advanced degrees, she had just taken a dream job as a vice president for student affairs at Lincoln University, where she was a beloved alumni.

It's not wonder her suicide on January 8, just five days after being fired from her position has become a top trending subject on the internet.

The discussions revolve around workplace bullying, her boss the university's president has since taken a paid leave of absence following calls for his termination.

The other discussion revolves around depression in Black women and the need for self care. However, very little of the discussion has revolved around the fact that Candia-Bailey is part of a growing trend, an increase in suicide among Black females.

Black Suicide?

Suicide rates among Black people have consistently been the lowest among any racial group. It's a statistic that's contradictory considering the enduring racism, marginalization and violence Blacks

endure.

The suicide rate for Black women has been the lowest of all leading to growing acceptance of the "Strong Black Woman" identity, with Black women assumed to just keep on keepin' on, despite what they endure.

However recent suicide statistics support a growing crack in that model. The stats are both grim and alarming. suicide rates rose from 2 deaths per 100,000 in 1999 to 3.4 per 100,000 in 2020. Increases considerably spiked among Black women and girls ages 15 to 24, rising from 1.9 to 4.9 per 100,000 during that time frame.

This short time frame may reflect an anomaly associated with the pandemics, but stats over longer timeframes also reflect alarming increases in Black female suicides particularly in younger Black women.

From 2001 to 2017, suicide death rates among Black girls age 13 to 19 rose a staggering 182%. The two decades between 1999 and 2019 saw suicide rates for Black women between the ages of 25 and 44 increase by 72%

"High rates among those

See **SUICIDE**, Page 4 →



Senator Faust-Goudeau: What She'll Be Working on for "The People"

Read about it at communityvoiceks.com

Black Legislative Day in Topeka Returns With Networking and Information

Black leaders across the state have a lot to take on at their annual Black Legislative Day at the Kansas Capitol on Mon. Feb. 19.

By Bonita Gooch
Voice Editor-in-Chief



KBLD 2023

With voting rights, legalization of medical marijuana, voting rights and Black economic development, child care and criminal justice reform in Kansas— just to name a few – on the agenda for Kansas' 2024 legislative session, Black leaders across the state have a lot to take on at their annual Black Legislative Day at the Kansas Capitol on

Mon., Feb. 19.

This is the sixth year for the day-long event that has annually attracted more than 100 African Americans from across the state to the capitol.

There is an open invitation for anyone interested in issues that affect African Americans to join others in the capitol for an opportunity to grow their understanding of the issues

and to advocate for or against legislation that may have a positive or negative impact on the state's Black community.

"This is an event for experienced advocates as well as for citizens hoping to grow their knowledge and understanding of the legislative process and the issues," said Stacey Knoell, Executive Director of

the Kansas African American Affairs Commission, one of the event's primary sponsors.

Again this year, the event will include a series of panel presentations and discussions on hot legislative topics of the year, with a specific focus on the potential impact the legislation might have on the state's Black community.

The keynote speaker will be Dr. Micah Kubic, executive director of the ACLU of Kansas.

There is a distinguished and expert list of presenters who will serve on panels or present on session topics. A partial list includes:

Clay Barker, General Counsel for the Kansas Secretary of State will discuss changes and proposed changes in voting laws in Kansas

Amber Sellers, a member of the Lawrence City Council, will give an overview and update

on proposed bills affecting African Americans in Kansas.

John Nave, executive vice president AFLCIO Kansas, one labor issues and the variety of job training and educational programs and funding

A unique panel this year will feature experienced candidates speaking on the ABC's of running for office. This is a great session for those who've considered running for office and designed to help encourage more Kansas African Americans to step up, file and run.

Plus a lot more sessions, the highlight of the day is always the opportunity to meet and network with other Black leaders from across the state.

Participants are also encouraged to drop into the Kansas House and Senate sessions to see our legislative process in action, meet Black legislators

during a planned update session and visit representatives from their district to let them know about issues that are important to you and other Black residents of your area.

The \$15 registration fee, includes attendance at all sessions, continental breakfast, lunch and a closing reception.

Registration for the event is open on communityVoiceKS.com. Use the QR code on this page to go direct to registration. Check in with continental breakfast begins at 9:30 a.m. on the 1st floor rotunda. The deadline to register is Wed., Feb. 14.

Kansas Black Legislative Day is a collaborative project of the Kansas State Branches of the NAACP, Kansas Black Legislative Caucus, the Kansas African American Affairs Commission and the Kansas Black Leadership Council.

SUICIDE, from Page 3 ↓

insurance and education about how to locate a local mental health provider,

Plus a lack of culturally conscious medical providers only make matters worse.

Only 2% of psychiatrists and 4% percent of psychologists in the United States are Black, according to the American Psychiatric Association and American

Psychological Association.


Racism and Discrimination

Black people regularly experience structural racism that pervades public policies, institutions, housing, education, and the justice system, among other areas with these different types of racism and discrimination causing stress and trauma to Black people on the receiving end.

What State Level Issues are Important to You?


The Kansas Black Leadership Council want so know what issues you're concerned about. Even if you don't have an issue of particular concern, they're asking Black Kansans from across the state to take their 5-minute survey on this issues. Don't know what the issues are, taking this multiple answer survey can help grow your knowledge of the issues. To take the issue, scan the QR Code or go to kansasblc.org/blackagenda The results of this survey will be used to help guide KBLC's lobbying and advocacy efforts.





All your protection under one roof®

Sammy O. Oduniyi Agency
1117 S. Rock Rd. Ste 4A • Wichita, KS 67207
316.685.7700 • soduniyi@amfam.com
www.sammyoagency.com



Sammy O. Oduniyi

• Auto • Home • Life • Business

Competitive Rates
Discounts Available

Quality Service
24-Hour Claims Reporting & Customer Service

Monthly Payment Plans



GIVENS
DISASTER RESTORATION
FLOOD FIRE MOLD AIRDUCT



We work with all Insurance Companies

24 HR
EMERGENCY
SERVICE

316-265-1315

Locally Owned and Operated 50 Years of Experience

HAPPY NEW YEAR !

HAHN PLUMBING & DRAIN CLEANING LLC

Drain Cleaning | Leaky Pipes
Toilet Repairs | Water Heaters
Garbage Disposals | Sump Pumps
Sewage Ejectors
LICENSED & INSURED

Herb Hahn, Owner | 316.351.2436
Hahnplumbingsvc@gmail.com

Sylvester Thompson
Retirement and Insurance Advisor


"Medicare can be complicated."

Are you enrolled in the right Medicare Plan?


We need to talk!

Sylvester Cares!!

Contact me at:
Cell (316) 648-1972
Email: nvestor77@gmail.com



HEALTH | LIFE | CANCER



Sylvester Thompson

Wichita Funds Program Aimed At Preventing Gun Violence

This program is designed to get ahead of and stop killings in two core areas of the city.

By **Bonita Gooch**
Editor-in-Chief

Key Points:

- Wichita launches “Cure Violence” program to tackle gun violence.
- Core to the program are violence interrupters who work in the streets to build helpful connections with at-risk individuals.
- Program funded by \$1.27 million from American Rescue Plan Act.

Gun violence is a growing problem in Wichita and instead of just addressing the problem after it happens, the City of Wichita recently funded a program designed to stop gun violence before it starts.

The city awarded a \$1.27 million, one-year agreement for the operation of a community-based program designed to get ahead of, and prevent, violence in two areas that have shown an alarming increase in gun violence since 2016. The program will focus on violence prevention in the Northeast Wichita area from 9th Street to 25th and Oliver to I-135, and in South Wichita from Pawnee to 31st Street and Oliver to Broadway.

Cure Violence, the model the city is implementing, is a national organization that is proving success at reducing violence in communities across the country.

Core to the program’s success are trustworthy change agents who are “credible messengers” and can build



Marquita Atkins Woods

connections with individuals most at risk of perpetrating or experiencing violence.

These neighborhood change Violence Interrupters and Outreach Workers go into the community and build trust and form personal relationships needed to mediate conflict. The change agents will also connect violence-impacted individuals to critical supportive social services.

The violence interrupters have one goal in mind: to stop the killings. They’re trying to save lives.

Destination Innovation

Since 2005, Marquette Atkins-Woods, through her nonprofit Destination Innovation, has employed grassroots programming with a focus on strengthening and empowering youth to make changes in their lives, in the community and in state legislation.

Her programming most often interfaces with youth from underserved communities, with many of them exiting out of or matriculating in the foster care and juvenile justice system.



Dr. Tasha Parker

It is this alignment that made Destination Innovation (DI) the kind of authentic, community-based program the city wanted to lead the Violence Interrupters program.

“Everything we do is based around making our community a safer place, a better place and a community that feels invested in specifically when it comes to young people,” says Atkins-Woods.

Under the contract, DI is the direct implementer of the program, but they are partnering with Prevention Initiatives at Wichita State University’s Community Engagement Institute (in Old Town) as administrators of the program. In addition, they are working with Dr. Tasha Parker, of the Institute of Development consulting firm, as a third-party evaluator.

Cure Violence is a national program and model that is designed to be followed based on its evidence of success. Parker’s role will be to make sure the model is followed, although some local variations or flavor of the program is allowed.

“No program can be impactful if it isn’t implemented as designed,” says Parker. “With the targeted focus of this program, it’s important for us to be measuring how and if we’re legitimately engaging and collaborating with the community.”

Collaboration & Transparency

Atkins says she wants to make sure the community feels like they are an active part of the movement, and they legitimately have a say in the programming. To get the community involved, she plans to implement a community council to have some say in how the program moves forward.

“We’re going to do our due diligence to be transparent to make sure all of our T’s are crossed and our I’s are dotted and to just center in our community in the work that we do,” says Atkins-Woods.

As part of the planning and implementation process, the Cure Violence model calls for collaboration with a variety of stakeholders, not just residents. Atkins-Woods says she’s actively reached out to service providers in the community who can provide supportive services to impacted individuals. Some of those services might include housing, education and training, health care, and psychological support.

Atkins sees providing individuals with jobs and other lawful sources of income as an important issue to address, so she’s already reached out to Workforce and other employers about partnering with the program. She’s also working with Network Kansas to build an entrepreneurship academy for people touched by the system.

“Where people are looking for jobs, where people are looking for any kind of resources, to say these are the options that we have for you rather than going out and doing more violence,” says Atkins-Woods.

The Cure Violence model also uses hospital-based violence intervention that reaches out to individuals who were shot and hospitalized in an effort to prevent retaliation and connect survivors to social services. Atkins-Woods says the City of Wichita has already implemented Memorandums of Understanding with local hospitals to allow interrupters access to the injured in the hospital.

What the Program Isn’t

This isn’t a city program and this isn’t a handout, says Atkins-Woods. The program will be totally implemented by Destination Innovation. The money from the city isn’t a handout, but an investment

in the community.

In addition, she says the program will not function as the “eyes and ears for the government or the police.”

“We are the eyes and ears for our community,” says Atkins-Woods. “This is not a program where we are giving the police information. We are not doing that, and Cure Violence is against that.”

The Program Will Be Hiring

In addition to a program administrator, the program will be hiring five to six people in each area to serve as on-the-ground violence interrupters.

“These are people that may have been touched by the system or not necessarily touched by the system, but they could have had one foot in the street while they were younger and changed their lives and want to do better for the community,” says Atkins-Woods.

But what they must be is “somebody that the young people in the community or the people that are still in the streets in the community will respect and listen to,” she says.

Program Funding

The city used American Rescue Plan Act dollars to fund the program. The contract has an option for an additional two years of funding.

City of Wichita Relaunching Home Repair Program



Naomi Vertilus is all smiles as she receives the keys to her home.

New Year in a New Home

100th Rock the Block home is a milestone for Habitat & a 22-year dream come true for new homeowner.

By P.J. Griekspoor
Wichita Reporter

Key Points

- Habitat for Humanity dedicates 100th Rock the Block home in Northeast Wichita.
- Naomi Vertilus receives keys to her own five-bedroom home, making a 22-year dream come true.
- Habitat for Humanity program provides education on financial aspects, home maintenance, and more.

Ever since she gave birth to her first child 22 years ago, Naomi Vertilus, has dreamed about a home of her own. And, now, that dream has come true.

On a cold, snowy January afternoon, the mother of four was handed the keys to her very own five-bedroom home following a dedication ceremony to celebrate the 100th Rock the Block home built by Habitat for Humanity in Northeast Wichita.

Rock the Block is a decade-old project to improve the housing stock and increase the level of home ownership in the long-blighted area bordered by Hillside on the East, Grove on the West, 9th Street on the south and 13th Street on the north.

The area was expanded last year north from 13th to 18th streets.

Naomi's new home, at 1357 N. Chautauqua, was built with the help of 341 Habitat volunteers from First Church of the Nazarene.



Naomi Vertilus, left, is shown with her children, Nyla, Vatedis and Vanessa, and former Councilwoman Lavonta Williams, who was a guest at the dedication of Naomi's new home.

Naomi moved from her native New York 17 years ago, encouraged by her older brother who had found opportunity in Wichita in the late 1990s.

"I knew I wanted to be a nurse," she said. "But life kept putting off my dreams."

Her oldest son, Dontae, was 5 years old; her second son, Vatedis, was a baby; and her two daughters, Vanessa and Nylah, now 15 and 9, respectively, had not been born.



GETTY IMAGES

Rock the Block Homes Like Money in the Bank

Participants in Wichita's Rock the Block Habitat Program have grown equity & generational wealth.

By P.J. Griekspoor
Wichita Reporter

Since 2014, Habitat for Humanity has focused its Wichita programming in a 32-block area in Northeast Wichita and their focused effort has paid off in many ways.

If you drive through the area, bound by 13th Street on the north, Hillside on the east, 9th Street on the south and Grove on the west, it's easy to see the physical impact of Habitat's programming.

Ten years ago, the neighborhood looked like a tornado had come through it, with mounds and mounds of illegally dumped trash on more than 100 vacant lots.

This month, as the program celebrated the 100th new Habitat homeowner in the area, they also celebrated a doubling of property values in the area. Three-bedroom Habitat homes built in 2014, the first year of the Rock the Block Program, have doubled in value. According to statistics supplied by Habitat Executive Director Danielle Johnson, those homes purchased for \$75,000 are now valued at \$150,000.

After almost two decades of part-time work and part-time school, she graduated from Hesston College with a bachelor's degree in nursing in May 2022.

"A month later, I was talking to my brother and he said, 'the next step is that home you've always wanted,' and I started looking for a way to make that happen."

She was aware of the Habitat for Humanity program and thought it sounded like something that might work for her and her family.

She called Habitat and talked to advisor Katharine Franco,

See **NEW HOME**, Page 14 →

TALENT SHOWCASE PRODUCTION AND ENTERTAINMENT COMPANY
Presents
MARVIN SAPP DONNIE McCLURKIN HEZEKIAH WALKER



ANTHONY BROWN FRED HAMMOND

The Legends Tour Live

Saturday
FEB 17TH

Doors Open
5:30PM

Concert
7:00PM

CENTURY II PERFORMING ARTS & CONVENTION CENTER
TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

GREAT PLAINS CREDIT UNION
TANGLES UNLIMITED HAIR SALON
PROGRESSIVE MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH
ST. MARK UMC
AND ALL SELECT-A-SEAT-LOCATIONS
OR ONLINE INFO@SELECTASEAT.COM

RESERVED \$49 GENERAL ADMISSION // RESERVED \$65 VIP

SPONSORED IN PART BY THE PROGRESSIVE COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAM. A PORTION OF THE PROCEEDS GO TO BENEFIT DAD'S CARE 2 NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

SCLC-GKC King Mass Celebration

Reparations Now

By Bonita Gooch
Editor-in-Chief

Despite a last minute change of location to Jamison Memorial Temple CME Church and a snow storm, the dedicated found their way to the Southern Christian Leadership Conference of Greater Kansas City Mass Celebration held on Monday evening of the King holiday.

The keynote speaker, returning to Kansas City all the way from Ghana, West

Africa, was Ajamu Webster who delivered an enlightening and informative message "Is a Check Enough" that spoke directly to the SCLC King Celebration theme "Reparations Now."

Presenters in the program included Mia Ramsey and the KC Boys and Girls Choir, Rev. Alberta Walker, Bria Douglas and praise dancer Carol Collins.

A Community Service Award was presented to Oscco Bolton, III, a former gang

member who has worked for 30 years to prevent violence among youth through his program through his organization Peers Organized to Support Student Excellence (P.O.S.S.E).

Former Kansas City Councilmember Jermaine Reed also received special recognition.

Before the mass celebration, SCLC held a community forum on reparations. Learn more about that event on page 10.



Praise dancer Carol Collins enhanced her performance with these beautiful flags.



Ajama Webster returned to Kansas City from Ghana, West Africa, to deliver the keynote speech on the SCLC event theme "Reparations Now."



Members of the KC Reparations Coalition presented an award to the SCLC for their ongoing support of the reparations movement.

ALL PHOTOS THIS PAGE BY BONITA GOOCH

Wyandotte County King Holiday Event 2024

The Dream: It Starts With Me

By Bonita Gooch
Editor-in-Chief

Wyandotte County's 43rd Annual King Holiday Celebration returned to Memorial on Mon., January 15. While the crowd was down due to the chiling weather, the spirit was high.

Always an event highlight

was the MLK Mass Choir, made up of some of the city's most talented vocalists. Youth highlights included a selection by Lily Garcia of V. Lindsay School and a dance performance by Creative Movements.

The keynote speaker was Pastor Debleaire K.Snell, senior pastor of Oakwood University Church in Huntsville, AL.

The program concluded with what is always a large part of the Wyco Celebration, the awarding of scholarships.

The program is jointly sponsored by the Unified Government of KCK/Wyandotte County, the Baptist Ministers Union, Wyandotte County District Attorney's Office and the Board of Public Utilities.



Lily Garcia, a student at V. Lindsay Seventh-Day Adventists School in KCK, sang God Bless America.



Members of Mu Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority teamed with a representative of AME Voter Alert organizations, to hand out voter information.



The MLK Mass Choir is made up of some of the most talented vocalists in KCK.



This young family braved the cold to celebrate the life and service of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Wichita Ministerial League King Holiday Celebration

Shifting the Cultural Climate

Bishop Mark and First Lady Verdina Gilkey served as MC's for the Wichita Ministerial League King Holiday Celebration. Musical selections were provided by the MLK Celebration Ensemble, Aletra Chaney-Profit, the King Children's Choir and Prisca Barnes.

The keynote presenter was Grammy Award-winning gospel singer, songwriter, musician, talk show host, and evangelist Dr. Dorinda Clark-Cole.

Special recognitions included:

Terry Atwater, It Takes a Village – Spirit of Unity Award

Sandra Rankin – The Martin Luther King Visions and Dreams Award

Annual Presidents Award – Posthumously presented to Bishop J.C. Gilkey, Sr. accepted by his son Elder Allen Gilkey,

Special awards from the president were also presented to: Sheila Kinnard, Natalie Rolfe, Teketa Harding, Marche Fleming-Randle, Pastor Marsha Haney and Pastor Allen Stucky.

A Special Recognition Award was given to Pastor Richard Kirkendoll, the Wichita Ministerial League President.



The NAACP held a membership drive during MLK event.



Alphas Wichita King Commemoration and Awards Luncheon

**By Bonita Gooch
Editor-in-Chief**

The brothers of Eta Beta Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, in conjunction with the brothers of Delta Mu Chapter held an awards and commemoration luncheon on Sat., Jan. 13 at Wichita State University's Rhatigan Student Center.

Young Mr. Jerel McGeachy, Jr. delivered King's "I Have a Dream" speech. The brothers also introduced members of the Alpha Esquires, their youth mentoring program. Their keynote speaker was the fraternity brother Brian Black who leads the global Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Office for Hexion, Inc.

Awards presented were: Community Excellence Service Award: Terry Atwater, It Takes a Village, Inc.

Champion Award: Na'Shell Williams, Wichita/Sedgwick County Community Action Partnership, and

Alpha Man Brotherhood Legacy Award: Bro. Brandon Clark, Alpha Phi Alpha, Kansas District Director.



The brothers also introduced members of the Alpha Esquires, their youth mentoring program.



The keynote speaker was Alpha fraternity brother Brian Black who leads the global Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Office for Hexion, Inc.



Young Mr. Jerel McGeachy, Jr. delivered King's "I Have a Dream" speech.



Na'Shell Williams was recognized for promoting diversity in hiring.



Andrea Rankin receives the Visions and Dreams Award for helping to make our community better.



Grammy Award-winning gospel singer, songwriter, musician, talk show host, and evangelist Dr. Dorinda Clark-Cole was the keynote speaker.



Elder Allen Gilkey accepted the President's Award for his late father Bishop JC Gilkey, Sr.

Alphas Kansas City 26th Annual King Observance

**By Bonita Gooch
Editor-in-Chief**

The Brothers of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Beta Lambda and Delta Rho Chapter observed their 26th Annual King Holiday Observance with a luncheon on Mon., Jan. 15 at UMKC

Pierson Auditorium. Despite the cold and snow, this event drew a near full house, many of them members of the fraternity.

Brief presentations were made by representatives from the City of Kansas City including Mayor Quinten Lucas, Vice Mayor Ryana Parks

Shaw and Police Chief Stacey Graves. The keynote presentation was made by their Alpha brother and Congressman Emanuel Cleaver II.

Beta Lambda Chapter President Alber Ray, gave those in attendance an update on some of the chapter's activities and programs.



Brothers of Delta Rho, located at UMKC, supported the event.



Alpha Fraternity Brother and Congressman Emanuel Cleaver II was the keynote speaker for the luncheon.



Alber Ray, president of Beta Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha, shared information about the chapter's programming.

ARISE Hero and Sheroes Breakfast Program

Journey to Freedom

**By Bonita Gooch
Editor-in-Chief**

The ARISE Spiritual Ensemble held their annual Heroes and Sheroes Breakfast on the Monday of the King Holiday weekend at the Wichita State University Rhatigan Student Center. The event included performances by the ensemble and the presentation of a half dozen Hero and Shero Awards.

A New York Times Best Selling Author and former Wichita Eagle Columnist Mark McCormick was the

keynote speaker. He received the Sojourner Truth: Modeling the Power of One Award

Receiving the Sankofa: Preserving the Past, Perpetuating a Bright Future Awards were: Dr. Kevin Harrison, Donna Rae Pearson and Maggie Thompson.

Receiving the Jubilee: Bedrock of Faith, Serving/Celebrating Community Awards were: Darren and Jackie McGilbray and Christina Long.

The program was cosponsored by the Wichita State University Office of the Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer.



Maggie Thompson (center) was one of six hero and sheroe honorees. Pictured with (L) Gerald Norwood ARISE president and Andy Bias ARISE member.



The ARISE Ensemble performed several numbers at the breakfast.

Lack of Funding Hampers KC Reparations Commission's Progress

Mayor & council members are called out to commit their support for funding at SCLC King Reparations Forum.

By **Thomas White**
Kansas City Reporter

Nearly a year after the Kansas City Council approved the creation of the Mayor's Commission on Reparations, little progress has been made. The 13-member commission wasn't sworn in until June, and still, eight months later, absolutely no funding has been set aside for the commission to complete its work.

The commission is tasked with examining historical injustices to identify injury areas and make recommendations for reparations to the mayor and city council.

They are charged with looking at injuries in five key areas: education, economic development, health care, housing, and criminal justice. However, the commission did not receive any funding to complete the research to identify any discriminatory practices.

The lack of forward progress, and funding, has proven frustrating, considering the commission was charged with bringing back a preliminary report in 12 months and a final report with recommendations in 18 months.

Working on the King holiday theme "Reparations Now," the Southern Christian Leadership Council invited members of the Mayor's Commission on Reparations and the community-based KC Reparations Coalition as guest panelists at a community forum.

With the mayor, mayor pro tem, and two members of the city council firmly planted in the front row, the SCLC of Greater Kansas City's president, the Rev. Dr. Vernon Howard, took



Members of the Mayor's Commission on Reparations were guest panelists at a community forum sponsored by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference of Greater Kansas City as part of the King Holiday Celebration. PHOTO BONITA GOOCH

the opportunity to ask officials why the city's reparations commission has not received the funding it has asked for and needed to complete its work.

"This commission is hamstrung by an inability to tap into funds to get this work done," said Howard. "I'm frustrated by that; I'm disgusted by that. The money should've been appropriated and put in place when the commission was."

Mayor's Commission on Reparations Chair Terri Barnes said that a budget of \$510,000 was submitted to the mayor's office in December. Barnes said more than archival research and historical study are needed.

She said funding is needed for legal aid, input, and review to help draft the commission's

recommendations.

"We want to make sure that what we put forward is legally acceptable and not able to be challenged in court," said Barnes.

Reparations Commission member Dr. Linwood Tauheed raised concerns about the impact of the funding shortfall on the commission's timeline for completion of the project. He called for a reset of the commission's timeline.

Called on to respond, Mayor Quinton Lucas acknowledged the commission's need for resources and emphasized the city's commitment to "trying to be better" and expressed a desire to avoid delays in implementing reparations-related initiatives.



SCLC of Greater Kansas City President Rev. Vernon Howard. PHOTO BONITA GOOCH

"I don't know if we were more excited about just getting something happening, but we did not get to that contemplative work [funding] ahead of time," said Lucas. "Part of the conversation with the commission right now is to make sure that missteps like that don't happen again."

Barnes and Lucas said a financial commitment from the city council and the mayor's office is developing. Both expected a clearer picture by the Reparation Commission's Jan. 23 meeting.

They also noted that the needed funding extends beyond the city's coffers, with contributions from local businesses and philanthropic communities also anticipated.

Vice Mayor Ryana Parks-Shaw, and councilmembers Darrell Curls and Melissa Patterson-Hazley, joined Lucas in voicing their support for the commission's work and funding.

Curls highlighted the need for seven votes from the city council to secure funding, pointing out that while five Black members are likely to support commission funding and recommendations, two additional council votes are required.

KCK Public Schools Seek \$420M for New Facilities

KCKPS Board of Education sends bond issue to voters May 7.

By **Thomas White**
Kansas City Reporter

The KCKPS Board of Education voted to move forward with a bond resolution that would bring new schools, a new public library, an aquatic center, and renovations to school campuses.

In a meeting Jan. 9, KCKPS board

members voted 5-2 to send the \$420 million bond proposal to voters on the May 7 ballot. Members who voted yes are Yolanda Clark, Maxine Drew, Randy Lopez, Robert Milan Jr., and Rachel Russell. Voting against the measure were Wanda Brownlee Paige and Valdenia Winn.

The bond measure is designed to address overcrowding and a need to update facilities district wide. The bulk of the funds, \$228.6 million, would go toward consolidating and building new elementary and

middle schools. Up to \$20 million would go toward a new main library.

If the bond measure is passed, the plans include:

- Building a new school and combining Emerson and New Stanley elementary schools
- Building a new school and combining Silver City and Noble Prentis elementary schools
- Building a new Argentine Middle School
- Building a new Central Middle

School

- Building a new school and combining Lindbergh and Eugene Ware elementary schools

Other line items for facility improvements include \$44 million in district-wide deferred maintenance, \$29.3 million in athletic facilities improvements, \$15 million for a district aquatic center, \$12 million for auditorium improvements, and \$5 million for classroom additions to eliminate portable classrooms presently at schools.

Bond Issue Input & Listening Sessions

The KCK Public Schools are inviting the public to participate in a "listening and learning session" where the community can have a dialogue about the bond measure and other topics.

Members of the KCK Board of Education will attend the session to be held Jan. 18, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at KCKPS Central Office, 2010 N. 59th St, KCK. Dinner will be served. To attend, register at <https://bit.ly/KCKPSListenLearn>.

KC's Plan to Preserve Parade Park Homes

The nation's oldest Black-owned housing co-op is in foreclosure, and the city council hopes to save it.

By Thomas White
Kansas City Reporter

In a unanimous decision, the City Council of Kansas City voted to move forward with a plan aimed at preserving Parade Park Homes, the nation's oldest Black-owned housing cooperative.

A year ago, the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) took control of the Parade Park property, citing financial distress and deteriorating conditions. The council's decision authorizes City Manager Brian Platt to negotiate an agreement with HUD for the acquisition of Parade Park Homes.

Parade Park History

Spanning 26 acres, Parade Park sits near the heart of 18th & Vine and boasts famous former residents like Bruce R. Watkins, baseball legend Reggie Jackson, and Mayor Quinton Lucas' mother. When it opened in 1962, Parade Park offered low-cost housing, the ability to gain equity, plus a say in how the co-op was run.

Instead of rent, co-op residents paid carrying charges at a rate set by the co-op board to cover the cost of operating and maintaining



Parade Park Homes, the nation's oldest Black-owned housing co-op, may be set for a renovation thanks to an effort led by the Kansas City Council.

submitted between October and December 2023.

Redevelopment Details

Flaherty & Collins Properties will have 24 to 36 months to complete the redevelopment project, involving \$18.9 million in capital improvements. The specifics of their proposal, including the mix of housing and potential commercial buildings, have not been disclosed. However, when the city asked for proposals, they said they wanted the property to be mixed-income, honor Parade Park's history, and that they would consider proposals that included ground-level retail.

As part of the development agreement, Flaherty & Collins Properties is required to sign a community benefits agreement (CBA). The city wants the CBA – which has not been finalized – to include local hiring and union participation in construction, building with climate resiliency in mind, offering homeownership opportunities, offering low-income housing, and preservation of Parade Park's historical significance. The exact mix of

See **PARADE PARK**, Page 13 →

the complex.

However, over the years, the co-op board failed to set the monthly carrying charges high enough to adequately fund the maintenance needed on the aging complex. Over the past 15 years, many of the townhomes fell into such a bad state of disrepair that when residents vacated their units, the co-op couldn't afford to repair them. By 2022, more than half of the co-op's 510 units were vacant.

In 2019 and 2022, the townhomes scored some of the worst scores possible in their HUD inspections. The death knell came last year when HUD intervened because the co-op was unable to repay a \$10 million loan. HUD gave the co-op board a deadline to negotiate a deal with a developer to renovate the project. When that deadline passed without a formal deal, HUD moved to foreclose on the project.

The Acquisition Plan

Under the approved plan, Kansas City will acquire Parade Park Homes from HUD, contingent on HUD placing the highest bid at the upcoming foreclosure sale in March 2024.

The city will pay a nominal fee of \$10 for the properties to HUD and, upon successful acquisition, transfer ownership to city-selected private developer, Indianapolis-based Flaherty & Collins Properties. The city chose Flaherty & Collins from multiple proposals

12 Street Heritage 50/50 Partner on Parade House Redevelopment

12th Street Heritage Development Corp (TSHDC), a community development corporation founded to improve Kansas City's 12th Street neighborhood, and Flaherty & Collins Properties, a multifamily housing development, construction and property management company based in Indiana are slate to be 50/50 partners on the redevelopment of Parade Park if the project gets a final go ahead in March. (See story this page for details)

In a partnership well underway in Kansas City, the partnership are renovating The Jazz Hill project, a 100% affordable project, located along Paseo Blvd. between 9th and 13th streets in Kansas City. That project is adding nearly 200 units of much-needed affordable



Twelfth Street Heritage Corp. CEO Dwayne Williams in front of the Jazz Hill Project. Twelfth Street and partner Flaherty & Collins Properties were selected by the City to redevelop Parade Park.

housing to the city's north side. See our Jazz Hill story here: <https://bit.ly/424s75Z>



A Home-At-Last loan from Capitol Federal offers qualified buyers:

No minimum loan amounts

Low down payments & competitive rates

No up-front mortgage insurance premium

Local service for the life of the loan

Homebuyer education by recognized community organizations



View CapFed's loan options and apply today.

Or find the right loan for your needs with a Purchase + Improvement loan or Home Equity Line of Credit from CapFed.



888.8CAPFED | capfed.com



A New Space for KC Startup Retailers to Thrive

The Porter House KC's 811 Retail Incubator will provide mentorship, networking, and space for retail entrepreneurs. Creating a vibrant retail ecosystem in Kansas City is their ultimate goal

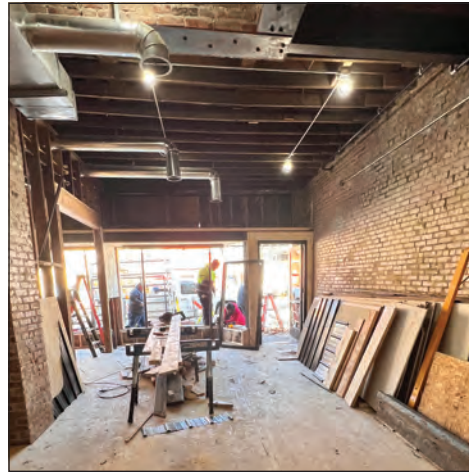
By Asia Jones,
Freelance contributor

The Porter House KC team has been hard at work on a new retail incubator in Kansas City that they hope will help remove barriers for retail startups.

Renovation is well underway for the 811 Retail Incubator that will be located at 811 E 31st Street in Kansas City.

There will be nine booth spaces in the two-story building, with designated areas for each business owner and an open workspace that encourages creativity and productivity among business owners.

"We wanted to create a lane for them to see if what they're doing at the pop-ups could be sustained in a brick-and-mortar format," says Porter House KC Co-owner and Principal Dan Smith. "But we knew that you can't just put people in a brick-and-mortar space and expect them to run a store. So we wanted to create a smaller space that's manageable for them and



The interior renovations take advantage of the building historic brick walls, giving the space a rustic but contemporary appeal

at \$250 per month, if they failed, it wouldn't hurt them [financially]."

On the first floor, there will be tables and a coffee bar where the public can use WiFi, socialize, and browse the retail businesses. Booth owners will also have space on this floor to display their products digitally, and have signage and decorate their areas.

There will be an open workspace on the second floor, as well as lockers for safe storage, and restrooms. The center will also have an outside patio with tables and seating which



The Porter House's 811 Retail Incubator will be located in a renovating retail strip on 31st just off Troost.

can serve as an additional work area for incubator users during nicer weather. The yard in the back of the building can be used for PHKC events and gatherings, such as First Friday events, pop-ups, and more.

"The hub is not a permanent location for them. Our goal is to get them prepped within 12 to 16 months and get them into spaces on the east side of the city," shared Smith "Within our space, the goal for them is to fail, learn again, fail again, learn, and then hopefully, they're ready."

While they're housed in the incubator, business owners will complete the Missouri Small Business Development Center's GROWTH360 program. Through the program, 811 Retail Incubator renters will receive training and resources to help them grow and avoid blind spots and make smarter business decisions.

In addition to the GROWTH360 training and resources, PHKC aims to provide financial, network, and mentoring support to retailers in the 811 incubator.

Putting the Vision into Action

Founded in 2018, the Porter House KC provides entrepreneurship guidance and expertise to underserved business owners in Kansas City. Co-owners Smith and Charon Thompson saw the struggles many business owners face when starting so they made it their mission to connect underrepresented businesses with entrepreneurial success. Along with Director of Programs Miranda Schultz, they provide space, expertise, and education for businesses at any stage of their development.

The team has always wanted to create a space

to help people grow into full-time retailers.

"We had this vision years ago about addressing this retail barrier," shares Smith. "A lot of folks want to do retail on a full-time basis but they didn't know how and didn't have the resources, so we said we're going to create this space." Smith went on to share that although not all 811 Retail Incubator businesses will leave the space and become successful retailers, it's still a chance for new and early retail business owners to try and figure it out.

Although the timeline for opening the incubator has sometimes been rocky, partly because of COVID and its impact on material costs, financial support from the program has come from multiple sources including Kansas City Community Development Block Grants funds, Missouri Technology Corporation and JPMorgan Chase.

While financial support for the project has been essential, Dan does not underestimate the importance of relationships and mentoring in the work they do.

"Relationships are everything," shares Smith. "You have transactional relationships and you have relational relationships and I feel like what we've built has been relational." He explained how building relationships and meeting people one-on-one led to connections with JPMorgan Chase, UMB Bank, the Kauffman Foundation, and other similar organizations around the country. Smith emphasized that these relationships are key to PHKC's success and to its ability to help other businesses grow.

Learn more about the Porter House KC on their website <https://theporterhousekc.com/>

MBE / WBE

INVITATION TO BID

JE Dunn Construction Company is bidding the Blue Springs R IV School District - Career Innovation Center-Early Precast Pkg and request your bid proposal for applicable material and/or labor. In particular, we are soliciting M/WBE Subcontractor/Supplier Bid Proposals for the following scope(s) of work including, but not limited to:

A. Section 03 41 00 – STRUCTURAL PRECAST CONCRETE

We would appreciate your indication of the scope of work you will include in your proposal by February 2, 2024. Proposals must be submitted to buildingconnected.com or our office by February 2, 2024, before 10:00AM.

JE Dunn invites M/WBE subcontractors to call if any assistance is required or questions arise concerning work segmentation, work and contract requirements, or the form of proposal requested. Questions should be directed to Darren Younker, Project Manager, by phone at (707) 327-6338, or by email at Darren.Younker@JEDunn.com.

EOE, Minority/Female/Disability/Veteran/Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity

WICHITA

Sun., Jan. 21, 11:30 am: One4Us Brand Official Debut. Knockout Sneaker Boutique, 600 E Douglas. Get a sneak peek at the urban company's never-been-seen-before winter gear during an exclusive fashion showcase. Meet One4Us Brand Ambassador TJ Williams, a high school star athlete who just entered the prestigious 1,000 Points Club at Wichita Heights High.

Sun., Jan. 21, 3 pm: Brahms & Beethoven, Century II, 225 W Douglas. Canadian Concert Pianist Stewart Goodyear returns to the Wichita Symphony to perform the titanic Brahms' Piano Concerto No. 2. The piece is paired with Beethoven's 7th Symphony. Sometimes called "the apotheosis of the dance," its finale will take your breath away. COST \$25 <https://bit.ly/3O5tV8U>

Sat., Jan. 27, 6 - 9 pm: Snow Glow at Mid America All Indian Museum, 650 N. Seneca. Sledding under the starry night sky while a live DJ spins your favorite tunes. A dazzling light show will leave you breathless. Savor delicious treats from a variety of vendors onsite. Cozy up by the fire pit and warm your hands as you share stories with friends and family. COST \$12 for ages 3+. <https://bit.ly/48Xi6tc>

Sat., Jan. 27, 6 pm: Pizza Hut Shocker Sports Hall Of Fame Dinner, WSU Rhatigan Student Center, Beggs Ballroom. The annual Pizza Hut Shocker Sports Hall of Fame Dinner honoring this year's inductees Charlie Giaudrone, WNGA player Alex Harden, Taryn Torgerson, and Cacy Williams. COST \$50 and must be purchased by Jan. 23. <https://bit.ly/48zDvct>

Sat., Jan. 27, 11 am: The Empowerment Center Ribbon Cutting, Bible Way Community of Faith, 2105 N. Jackson. Ribbon cutting for transitional homes for women.

Wed., Jan. 31, 10:30 am: "Tal Jones: A Black Oil Legacy," The Kansas African American Museum, 601 N. Water, Senior Wednesday with Dr. Bernard Moore & Dr. Danya Jones Burks as they explore stories related to African-American families, history, and culture through their book "Tal Jones: A Black Oil Legacy."

Thu., Feb. 1, 12:30-1:30 pm: Black Educators. Wichita Public Library, 711 W 2nd. Janice Burdine Thacker, artist, retired educator and founder of the nonprofits Art That Touches Your Heart and the Black Educators Hall of Fame, will present a talk about the history of Black educators in Wichita.

Tue., Feb. 6, 7:30-10 pm: Black Violin. Orpheum Theatre, 200 N Broadway. The Black Violin Experience Tour showcases the two-time Grammy-nominated duo Black Violin, brought to life by Kev Marcus and Wil Baptiste, invoking a mystifying musical fusion of exquisite classical sounds and exhilarating hip-hop beats. COST \$29+ <https://wichitaorpheum.com/>

Thu., Feb. 8, 12:30 - 1:30 pm: The Wichita African American Business History Project, Advanced Learning Library, 711 W 2nd, Dr. Robert Weems Jr., Willard W. Garvey Distinguished Professor of Business History at Wichita State University, will share stories from his oral history project. FREE

Sat., Feb. 10, 8:30 am - 2 pm: Blood Drive. Gamma Epsilon Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Blood Drive, Grant Chapel AME Church, 2750 N. Hillside. Blood drive honoring Dr Charles Drew and raising awareness of Sickle Cell Anemia during Black History Month. FREE

Thu., Feb. 15, 12:30-1:30 pm: African American Journalism, Wichita Public Library - Advanced Learning Library, 711 W 2nd. In this program, Bonita Gooch, editor-in-chief of The Community Voice, the leading publication for African-American communities in Kansas, will present a talk about the role of African-American newspapers in Wichita.

KANSAS CITY

Sat., Jan. 27, 8 am: Breakfast & a Movie, Zhou Brothers Art Center, 1801 E 18th. Breakfast & VIP movie screening of "The Space Race," which weaves together the stories of Black astronauts seeking to break the bonds of social injustice to reach for the stars. COST \$15 mlkday.asteamvillage.org.

Sat., Jan. 27, 4 - 8 pm: Jazz on Baltimore, The Grand Hall, 1330 Baltimore Ave. An evening of drinks, hors d'oeuvres and local jazz in the historic Kansas City Power & Light Building in downtown KC. Evening includes cocktail hour with hors d'oeuvres followed with performances by KC's finest musical talent. Day-of tickets sold at the door \$55, bar offerings not included. COST \$45+ <https://bit.ly/41XGI8F>

Sat., Feb. 3, 1 pm: Kansas City Jazz Academy: Spring Semester Registration, Gem Theater, 1615 E. 18th. This American Jazz Museum program provides excellent jazz instruction for middle and high school students interested in improving their skills. COST \$60 <https://bit.ly/3tVnhuW>

Wed. Feb. 7, 7:30 p.m. Black Violins. The Kaufman Center, KCMO The Black Violin Experience Tour showcases the two-time Grammy-nominated duo Black Violin, brought to life by Kev Marcus and Wil Baptiste, invoking a mystifying musical fusion of exquisite classical sounds and exhilarating hip-hop beats. Tickets \$44 - \$194.

Sat., Feb. 3, 10 am - noon: WeCode KC's Black History Month Extended Reality Experience (Ages 12+), 4825 Troost Ave. WeCode KC presents a groundbreaking exploration of history and technology. Join them for an immersive journey that merges Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) to celebrate the rich heritage of Black history. FREE

Sat., Feb. 3, 7:30 - 9:30 pm: Modern Night at the Gem dance performance, Gem Theater, 1615 E 18th. The 20th annual Modern Night builds upon City in Motion's mission to develop quality contemporary dance programming in the metro area. All guests are invited to the free, after-show reception beginning at 9 pm at Vine St. Brewing, 2010 Vine Street. Reception. Light appetizers provided beverages are guests' responsibility. COST \$18+ <https://bit.ly/3U1JNwO>

Sat., Feb. 10, 10 am: Buy Black Expo, Bruce R. Watkins Cultural Heritage Center, 3700 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. The 2024 Buy Black Expo will feature a screening of the documentary "The Big Payback." The documentary chronicles the journey and work of Robin Rue Simmons that resulted in establishing Evanston, IL, as the first city in the U.S. to adopt and distribute tax-funded reparations for Black Americans. Q&A session with reparations dynamo Robin Rue Simmons, herself, including shopping with KC's best vendors. FREE

PARADE PARK, from Page 11 ↓

rental, retail, and homeownership is to be determined. Those details will remain confidential as the city negotiates with the developer.

The city's plan also includes provisions to protect the current residents of Parade Park Homes. According to HUD documents, 87 low-income households will receive Tenant Protection Vouchers.

These vouchers will help cover the cost of rent to those who are displaced during redevelopment. The agreement also features a right-to-return policy that ensures residents can return to their units after the redevelopment is completed, and 61 tenants identified as very low-income will be safeguarded from rent increases for two years.

District 3 Councilwoman Melissa Robinson expressed support for the plan, emphasizing the importance of restoring Parade Park to its prominence.

Robinson said the plan provides a clear pathway for redevelopment while addressing the concerns of residents and maintaining the historical value of Parade Park. HUD issued a statement saying the move helps Parade Park remain an affordable and well-maintained property for the current and future residents over the long term.

The scheduled foreclosure sale on Parade Park Homes is scheduled for this March. The city hopes this plan will preserve Parade Park Homes and ensure affordable housing near the historic 18th & Vine District for years to come.

List Your Events on our Website
@ www.communityvoiceks.com
Click on Calendar

FINAL EXPENSE LIFE INSURANCE

This policy covers the policyholder for his/her entire life, with final expense insurance benefits at an affordable rate. Whole life program.

Final Expense Monthly Premium
(non-smokers)

Age	Female	Male	Amount of Insurance
50	\$23.10	\$26.04	\$10,000
55	\$26.38	\$30.64	\$10,000
60	\$30.99	\$36.46	\$10,000
65	\$37.32	\$44.82	\$10,000
75	\$35.82	\$42.66	\$5,000

KSKJ LIFE! AMERICAN SLOVENIAN CATHOLIC UNION

For more information call
CLIFF CROSS
40 YEARS of insurance service
(316)721-4200 (OFFICE) • (316)841-0091(CELL)

Black Beauty Meets Queer Identity in Art Exhibition 'Miss/They Camaraderie 2024'

The show runs Jan. 19 to March 2 at the Charlotte Street Foundation.

By **Thomas White**
Kansas City Reporter

"Miss/They Camaraderie 2024" is an upcoming exhibition that promises to be an immersive experience to make audiences think about their assumptions of beauty by exploring the realm of Black beauty pageants and drag performance.

The exhibit, curated by Yashi Davalos, runs Jan. 19 to March 2 at the Charlotte Street Foundation, 3333 Wyoming St., KCMO.

"I know that these things are kind of separate in Kansas City, so the programming that I have developed through Charlotte Street will host a space to reflect on this intersection and see what that looks like here when it is given space," says Davalos.

Upon entering the gallery space, there are printed and framed archival images from Black beauty pageants in KC.

There will be images from



Art by Delaney George, titled "Teen Dream"

the Delta Sprites Pageant from the 1970s, which was a popular KCl Black teen pageant that was hosted at Lincoln High. Exhibit goers will also find archival magazine covers — like famous images from the drag revenue program "Jewel Box" — and other Black pageants put on by local groups.

"After engaging with the works, I want the first thing you're questioning to be who is the star in this situation," says



Art by Trenity Thomas

Davalos. "We're addressing Black excellence but from a different social strata."

As the exhibit continues, the archival images are intermixed with works from local Black artists. These are works of editorial realism, meaning they look like they come from the same time as the archival images but were made in the present day.

Nasir Montalvo is a local archivist who is working to create the first Black queer archive in KC. Montalvo's curated images are featured toward the back of



Photography by John Brandt

the exhibit, interspersed with works of editorial queer photography from John Brandt. Throughout the exhibit, there are sculptures, photos, video projections, interactive props, and even a large-scale holographic image.

"I want people to show up with the expectation that they can be beautiful for better or for worse," says Davalos. "I want them to leave questioning: what is better and what is worse?"

Featured Artists:

- Boi Boy (KCMO)
- John Brant (KCMO)
- Delaney George (Los Angeles)
- Jakob Graves (KCMO)
- Nasir Anthony Montalvo (KCMO)
- Sun Young Park (KCMO)
- Trenity Thomas (New Orleans)

Program Highlights:

Exhibition Opening Reception

Jan. 19, 6 - 9 p.m. at Charlotte Street Gallery
Opening night, the curator will be present interacting with guests in costume as the former pageant winner there to crown the next winner.

Miss/They Camaraderie 2024 Pageant

Feb. 9, 6 - 8 p.m. at Charlotte Street Gallery
A satirical pageant performance featuring drag artists Boi Boy, Korea Kelly, and Alej Martinez, who will debut specially commissioned garments by Dustin Loveland in a popup runway, then engage in a panel on world peace that culminates with the crowning of a local contestant.

Artist Talk

March 1, 6 - 7 p.m. at Kemper Library at Charlotte Street Foundation

Hear from curator Yashi Davalos as she explores the social agenda for standardizing beauty and femininity.

NEW HOME, from Page 6 ↓

who explained the program and the required documents, classes and income.

At the time, Naomi was working as a CNA until she passed her state nursing boards, so her income wasn't high enough to qualify for the program.

"But I got an offer letter from Ascension Via Christi. Using that, she cleared me to start earning sweat equity hours so when I did pass the boards, I'd be able to get started on other parts of the

program right away," Naomi said.

With boards out the way, in September 2022 she started working in the ICU unit at St. Francis Hospital and began working full-time in earnest — in both nursing and in studying to become a homeowner.

One of things that really sold her on the program was the educational component. She attended classes on the basics of buying a home and financial "Smart Money" that taught her to spend money wisely, as well as classes on home maintenance and

gardening.

She was able to take her children with her to onsite training classes and her daughter attended all of the online classes with her. She shared what she learned with her children.

"It really made me aware of my lack of financial education, and I feel much more confident that I can do this. I understand how important it is to budget for homeowner's insurance, for taxes and for upkeep. I think those are things that would trip up a lot of first-time owners," she said.

Even the sweat equity hours provided valuable education, Naomi said. Her sons Dontae and Vatedis agree.

They enjoyed learning basic building skills while helping build their home and putting in sweat equity hours helping build others. The boys learned basic retail skills working in the Habitat ReStore, which takes in donated building materials, appliances and furniture and resells them at affordable prices.

Dontae is working as an A&P mechanic and Vatedis

will graduate high school in May with an A&P mechanic certification. Both boys plan to enroll in Wichita State University in the fall to pursue degrees in aerospace engineering.

Combined, the Vertilus family put in 250 hours of sweat equity and hundreds more hours in classes expanding their basic home ownership knowledge.

"It was fun for me seeing my sons working side-by-side at building sites. They had so much fun doing that," Naomi said.

Now, she said, comes both the joy and the responsibility of home ownership. She's eager for spring weather and the opportunity to spend time with family and friends in her backyard.

She is also looking forward to being able to give back to the community and to other women trying to achieve their dreams.

"I would love to be an advocate for women and for children, lead an effort to improve senior care and be of service to the community," she said.

CAMP DESTINATION INNOVATION PRESENTS
URBAN WICHITA

Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge

FOR MIDDLE (7TH & 8TH GRADE) & HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Prizes up to \$1250

COMPETITION DATES:

REGISTRATION & EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SUBMISSION - JAN 2ND TO FEB 19TH

TRADE SHOW AND FINALS PRESENTATION - MAR 1ST

STEP 1 REGISTER
Register for YEC on VentureDash, submit an executive summary, & a 1-2 minute elevator pitch video. The competition opens January 2 and the last day to register is February 19.
goventuredash.com/competitions/539

STEP 2 TRADE SHOW
Showcase your business at the trade show on **Friday March 1st, 9:00 am-3:00 pm at Wichita State University 1818 Innovation Blvd.** Each participant will have a table to showcase their business for judges and the public.

STEP 3 FINALS
After the trade show judging is complete, the top 6 participants will go on to participate in a finals presentation, then winners will be announced when presentations are complete.
**The 1st place winner will have the opportunity to compete at the state competition.



Quinta Brunson

Quinta Brunson Makes History at Emmys

With her Emmy win for Outstanding Actress in a Comedy, Quinta Brunson became just the second Black actress to receive the award. The “Abbott Elementary” creator was presented the award at the 75th annual Primetime Emmy Awards on Jan. 15, 42 years after Isabel Sanford first took home the honor in 1981 for her role in “The Jeffersons.”

With the win of 28-year-old Ayo Edebiri as Best Supporting Actress in a

Comedy, this year marked the first time a pair of Black actresses won the two comedy actress categories in the same year. Edebiri plays chef Sydney Adamu in the comedy-drama series “The Bear.”

This year, through its Demo Day Pitch Competition, the organization dispersed \$3.2 million to 36 diverse entrepreneurs.

More than 2,000 applicants participated in the contest in five categories: Consumer Products and Services, Healthcare, Media and Entertainment, Technology and Web 3.0. The 36 top finalists received prizes from \$20,000 to \$250,000. Taking home the \$1,000,000 top prize from the eight-finalist pitch competition was Antoinette Banks. Her app, Expert IEP, was created to optimize existing Individualized Education Plans with predictive AI for children diagnosed with disabilities.



Dwayne Wade
STEPHEN DUNN

Dwyane Wade Scores Miami Heat Honor

The Miami Heat has revealed that Dwyane Wade will be honored with a statue outside the team’s home arena. The news was revealed Jan. 14 when the Heat honored Wade for being inducted into the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame.

Wade retired in 2019 after 16 successful seasons and three national championship rings. Since his retirement, the Heat retired his No. 3 jersey and have more in store to honor the legend. Perhaps, in the future, LeBron will join him with a statue outside the arena as well.



Michael Strahan

Michael Strahan’s GMA Disappearance Explained

“Good Morning America” co-host Michael Strahan took an unexpected leave of absence to handle a “personal family matter” last year. The former NFL player was missing in action for nearly three weeks on the daytime talk show as well as his other gigs hosting “Fox NFL Sunday” and “The \$100,000 Pyramid.”

Strahan recently revealed he was taking time to be with his 19-year-old daughter, who was diagnosed with brain cancer. Isabella, a college student with a twin sister, Sophia, was diagnosed with medulloblastoma, which is more common in kids ages 5 to 9. Doctors found a 4-centimeter tumor in the back of her brain, which was removed during an emergency surgery. She will begin chemotherapy in early February.



Pharrell Williams
COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

Pharrell Donates \$3.2 Million to Entrepreneurs

In 2020, singer and activist Pharrell Williams founded Black Ambition, a nonprofit dedicated to supporting Black and Hispanic entrepreneurs.

Kansas Black Legislative Day at the Capitol

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2024 | 10 AM - 3 PM
KANSAS STATE CAPITOL

- Advocate for the Black Legislative Agenda
- Network with Black Leaders in Kansas
- Hear from Subject Matter Experts

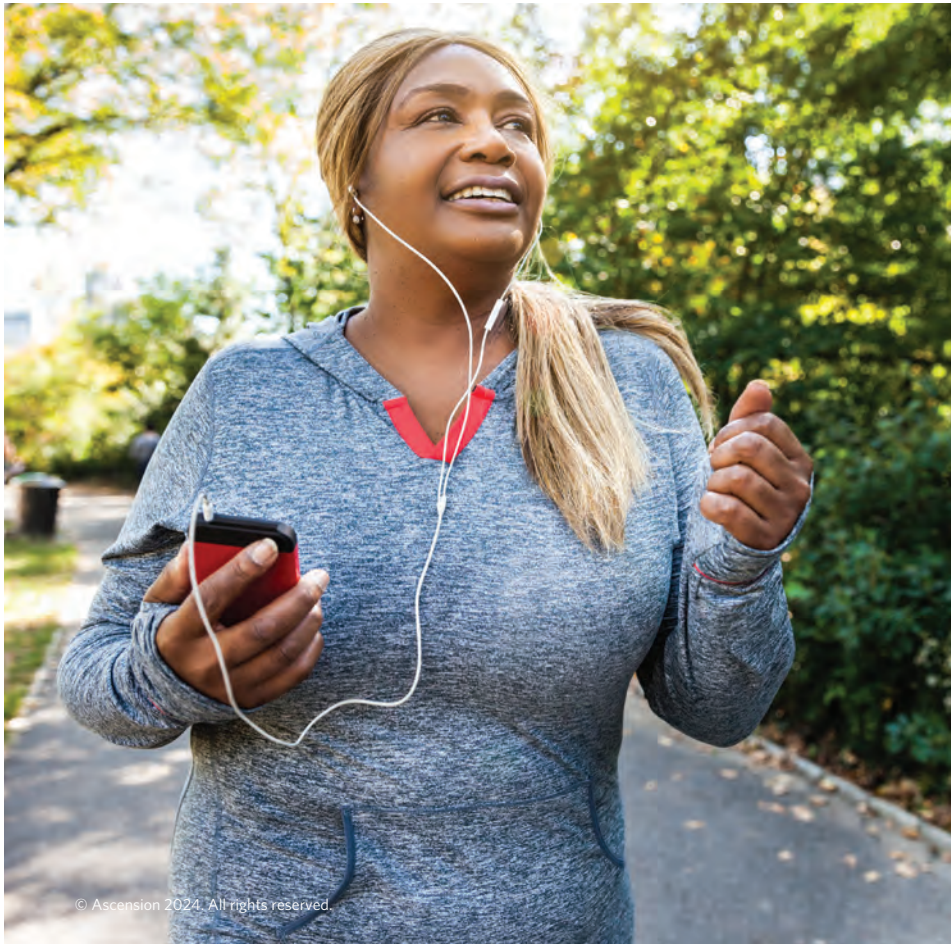
CLICK HERE TO REGISTER







KANSAS STATE CONFERENCE OF NAACP BRANCHES



© Ascension 2024. All rights reserved.

New symptoms? Heart care shouldn't wait.

Talk with a cardiologist who listens

Getting heart care sooner might mean you and your doctor can catch things before they get worse. Don't delay. Our cardiologists and vascular specialists are trained in the latest heart care testing, treatment and procedures — and are part of a national network of specialists sharing best practices — so you can get the advanced heart care you need, close to home.



Schedule an appointment
ascension.org/ViaChristiHeart



MIDWEST TRUST CENTER SERIES

JOHNSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

MAKIN' CAKE

by **Dasha Kelly Hamilton**

SATURDAY, FEB. 3 / 8 PM
POLSKY THEATRE ON THE JCCC CAMPUS

Guest Baker, Chef Shanita McAfee-Bryant,
founder of The Prospect KC

Cake reception immediately following
the performance.



JCCC.EDU/MTC

TICKETS START AT \$25.
SCAN THE CODE AND GET TICKETS NOW.



Slice into American history and explore race, culture and class in a fun and delicious way. Featuring layers of storytelling, history and social science commentary. The onstage bakers who create the pièce de résistance are the icing on the cake.



Box Office: 913-469-4445 / Mon.-Fri. / 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

@MidwestTrustCenterJCCC

@MidwestTrustCenterJCCC

@MTC_JCCC