

# THE VOICE

A Trusted Voice From The Community Perspective



## GET TWO STEPPIN'

NOTHING IS MORE KANSAS CITY THAN KC TWO-STEPPING PAGE 12-14



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Her Judicial Dream  
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# THE VOICE

VOLUME 31, NUMBER 13  
FRIDAY, JULY 12, 2024

## LOOKING AHEAD

### If You're Not Reading Us Online –

Here a few of the stories that you may have missed on our website that didn't make it into this edition.

#### Health

Power Up: 10 Ways To Boost Your Energy Naturally

#### Wichita

KBOR Approves new WSU Master Plan With 17th Street Entry Way

#### Missouri

Missouri Moves to the front of the Maga Parade

#### Kansas

Kansas Medicaid Will Soon Cover Douلاس

#### Pride Month

Understanding LGBTQ+ Terms

**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.

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WITH *Bonita*



Editor-in-Chief  
The Community Voice

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## Where Can I Find *The Community Voice*

By **Bonita Gooch**  
Voice Editor in Chief

I'm asked that a lot!

Here's my answer, and it's not where many of you might think.

You can find The Community Voice right in your hand. You don't have to go any further. Our paper is online in a digital format and as we always say, if you're not reading us online, you're missing a lot.

We have an electronic version of our print publication – it looks just like the paper – on our website. In fact, we have digital copies of all our back issues online going back at least five years. The current issue is always on the front page of our site. For older issues, click on e-edition.

What I tell people, is that we

have way more stories on our website than we have in our print edition. Most days, we post two or three new stories to our website, many of which never appear in the print edition. That's about 72 pages every two weeks on line, compared to 30-35 stories in each of our bi-weekly newspapers.

AGAIN!! If you're not reading us online, you're missing a lot. Plus, if you read the stories online, you'll typically get the news sooner, than later.

PLUS, We make it easy to read our online content.

If you sign up, we'll email the electronic copy of the new edition as soon as it comes out. No more worrying if you missed an issue. No more looking for a paper.

You can also sign up to receive a notice when we post a

new story to the website. Don't worry, with just two to three stories a day, we won't overwhelm you.

If you think that's to much, sign up for one or more of our newsletters:

On Mondays, we send out two newsletters, one for Wichita and one for Kansas City, that includes our latest headlines for that market. Open it, scan through the headlines, and click to read any of the stories that grab your attention.

We also distribute a newsletter on Fridays call the Friday Top Five. If you sign up for this newsletter, you get headlines for the top five stories on our site that week.

On Wednesdays, we distribute a health newsletter, typically with three health stories of particular interest to African Americans.

We're currently working on a calendar newsletter. It should be available for our readers within the next few weeks.

Now if you insist that you want a hard copy of the paper, we have 64 distribution locations in Wichita and 80 in the Kansas City metro area. All of the locations are on our website, just click on more and you'll find a listing of location of distribution locations by city and in alphabetical order. We also have a mapped list of our distribution locations, so you can find a distribution location near you.

We're open for considering quality new distribution locations in both areas. A quality location is a place with a lot of come and go traffic. Give it some thought, and if you have a location to suggest, reach out to us. Our contact information, including staff emails, are is on our website under contact us.

Remember all of this, all the time, is FREE, FREE, FREE!!

[Communityvoiceks.com](http://Communityvoiceks.com)

## Behind the Cartoon: SCOTUS King Makers

The United States Supreme Court declared that Trump is king and that anything he did while he was president is legal.

The court split 6-3 along ideological lines in finding that a president is a) absolutely immune for actions taken while exercising his "core constitutional powers" and b) entitled to the presumption of immunity for all official acts.

But what are "official" acts? Is calling election workers to intimidate them to give you more votes an "official" act? Is telling the entire nation that

you won an election you lost an "official" act? Is delegating goons like Sidney Powell and Rudy Giuliani to convince lawmakers to overturn an election an "official" act? Is orchestrating the installment of fake electors an "official" act? Is demanding Georgia's Secretary of State of state to find you 11,780 votes an "official" act?

We are moving closer and closer to becoming an authoritarian government.

By the way, Donald Trump is a national security threat. He



attempted to overturn an election and overthrow the government, and he's beholden to Putin. Citing him as a danger to this nation, like Osama bin

Laden or Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, couldn't President Biden have him taken out as an "official" act?

I'm just thinking out loud.

ON THE COVER: De Barker "The Queen of KC Two-Step" with her dance partner Lamont Edwards. Page 12

### THE COMMUNITY VOICE

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# The Kansas Black Leadership Brunch Series



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**THE VOICE**

# MO Voters to Decide on KC Police Funding in August Primary Election

Missouri will vote on increasing the minimum funding for the KCPD

By **Thomas White**  
Kansas City Reporter

This August, Missouri voters will once again weigh in on a constitutional amendment that would increase minimum funding for the Kansas City Police Dept. (KCPD). Amendment 4, which appeared on the ballot in 2022, is back for a re-vote after the Missouri Supreme Court ordered a new election due to misleading language in the previous ballot measure.

## What is Amendment 4?

Amendment 4 would change the Missouri Constitution to increase the minimum funding Kansas City must provide to its police department from 20% to 25% of the city's general revenue. This would amount to an additional \$38.7 million per year for the KCPD from the city's budget.

The measure only affects Kansas City, as it's the only city in Missouri - and one of the few major cities in the U.S. - that doesn't have local control over its police department. Instead, a state-appointed Board of Police Commissioners oversees the KCPD, a system dating back to the Civil War era.

## Why is this on the ballot again?

The Missouri Supreme Court ordered a new election after ruling that the fiscal note summary in the 2022 ballot was inaccurate and misleading. The previous summary stated there would be no additional costs or savings related to the proposal despite Kansas City officials informing the state auditor that the measure would cost the city about \$38.7 million annually. Mayor Quinton Lucas sued the state, and a judge agreed that the ballot language was misleading and it should be put before voters again. The judge also suggested that Amendment 4 go on the November ballot, but Missouri Gov. Mike Parson and other state officials moved the vote to August.

## Arguments For Amendment 4

Supporters of the measure, like Republican state Sen. Tony Luetkemeyer, who introduced the original legislation that became Amendment 4, argue that increased funding is necessary to combat rising crime rates in Kansas City.

"Amendment 4 would stabilize the KCPD budget and set a minimum funding level of 25% of city funds, which matches the historic funding the department has recently received," Luetkemeyer wrote in an opinion for The

Kansas City Star.

Luetkemeyer and other proponents say the measure would prevent future attempts to "defund the police" and ensure the department has resources to keep the community safe.

Supporters also contend that the measure protects the KCPD from political interference by city government, maintaining the police force's independence under the current Board of Police Commissioners structure.

## Arguments Against Amendment 4

Opponents, including KC Mayor Quinton Lucas, argue that the measure takes away any semblance of local control of the KCPD and harms the financial flexibility of the city.

"The radical legislation provides no pay guarantees for our officers, will not hire a single police officer, and ignores the will and importance of Kansas City taxpayers, instead attempting to politicize policing in Kansas City at a time we sorely need bipartisan solutions to violent crime," Lucas said in a statement.

Critics also point out that KC has already voluntarily funded the police department above the proposed 25% minimum. They argue the measure would limit the city's ability to allocate funds to other essential services like fire protection, public works, and health programs.

Opponents also argue that the measure unfairly allows voters across Missouri to decide on an issue that only affects KC residents. In the 2022 vote, while the measure passed statewide, it was rejected by 61% of voters in the Kansas City portion of Jackson County.

"Unfortunately, it's gonna be all of Missouri in on the vote," says Steve Young, co-founder of community-based Kansas City Law Enforcement Accountability Project (KC LEAP). "So there will be people voting who have no idea of the police problem here in Jackson County."

## Local Control of KCPD & Impact on the Black Community

The debate over police funding and control is particularly significant for KC LEAP, a victim advocacy agency focused on local police violence, law enforcement accountability and victim/family support. Young of KC LEAP emphasizes the importance of increased local control in improving community-police relations.

"The way the system is currently set up, the police are not really accountable to anybody in KC," says Young. "All that tax money going to the police, and they aren't even beholden to us? Talk about taxation without representation."

# What's the Difference Between the Candidates for Jackson County?

Hear from the two in their three-minute closing statements at the debate sponsored by The Urban Summit



Candidate for Jackson County Prosecutor Stephanie Burton (forefront) responds to a question at the Urban Summit debate while candidate Melesa Johnson waits to respond. (PHOTO BONITA GOOCH)

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

Candidates Melesa Johnson and Stephanie Burton are two talented Black women vying against each other for the most important law enforcement position in Jackson County. That's the position of Jackson County Prosecutor.

While a prosecutor can transform a broken criminal justice system, they are still ultimately responsible for helping to maintain the community's safety by successfully charging and prosecuting violent criminals.

Johnson and Burton are two of three Democrats who will face-off in the August 6 primary. The third candidate, John Gromowsky, who did not attend the debate. The winner of the primary will face off against Tracey Chappell, the sole Republican candidate for the position. All three of the women are African Americans.

He says that voting against Amendment 4 is "a step in the right direction" but that he'll continue to advocate for full local control of the KCPD.

"Local control would actually turn the

One of the candidates will replace long-time Jackson County Prosecutor Jean Peters Baker,

If you want to be an informed voter, beyond their political ads and endorsements, you can get a good understanding of their qualifications and how these two women will approach this important position in their three-minute closing arguments at the debate sponsored by Kansas City's Urban Summit.

Invest six minutes in being an informed voter. The future of Jackson County is worth it.

If you're willing to invest more time to learn more about the candidates, check out the profiles written on both candidates by our reporter Tom White.

Meet the Candidate: Melesa Johnson  
<https://bit.ly/3XTqdVY>

Meet the Candidate: Stephanie Burton  
<https://bit.ly/4eVh0lx>

tables," says Young. "We could actually have some action behind our grievances, and we can get some things done."

See **KCPD Page 11** →



Kimberly DeWitt



Wanda Brownlee Paige



Michelle Watley

# Meet the 3 Challengers Against Marvin Robinson in KS House Race

With no Republican in the race, the Aug. 6 primary will determine the winner of KS House District 35 seat in Kansas City, KS.

**By Thomas White**  
Kansas City Reporter

Incumbent Marvin Robinson is being challenged by three Black female candidates for the Kansas House District 35 seat. At a forum put on by the Wyandotte County NAACP, the three candidates made their case on why they were best for the position while Robinson was absent. His opponents have criticized Robinson for voting with Republicans 40 times. He also faced criticism for being singularly focused on funding for the Quindaro Ruins and for voting against Medicaid expansion.

With no Republican running in the general election, the winner of the Aug. 6 Democratic primary will assume the seat. Here's a brief overview of the challengers.

## Kimberly DeWitt

An IT professional and business owner, Kimberly DeWitt, who previously ran for the same seat in 2016, positions herself as a coalition builder with a clear plan to revitalize the district's representation in

Topeka.

DeWitt graduated from Sumner Academy, holds a bachelor's degree from Park University, an MBA from Baker University, and is currently enrolled in law school at Washburn.

DeWitt's campaign focuses on three main priorities: rebuilding community relationships, restoring the district's standing in Topeka, and raising the bar for what constituents should expect from their representative.

"We need actual representation for our district, ready to get out there and advocate for our district directly, not just going out there and being a 'good Democrat,'" says DeWitt. "Being a good Democrat is no longer good enough in our state; we've got to do more."

DeWitt says the district is one of the most diverse in the state and that she wants to represent all the people.

"I want to represent our whole district," says DeWitt. "There are Black, White, Hispanic, and Asian interests. We have to do better; we are more than a one-issue district. We are more than just the

Quindaro Ruins."

Her legislative priorities include improving health care and education, particularly for children. DeWitt criticized the current representative's vote against Medicaid expansion, noting its importance to the district's lower-income residents. She says economic development and investment in the district is a priority for her, including the possibility of a Royals stadium if it's "done right."

DeWitt says what distinguishes her from the other candidates is her concrete plans and community engagement.

"What sets me apart is that I have a plan," she said. "How can you know what you need to do in Topeka if you don't know what's going on in your district?"

## Wanda Brownlee Paige

Wanda Brownlee Paige, is a retired educator and current member of the USD 500 School Board who spent 30 years teaching social studies in KCK Public Schools. She says she's running because she believes the district needs stronger Democratic representation.

"I'm running because the current incumbent, it seems to me, doesn't care about us," Brownlee Paige said. "I voted

for him because he was supposed to be a Democrat, 85% of our district are Democrats, so why would he vote with the other party and talk about 'I'm bipartisan?' We have to stop this madness."

Brownlee Paige is a lifelong resident of KCK who graduated from Wyandotte High in 1974. She holds a bachelor's degree in history and a master's degree in education from Simpson College. During her teaching career, Brownlee Paige taught at Argentine, Coronado, and Central Middle Schools.

Her campaign platform focuses on several key issues, including Medicaid expansion, education funding, and property tax relief.

"We gotta work on Medicaid, Medicare, fund education, ensure access to reproductive rights, and we've got to work on our tax program," Brownlee Paige said. "People are leaving this city and this county over it; that's not fair."

The candidate supports the Democrats' plan to expand Medicaid, which she says won't cost taxpayers anything for the next eight years. She also advocates for full funding of public education, including special education.

To address rising property taxes, Brownlee Paige supports the Kansas Legislature

funding the Local Ad Valorem Tax Reduction Fund, which she says would provide millions of dollars in local property tax relief.

Brownlee Paige has received endorsements from several labor organizations, including United Auto Workers Local 31, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 53, Tri-County Labor Council, and International Association of Fire Fighters Local 64.

## Michelle Watley

Founder of the nonprofit Shirley's Kitchen Cabinet, Michelle Watley is running for Kansas House District 35 with a background that spans community advocacy, labor, education, and politics.

Watley attended Washington High and began her career as a union carpenter. She worked in the trades for five years before going to Avila University, where she studied communications and received a master's degree in organizational development. She also studied law and world politics at Leiden University in the Netherlands. She has since served as a political director for a local ACLU chapter, taught communications at Avila, and founded two nonprofits.

"Shirley's Kitchen Cabinet

has been working in Topeka the past four years advocating for them to do better by Black people," says Watley. "As a result, we got the Crown Act because you shouldn't lose your job because you wear your hair the way God gave it."

Watley's campaign emphasizes community engagement and grassroots outreach.

"I've knocked on 2,000 doors, and I'm talking to everybody in the community to try to earn your vote," she stated. "We deserve an advocate from right here. We deserve representation that is present and will talk to you, and we deserve representation that will enact policies that help us."

Her priorities for the district include addressing the local food desert, finding solutions for rising property and income taxes, and tackling mental health and substance abuse issues. Watley also plans to hold forums and listening sessions to continually refine her policy agenda based on constituent feedback.

"I have hands-on experience and understanding of not only how bills get passed but how they get stopped and the shenanigans that get pulled to keep good policy from getting passed that could help us here in the Dotte," says Watley.

# Wyco Judges Race to Be Decided in Primary

By Bonita Gooch,  
Voice Editor-in-Chief

Two Democratic candidates will face off for a Wyandotte County 29th District Judicial seat serving the Child in Need of Care Court. Without a Republican candidate, this race will be decided in the Aug. 6 primary.

This is a judicial seat that handles cases involving families trying to get custody for the children back from the Kansas Department of Children and Family Services. Many of them are lower income and minorities.

Allison Williamson has a history of working with



Judge Jane Sieve Wilson

CINOC cases as a private attorney representing parents and on the other side as a prosecutor in the Wyandotte County District Attorney's Office.

Her competitor is the incumbent Judge Jane Sieve Wilson who was



Allison Williamson

appointed to the position by gov. Laura Kelly in 2019. Prior to that she was a legal advisor to the Wyandotte County Sheriff's Department and before that she was an attorney for Liberty Mutual Insurance.

# Jacqueline Kelly Pursues a Dream

District judge candidate brings years of courtroom experience to her quest for a seat on the bench.

By P.J. Griekspoor  
Wichita Reporter

## Key Points

- Jacqueline Kelly, a former prosecutor, is running for district judge in the 18th Judicial District.
- The Republican primary on Aug. 6 will determine the replacement for outgoing judge Patrick Walters.
- Kelly's opponents in the primary are Clark V. Owens, Joshua D. Wright, and Jarrod Kieffer.

Jacqueline Kelly says she has had a lifelong dream of being a judge.

"I think I have the right temperament for the job. I can follow the law and still be kind and respectful to all the parties involved," she says.

On Aug. 6, she'll find out if the voters of Sedgwick County agree with her when she faces off against three opponents in the Republican primary for district judge in the 18th Judicial District, Division 14.

Since there are no candidates in the Democratic primary, the Republican winner on Aug. 6 will replace outgoing judge Patrick Walters, who did not file for re-election after 16 years on the bench.

It was the Air Force that brought Jacqueline, husband Darryl Kelly and their three small children to Wichita from Newport News, VA, in 2009. But, Jacqueline says, "The incredible people we've met along the way is what has kept us here."

She was an analyst for



Jacqueline Kelly says she believes she has the right temperament and skill set to be a judge.

federal defense programs in Virginia, but after arriving in Wichita, she was a stay-at-home mom while the family got settled. Their oldest daughter, Jada, was just 4, son Trey was 2, and the youngest, Janae, was an infant.

As her children grew, she decided to seize the opportunity to follow a dream to attend law school. She was accepted to Washburn University School of Law in Topeka and spent a tough three years of balancing law school as a commuting student, motherhood, and supporting Darryl's deployments.

"I learned what a great family support system the Air Force has," she said.

She earned a prestigious internship with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Kansas and graduated with her juris doctorate in 2014. Along the way, she said, she became more and more dedicated to Kansas.

"Wichita has been wonderful to us," she says. "As we got settled here, Darryl convinced his brother, Corinthian, to move to

Wichita to take advantage of the opportunity at Wichita State University. When he married, his wife, Latasha, came to Wichita too. Since then, his little sister, Veronica has also joined the family in Wichita."

Jacqueline's first legal position was as a prosecutor in Sedgwick County, specializing in civil probate, juvenile offender and traffic cases. From there, she worked as city attorney for Bel Aire and since 2022 has been city attorney for Derby, advising the city's management and governing body on a range of civil law matters.

She is actively involved in the community, serving as president of the Wichita Women Attorneys Association and vice chair of the Kansas Real Estate Commission. She is also an honorary commander at McConnell Air Force Base and participates in The Gathering steering committee to support and retain diverse talent in Wichita.

Darryl is now retired from the Air Force and currently serves as the director

See **KELLY** Page 11 →

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## Faces in the News.

By Voice News Service

**Olatunji Ajani** has joined Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation as a workforce development leader. In this position he will steward two core products for the Kansas City philanthropic organization: Fast Trac and entrepreneurial education program and One Million Cups, a safe place where new business owners can present their company to a supportive audience by helping them work through business challenges and identify opportunities.



Olatunji Ajani



Andrea Hendricks

Hiring Ajani reflects a continued demonstration of the foundation's commitment to growing entrepreneurship.

**Andrea Hendricks**, Ed.D and **Merideth Rose** have been elected to the Board of Trustees at Park University, a private college in Parkville, MO.



Merideth Rose

Hendricks is the chief diversity, equity and inclusion officer at Tico Productions in Kansas City and Rose is the president and CEO of Cornerstones of Care in Kansas City.

Rose, from Independence, brings extensive experience in community service and emergency management. She is a two-time alumna of Park University.

Hendricks authored "The BIG Journey: Bold Inclusion for Greatness," a blueprint for business leaders on building capacity around diversity and inclusion.

# Mark Dupree Named 1st Black President of Kansas Bar Association

The Kansas Bar State Convention also featured keynote speaker Andrew Young and a civil rights theme.

By Jarrod McDaniel  
Guest Contributor

In a historic appointment, Wyandotte County District Attorney Mark Dupree has been named the first African-American president of the Kansas Bar Association.

### Dupree's Presidency

Dupree was sworn in as president of the Kansas Bar Association last month at the state convention held at Washburn University in Topeka.

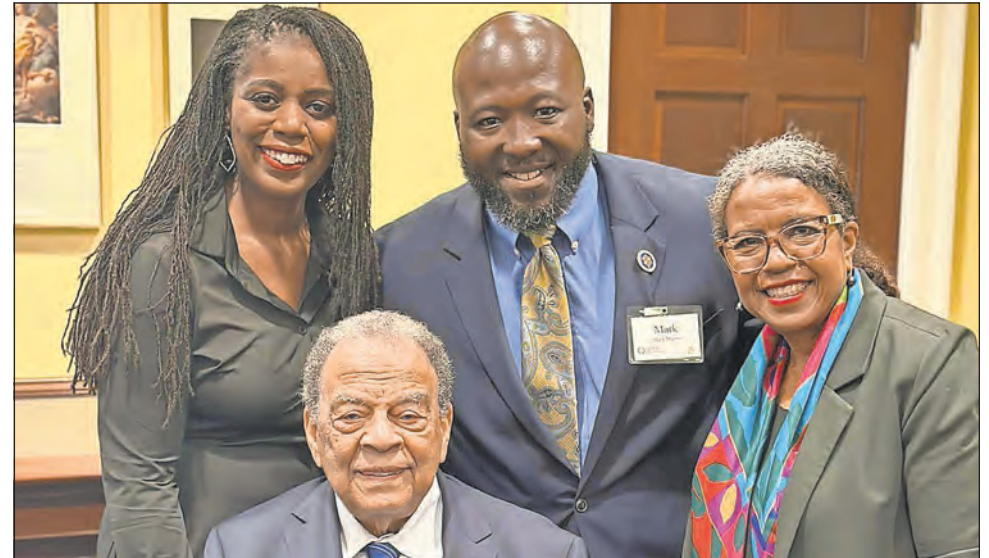
The Kansas Bar Association, founded in 1882, is a voluntary association for legal professionals and has more than 5,000 members, including lawyers, judges, law students, and paralegals.

"Being elected by other lawyers across the state of Kansas has been humbling but a task at the same time," said Dupree.

During his term as president, Dupree said he would work to ensure everyone who works for the courts as well as individuals seeking justice receive fair treatment across the board.

"We've got a lot of work to do," said Dupree.

The theme of this year's KBA convention was "Civil Rights: 70 Years of Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka ... We've Come a Long Way." For keynote speaker at the event, Dupree selected Andrew Young, an original cohort of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and a former mayor of Atlanta and U.S. congressman. During his presentation, Young said he believes

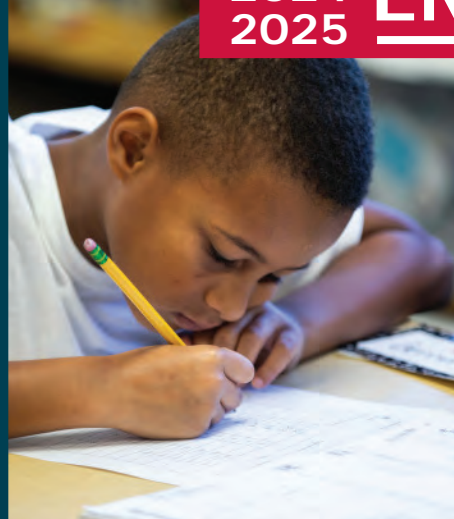


WYCO DA Mark Dupree and wife Shanelle Dupree meet Civil Rights icon Andrew Young and his daughter Andrea Young at the Kansas Bar Association State Convention. All are attorneys.

See DUPREE Page 20 →

2024  
2025

ENROLLMENT



**Online enrollment** will be available for grades 1-12 starting July 5, 2024.

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# Kansas Black Leadership Council Kicks Off 2024 Brunch Series

This year, the heavy on networking series will focus on stepping up to lead

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

The Kansas Black Leadership Council is back again this year with an expanded schedule for their Brunch series. The series, which kicked off last month in Lawrence, with what will be a recurring message encouraging African Americans across the state to step up and lead.

“One of the things that’s really big and important for KBLC is that leadership is not necessarily a position,” Knoell said. “Leadership is something that anyone can do. If

you have a title or don’t have a title — from any position, a person can lead.”

This year the series will have stops in Kansas City, Manhattan and Topeka. Next up is the Wichita Brunch, on Sat., July 20, 10 a.m. to noon at the Hyatt Regency, 400 W. Waterman. The keynote speaker will be former Wichita Eagle columnist and Wichita native Mark McCormick.

Future dates are: Kansas City, Aug. 24, Topeka, Sept. 21 and Manhattan, Oct. 19. The brunches are free, but registration is required.

#### About KBLC



Kaye Monk Morgan, CEO of the Kansas Leadership Center (pictured with her mother) was the keynote presenter at the KBLC brunch in Lawrence.

The Kansas Black Leadership Council was formed in Wichita in 2015 by a small group of community leaders who recognized the need for African Americans to advocate on issues affecting our communities on a state-wide level. The organization conducts an annual survey and visits with Black Kansans to better understand their issues and concerns. They use this information to help prioritize and direct their legislative advocacy.

The signature event for the organization is their Kansas Black Legislative Day at the Capitol, held in partnership with the Kansas African American Affairs

Commission, the State NAACP, the Kansas Black Legislative Caucus and The Community Voice.

To register go to <https://www.kansasblc.org/kblcbrunch>



The brunches include a delicious free meal.

#### 2024 KBLC Leadership Brunches

July 20, Wichita  
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Sept. 21, Topeka  
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Sylvester Thompson

# Just How Bad Was the Treatment of Black Students in Wichita's Public Schools?

Here are facts and examples of discrimination against Black students in USD 259 cited in the Dept. of Justice's recent report.

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

## Key Points:

- U.S. Dept. of Justice report finds Wichita School District discriminated against Black students.
- Black students are disciplined more frequently and severely, especially Black girls for subjective offenses.
- District will create new policies, eliminate seclusion, and improve treatment of students with disabilities.

A report by the U.S. Dept. of Justice released July 2 found the Wichita School District discriminated against students based on race and disability.

Following an investigation that covered the 2020-21 school year through the fall of the 2022-23 school year, the department concluded

Black students were disciplined more frequently and more severely than White students. Black girls were particularly singled out for offenses such as insubordination.

The department said the district also inappropriately secluded and restrained students with disabilities.

"Black students inside our nation's public schools should not have to face discipline or a referral to law enforcement because of their race. And students with disabilities should not have to experience the trauma of seclusion or improper restraint," Assistant Attorney General Kristen Clarke of the Justice Dept.'s Civil Rights Division said in a statement. "Schools in our communities should not be a place of fear or mistrust."

## Just How Bad Was the Treatment of Black Students?

Here are just a few of the examples of disparate treatment of Black students documented by the Dept. of Justice:

At one high school, Black students were five times as likely as their White peers to receive a disciplinary referral and five times as likely to be suspended as a result of that referral.

At several middle and elementary schools, Black students were more than three times as likely as their White peers to be suspended.

Across the district, Black students were more likely than White peers

to receive multiple disciplinary referrals, and to receive referrals for subjective offenses such as "disruptive conduct" and "insubordination," which were not clearly defined.

Black students were more likely than White students to be referred to law enforcement for such subjective offenses as "disorderly conduct"

For Black girls, these differences in rates of disciplinary referrals were particularly pronounced, especially in the context of perceived insubordination and in dress code enforcement. At one middle school, Black girls were referred for insubordination at more than 4.5 times the rate as White girls, and about 2.7 times the rate as Black boys.

At one middle school Black girls were referred for dress code violations at more than nine times the rate as White girls, and more than 16 times the rate as Black boys.

Black girls were 3.5 times as likely as White girls to be described with stereotypical terms like "attitude" and "drama."

District personnel could not explain this different treatment of Black students in interviews with the DOJ. In one such incident involving a Black and White student fighting, the Black student was disciplined more severely than the White student, even though the Black student was not more violent during the incident, neither student was injured,



A recently released U.S. Dept. of Justice investigation found Wichita Public Schools disproportionately discriminated against Black students when it came to discipline, especially Black girls. SAMUWL BORGES

and the White student had instigated the fight by using a racial slur.

Black students in district high schools were referred to law enforcement for minor conduct even though similarly situated White students were not referred for similar conduct. This included a Black student being referred to the police for pushing another student to the ground during a game of tag in gym class, but no such referral being made when a White

student in the same grade engaged in similar conduct.

The DOJ's investigation also revealed examples, often involving non-White students, of security officers escalating student behavior while responding to routine discipline matters. This practice resulted in avoidable referrals to law enforcement.

See **DISCRIMINATION**, Page 11 →

## WYANDOTTE COUNTY

# Get Criminal Offenses Removed: WYCO Expungement Fair

**By The Voice News Service**

People with criminal records may be able to get offenses removed through the Wyandotte County District Attorney's Office's sixth annual Expungement Fair July 23-24, with assistance from Kansas Legal Services and Unite KC. The event will take place at the Kansas City Kansas Community College Technical Center, 6565 State Ave., from 4 to 8 p.m.

Prescreening for the event is currently

underway. To begin the process, check the eligibility criteria below and then email your name and date of birth to DAexpungements@wvccok.org to confirm your eligibility. You can also call the office at 913-573-2851 for prescreening.

## Eligibility Criteria

**Case Paid Off:** The case to be expunged must have no unpaid restitution, fines, fees, etc. It's common to be unaware of outstanding court debt even after release from supervision. Call

the court where you were convicted to verify your fines have been paid in full.

**Waiting Period:** A certain number of years must have passed since the completion of the sentence (usually probation or parole). The waiting period is generally 3 or 5 years, depending on the crime's severity. For some DUIs, it is 7 or 10 years.

**No Registration Requirement:** The case must not have a current requirement to register on an offender database, even if you have

moved out of state to avoid registering.

**No New or Pending Felonies:** There must be no new felony convictions within the past two years, and no felony charges pending against you.

**Expungeable Crime:** Under Kansas law, certain crimes cannot be expunged. Generally, these include crimes involving sexual offenses, children, or murder/manslaughter.

For more info and to see if you qualify, visit <https://tinyurl.com/mw83srzy>.

# Cash Bonus to Get Health Screenings in Jackson County

Earn up to \$100 for attending Our Healthy Jackson County pop-up events.

By Thomas White  
Kansas City Reporter

Want to earn \$100 cash just for looking out for your health? Jackson County residents can do just that at any one of the series of community events organized by Our Healthy Jackson County (OHJC).

The OHJC program partners with small businesses, faith organizations, neighborhood leaders, and youth centers to host pop-up health events throughout the community. These events — largely on Kansas City's east side — offer free health screenings, vaccinations, and educational resources in settings where residents already gather.

The health screenings and connection to services are free and worth the trip alone, but if you participate in a few select activities, you can earn up to \$100. Those who receive a COVID-19 vaccination (ages 5 and up) can earn \$40. An STI screening is worth \$20, and completing an OHJC survey (ages 13 and up) nets \$40. If you do all three, you can walk out with \$100, but the incentives are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

"We are big fans and proponents of the project," says Pastor Eric Williams of Calvary Temple Baptist Church, who leads the faith-based sector of OHJC. "The ability to have all these contacts and resources in places that really need it is so significant; on



An indoor OHJC health clinic event. (Photo: Our Healthy Jackson County Facebook)

top of that, people are walking away with cash, so it's a win-win-win for everybody."

#### Services Offered at OHJC Events

- COVID vaccines
- Diabetes screenings
- Blood pressure checks
- Tobacco education and smoking cessation
- Blood glucose screening
- Dental assessments (potential referral to UMKC's dental school for free services)
- Mental health screenings
- STI testing
- Cancer screenings

Williams described a recent OHJC event at his church as "stellar" with a "huge crowd." The pop-up OHJC events are often held in festive atmospheres, which can make receiving health screenings more appealing. Depending on the venue and weather, some events include bounce

houses, DJs, face painting, food trucks, and other entertainment.

Our Healthy Jackson County is intended to reach people in underserved communities. It began as a way to get COVID-19 vaccinations to ZIP codes on KC's east side that had poor health outcomes during the pandemic but has expanded its purpose and scope.

Dr. Janette Berkley-Patton, who leads OHJC, emphasized the program's expanded and preventative approach. "We want to focus on prevention; we know that the health care system is set up to treat the sick, but we want to keep people out of the hospital," she said.

The program has helped thousands, and its success stems from its collaboration. Jackson County funds the program, which works with community partners like local businesses, churches, neighborhood associations, and youth



You can earn \$40 for getting a COVID-19 vaccine at an OHJC event. (Photo: Our Healthy Jackson County Facebook)

groups to coordinate with health agencies to meet people where they are and provide these free clinics. Healthcare workers, researchers, and volunteers from UMKC, Children's Mercy, Truman Medical Center, and University Health are on site to support healthy lifestyles through these community events.

#### Current schedule of upcoming Our Healthy Jackson County events:

- **July 12** — 4 to 7 p.m.: Young Family Farm
  - **July 13** — 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.: Ivanhoe Center
  - **July 28** — Noon to 3 p.m.: EarlySTART Child & Family Development Center
  - **Aug. 2** — 4 to 7 p.m.: Eastwood Hills Neighborhood Center
  - **Aug. 3** — 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.: Truman Heritage Habitat for Humanity
  - **Sept. 21** — 1 to 4 p.m.: Holmes Garden Neighborhood Association
  - **Sept. 22** — Noon to 3 p.m.: Rhema Church
  - **Oct. 5** — 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.: Blue Hills Park
  - **Oct. 19** — 1 to 4 p.m.: W.E.B. DuBois Learning Center
  - **Oct. 20** — Noon to 3 p.m.: Sunlight Missionary Baptist Church
  - **Nov. 1** — 4 to 7 p.m.: Mattie Rhodes Cultural Center
  - **Nov. 2** — 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.: Robert J. Mohart Multipurpose Center
- Dates and locations are subject to change; for the most up-to-date calendar of OHJC events, visit [bit.ly/OHJC2024](https://bit.ly/OHJC2024).

# Finally, A Cancer Study Focusing on Black Women

The goal is to recruit 100,000 Black women ages 25 to 55 who have not had cancer; Missouri women are eligible to participate.

#### By The Voice News Service

With a goal of enrolling 100,000+ Black women, the groundbreaking VOICES of Black Women study will focus on lived experiences to improve health outcomes for the next generation, collecting data over the next 30 years.

The American Cancer Society

(ACS) has announced plans to launch the VOICES of Black Women study, the largest behavioral and environmental-focused population study of cancer risk and outcomes in Black women in the United States.

Designed to better understand the multi-level drivers of cancer incidence, mortality and resilience within this demographic, the long-term

study will gather valuable data from Black women between the ages of 25 and 55 from diverse backgrounds and income levels who have not been diagnosed with cancer.

The organization aims to enroll over 100,000 Black women across 20 states and Washington, D.C., where, according to the U.S. Census, more than 90% of Black women in

the U.S. reside.

Black women continue to have the highest death rate and the shortest survival of any racial or ethnic group in the U.S. for most cancers. This is especially true for breast cancer, which from 2015 to 2019 killed Black women at a 40%

See CANCER STUDY Page 11 →

**KCPD, from Page 4 ↓**

Young also highlighted ongoing issues with police accountability, citing recent lawsuits against officers accused of excessive force. These cases underscore the tension between calls for increased police funding and demands for greater

accountability and community trust.

**What Happens If It Passes?**

If Amendment 4 passes, Kansas City would be constitutionally required to allocate at least 25% of its general revenue to the police department.

**What If It Fails?**

If the amendment fails, the current funding structure would remain in place, with Kansas City required to provide at least 20% of its general revenue to the police department. The city would retain more flexibility in its budget allocations and could continue to fund the department above

the minimum requirement as it sees fit.

Failure of the amendment could also spark renewed discussions about local control of the police department, similar to the change St. Louis made in 2012 when it regained control of its police force from the state.

**Voter Info**

Amendment 4 will be on the Aug. 6 primary ballot statewide. A sample ballot is available at [ballotpedia.org/Missouri\\_Sample\\_Ballot](https://ballotpedia.org/Missouri_Sample_Ballot). The last day to register to vote is July 10. To check your registration or register to vote, visit [sos.mo.gov/elections/goVoteMissouri/register](https://sos.mo.gov/elections/goVoteMissouri/register).

**KELLY, from Page 6 ↓**

of business partnerships for the Kansas Leadership Center.

She and Darryl are dedicated to their church, Central Christian Church, love to travel and are committed to investing time, prayer and

resources in Jayda, Trey and Janae.

Her primary opponents include Clark V. Owens, Joshua D. Wright and Jarrod Kieffer.

**History of Black Judges in Sedgwick County**

There are currently no

African-American judges serving on the district court in Sedgwick County.

The last Black judge was Monique Centeno, who was appointed by Gov. Laura Kelly to complete an unexpired term in 2019. Before her, Judge Greg Waller served for

21 years, until 2015. Judge Jennifer Jones, who was the first Black female judge in Kansas, served on the district court from 1992 to 2000.

In Sedgwick County, where judges run in partisan/political races for "retention," it's difficult for a Democrat to get elected. It was this

partisan, retention-format election process that pushed all three of these Black judges out of their positions.

Today there are no Democrats serving as judges in Sedgwick County on the district court level.

Kelly has a chance as a Republican.

**DISCRIMINATION, from Page 9 ↓****Settlement Agreement Reached**

District officials said they don't know what prompted the investigation but, according to the DOJ, the district fully cooperated with the investigation,

In a settlement agreement with the Justice Dept, the Wichita School District plans to create new policies and eliminate others, including its use of seclusion.

"The point for me is that we can and will do better moving forward, right?" Wichita Public Schools Superintendent Kelly Bielefeld said during a news conference discussing the report.

"We do have a challenge in front of us that we can improve. We can help solve this and become more equitable as a school district."

The school district said it plans to unveil a new student code of conduct in January. It also plans to formalize a standard dress code.

The Justice Dept. said it reviewed thousands of documents and interviewed dozens of people. During a site visit in March 2023, it toured and interviewed administrators and staff at 17 schools. Those included schools with programs that serve students with disabilities, and schools with security officers.

Here's a summary of the conclusions reached by the DOJ:

- Black students were disciplined more frequently and more severely than White students who engaged in similar conduct. This was most evident for subjective offenses, such as "disruptive conduct" and "insubordination." That was especially true for Black girls.

- Black students were more likely to receive disciplinary referrals and suspensions than White students. They also were more likely to be referred to law enforcement.

- Black girls were more often disciplined for being insubordinate and for dress code violations.

- The district lacked policies and procedures to ensure nondiscrimination.

- The district frequently relied on restraint and seclusion when responding to the conduct of students with disabilities. During the investigation, the district reported more than 3,000 incidents of restraint or seclusion. Of those, 98% involved a student with a disability.

- The district used restraint and seclusion when there was no safety threat, but to instead enforce school rules.

As part of its agreement with the Justice Dept., the Wichita School District outlined steps it will take to better serve students.

**Those steps include:**

- Ending the use of seclusion – where a student is placed alone in a room or area.

- Not using physical restraint unless a student's behavior poses a danger of physical harm.

- Implementing a new student code of conduct in January.

- Standardizing a new dress code.

- Not involving a school resource officer in an incident of student misbehavior unless there is a risk of physical harm, or a criminal offense is occurring.

- Creating an Office of Behavior Management Support and Oversight to better help students with disabilities.

**CANCER STUDY, from Page 10 ↓**

higher rate than White women despite their rate of diagnoses being 4% lower. Black women were also 60% more likely than White women to die of cervical cancer and almost twice as likely to die of endometrial cancer.

"VOICES of Black Women represents a crucial step towards achieving health equity in a population that is long overdue," said Dr. Alpha Patel, co-principal investigator of the study and senior vice president of population science at the American Cancer Society. "The data we've uncovered through previous population studies has been critical in reducing the unacceptably high burden of cancer, but that reduction has sadly not been equal. By centering Black women's voices and experiences, we can dig deeper in uncovering the unique challenges and barriers contributing to cancer disparities and develop tailored interventions to mitigate them."

Recruitment for the study began in October 2023 with a pilot launch in Atlanta, GA, and Hampton Roads, VA. The national launch expands enrollment to Alabama, California, the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia.

Eligible participants must identify as Black, be assigned female at birth or self-identify as women, not have a history of cancer (except basal or squamous skin cancer), and be between the ages of 25 and 55.

Enrolled participants will provide informed consent and, over the span of 30 years, answer behavioral, environmental, and lived experience questions through periodic short surveys delivered via a secure online portal. No medication, clinical testing, treatment, or lifestyle changes are part of the study.

A global leader in cancer research, the American Cancer Society has a 70-year history of funding and conducting some of the world's largest and most impactful population cohort studies to understand how cancer develops in populations, identify cancer risk factors, and improve survivorship and outcomes after diagnosis.

Through these studies, more than 2.5 million research participants have contributed to landmark discoveries in cancer science like the linkage of cigarette smoking to lung cancer, obesity to the risk of early death, and red and processed meat intake to higher risk of colon cancer.

These and other discoveries have contributed to a 33% age-adjusted reduction in cancer mortality rates since rates peaked in 1991. Led by American Cancer Society researchers, Dr. Alpa Patel and Dr. Lauren McCullough, the VOICES of Black Women study will partner with communities of Black women and cross-disciplinary experts in Black women's health to listen and better understand the unique, diverse lived experiences that may affect the risk of developing or dying from cancer. Results will be used to improve the overall health of Black women for generations to come.

The American Cancer Society believes everyone should have a fair and just opportunity to prevent, find, treat and survive cancer. Acting on this belief and fulfilling the organization's vision of ending cancer as we know it for everyone requires focus on eliminating deeply rooted barriers that have caused long-standing inequities in cancer outcomes. The VOICES of Black Women study represents a significant stride toward achieving this goal and underscores the organization's commitment to health equity and social justice.

For more info about the VOICES of Black Women® study and how to participate, visit [voices.cancer.org](https://voices.cancer.org).

# Kansas City Two-Stepping, a Black Cultural Phenomenon

Like barbecue and jazz, nothing is more Kansas City than its two-stepping.

**By Thomas White**  
Kansas City Reporter

De Barker was about to start high school at Paseo Academy when she received a stern warning from her older cousins, “You better not come to this school not knowing how to two-step.”

That summer, she watched, learned, and

practiced the dance for hours on end to make sure she didn’t embarrass her relatives. For Barker, who today is known as the “Queen of the KC Two-Step,” this was the beginning of a decades-long mission to master, preserve, and spread the good word about Kansas City two-step.

“If you didn’t know how

to two-step when you went to high school, you couldn’t be a part of the cool kids,” says Barker. “Guys would even get beat up if they didn’t know how to two-step. It wasn’t about the nice clothes or who had the fancy shoes. It was about the two-step.”

The Kansas City two-step is a synchronized

smooth-as-satin partner dance unique to KC that seems simple on paper but looks like magic in practice to the uninitiated.

It’s a ballroom-style dance with a repetitive six count basic pattern – right foot forward, left foot forward, left foot back, right foot back, then a rocking motion of right step then left step

– then repeat and always stay on the beat.

The basic framework is always there, but what makes a good two-stepping pair is when the male leads their partner through a mix of perfectly synchronized but spontaneous twirls, spins, and flourishes. “It’s a creative thing; it’s not a rigid



## KC Two-Step: Dance Classes & Lessons in Kansas City

Here are some locations where you can learn or enjoy KC two-stepping.

**By Thomas White**  
Kansas City Reporter

The Kansas City two-step is a cherished area dance tradition that takes practice to master. No matter whether you’re a beginner with two left feet or a seasoned vet looking to polish your skills, taking a two-step class is an opportunity to move your body and build community.

Classes and lessons are available all around KC, from community centers to dance studios to clubs, with a variety of options to suit your schedule and budget.

With experienced instructors and welcoming

environments, you’ll be gliding across the dance floor in no time. Don’t miss out on the chance to learn this smooth, synchronized partner dance that’s been a cornerstone of Black KC culture for generations.

### Linwood YMCA

3800 Linwood Blvd., KCMO  
Tuesdays at 7 p.m.  
Class \$5 or free with membership

### IDWD Productions

Private Lessons with De Barker  
Contact debarkereps@gmail.com  
\$25 per hour lesson

### Marlborough Community Center

8200 The Paseo, KCMO  
Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.  
Class \$3 or free with membership

### KC Friends of Alvin Ailey

1714 E. 18th St., KCMO  
Six weeks October – November  
Thursdays 6 to 7 p.m.  
\$15 a class or \$72 for six weeks

### Eisenhower Recreation Center

2901 N. 72nd St., KCK  
Mondays 7 to 9 p.m.  
\$8 lessons

### Sunday Two-Step Factory

4701 Blue Ridge Blvd.,  
Raytown, MO  
Sundays 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.  
\$8 lessons

### F.L.O.S.S.

1417 Norton, KCMO  
Sundays noon to 2 p.m.  
\$5, classes return in the fall

### Society

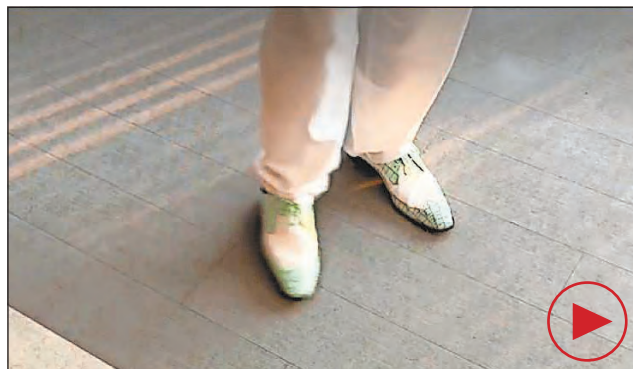
2050 Central St., KCMO  
Thursdays 8 to 10 p.m.  
Free lessons

### Pete’s Place

12044 Blue Ridge,  
Grandview, MO  
Thursdays 6 to 8 p.m.  
\$8 lessons

## Two Stepping Videos

See this close up video of the 2-step basics and more stepping videos on our website.



## The Basic Steps of Two-Stepping





DeBarker "The Queen of Kansas City Two-Step" and her partner Lamont Edwards.

or all the way orderly type of deal," says filmmaker Stinson McClendon, who made a documentary on KC two-step. "It's about a couple synching and finding their personal and paired rhythm together while dancing."

Similar regional dances are popular in other cities. There's the Chicago Step, which was made famous by R. Kelly's 2003 "Step in the Name of Love" video. Minnesota has hand-dance, St. Louis has the bop, and Detroit has what they call ballroom, all of which incorporate elements of the two-step, but KC two-step is a one and only.

"The Kansas City Two-Step is only really done here," says Barker.

### History of Two-Stepping

KC two-step was born in the late 1950s, and McClendon says it was a

natural evolution from the high-energy jitterbugs and Lindy Hops of the big band era.

KC was an epicenter of big band dance halls during the 1930s and '40s when big toss-your-partner-around dances were all the rage. However, the prevalence of big bands started to dwindle in the 1950s due to costs and evolving tastes.

More mellow music like Doo-wap, R&B, and Motown began to take over the airwaves. Music venues also became smaller, going from large dance halls to smaller settings with less floor space and a jukebox.

As the times changed, so did the dances — or as Barker puts it, they had to come up with something a little more low-key, something a little more cool.

"Going from the Lindy Hop and that big ballroom, they had to taper their dancing down into something a little more quaint," says Barker. "It started with dancing in a little square, and then the teenagers in the '60s created Kansas City two-step as we know it."

Barker says the roots of the dance run even deeper, tracing back to the resilience and creativity of enslaved Africans. Barker points out that even during slavery, slaves entertained themselves through song and dance as a way to

help to get through it. This spirit of using music and dance as a balm for the soul continued long after slavery, evolving with each generation.

"Black folks are very creative, and young people seem to change things every generation anyway," says McClendon. "We developed a style; we went from being wild throwing people around to really being cool."

Despite what new dances would come and go, for decades, the two-step remained a cornerstone of Kansas City's Black youth culture. As the original two-steppers aged and hip-hop exploded on the scene in the 1990s, KC two-step's popularity waned among younger generations.

### Two-Stepping Revival

Kansas City two-stepping never died, but by the early 2000s it was on life support and rarely seen outside places and events where "old" people gathered and re-lived the good old days.

"Kansas City two-step was about dead," says Barker. "Young people didn't touch it; they thought it was just for old people."

Barker moved to California for a job after college but returned to KC in 1999. She saw that two-step was fading and became determined to help save it. She began teaching the first formal KC two-step classes around town in accessible spaces like community centers.

In 2003, she helped create the Big Step Off dance competition, which featured \$10,000 in prize money for the best two-steppers.

Rodney Thompson and Stinson McClendon had the idea, and tapped Barker to gather the city's best steppers. Thompson



## The Big Step Off 2024: Bragging Rights & Cash on the Line

By Thomas White  
Kansas City Reporter

Members of the Kansas City two-stepping community are polishing their dancing shoes because the 19th annual Big Step Off dance competition is just around the corner. The dance competition, which celebrates KC's unique two-step culture, is set to kick off with a preliminary round July 20 at the American Jazz Museum, followed by the finals Aug. 25 at the Gem Theater.

Organized by the local "Queen of Kansas City Two-Step," DeBarker, the Big Step Off has been a cornerstone of KC's dance scene since 2003. This year, the top three winners — as selected by a panel of judges — will receive a trophy and a cut of \$5,000 in prize money.

"The top couples get bragging rights as well, which honestly probably means more than the money," says Barker.

Last year's winners, Asiel Moses and Ivory Tripp, came to the competition with only a few years of experience and were thrust into the spotlight. Tripp convinced Moses to enter after taking classes and winning a smaller two-step competition. They just wanted to get the experience under their belts and say that winning the Big Step Off has been a whirlwind.

"After winning everywhere we went, people were like, 'Oh hey, there's the champions,'" says Moses. "It was almost like we were celebrities or something; even people from out of town were recognizing us."

Along with notoriety and bragging rights, the two

**Step 3**



**Count 3 – move left foot back keeping weight on right foot.**

**Step 4**



**Count 4 – move right foot back and shift weight to left foot.**

**Step 5 & 6**

**Count 5 & 6 – are a rocking motion where you shift your weight to right foot on Count 5 and to your left foot on count six. To shift your weight you can either bend your right knee then your left or lift your right foot slightly then your left. You end with your weight on your left foot ready to start again with count 1, moving your right foot forward.**

See PHENOMENON  
Page 14 →

See BIG STEP Page 14 →

**PHENOMENON**, from Page 12 ↓

and McClendon also made a documentary, “A Conversation in Dance,” that covered the build-up to the Big Step Off finale. The event helped spur a renewed interest in KC two-step as clubs around town filled with couples practicing and swiping a few creative moves from those around them.

Today, the renaissance of two-stepping is evident across Kansas City. There are several organized two-stepping groups and almost every night of the week you can find two-stepping classes or two-stepping nights at local clubs and venues. If you want to keep up and chat with other two-steppers, there are several active KC two-step groups online.

However, in a world with an emphasis on multiculturalism and where Black culture is regularly appropriated by other races, KC two-stepping remains predominantly the pride and joy of Black Kansas City.

**A New Generation of Steppers**

With most of the early two-steppers in their 60s and 70s, saving two-stepping requires constantly attracting new and younger people to the dance. Baker’s approach is not to dismiss young folks but to learn their dances before showing them the two-step.

On Tuesdays, she hosts a one-hour line-dancing class at the Linwood YMCA that’s immediately followed by a one-hour two-step class. Each week, it’s amazing how many people stay around for the two-step class.

By holding the class in a community facility, rather than a club, it also helps make learning the dance more accessible to individuals, particularly youth.

“Since we’ve passed [KC two-step] on, the younger people have started to notice it and make it their own,” says Barker. “It’s almost like ‘we see y’all,’ they are a little more fancy with a little more showmanship; they’re on 10 most of the time.”

Younger two-steppers like Brianna Addison, 27, hope to keep the tradition alive even if they are putting their own stamp on it. Addison says she likes the older, more laid-back style that she learned from her relatives but says she notices generational differences.

“I definitely feel like the younger generation really just move faster,” says Addison. “But I think it all comes down to feeling out the music, feeling out the beat, and feeling out your partner.”

Despite these changes, Barker emphasizes that the core elements of the two-step remain. The lead-and-follow dynamic, the respect between partners, and the cool style continue to define the dance. She sees her role as not just teaching steps, but passing on a legacy.

“It’s not about me, a product, or anybody else: Nobody owns two-step,” says Barker. “It’s expressing our roots, our longevity, and our culture.”

**BIG STEP**, from Page 12 ↓

also won a cash prize, a championship ring, and a trophy. Tripp says she brought her trophy everywhere with her for a while, and it even helped her get into places for free.

Barker backs up what the couple says, noting that Big Step Off participants often gain recognition within the two-step community, regardless of whether or not they take home a trophy.

“People end up knowing you even if you didn’t win,” says Barker. “They still respect and appreciate you; they still talk about you. You’re known from then on in the community.”

**It’s About Promoting the Culture**

But the Big Step Off isn’t just about competition; it’s a celebration of community and culture.

Rodney Thompson and Stinson McClendon had the idea for the Big Step Off in 2003 and tapped Barker to gather the city’s best steppers. Since returning to KC from California in 1999, Barker had been teaching two-stepping classes in the community and working to revive the dance she learned and enjoyed as a teen.

The Big Step Off helped spur a renewed interest in KC two-step as clubs around town filled with couples practicing and swiping a few creative moves from those around them.

Twenty-one years later, the annual event brings together dancers of all levels, from novices to seasoned pros, and serves as a platform for dancers to showcase their skills, learn from others, and contribute to the dance’s legacy.

**How the Competition Works**

The competition begins with the preliminary round, where dancing pairs showcase their skills in hopes of advancing to the finals. At least five couples will advance to the finals at the Gem Theater. There, the top dancers will compete for trophies and cash: first place gets \$2,500, second place \$1,500, and third place \$1,000.

In the past, there were two preliminary rounds; this year, there is one chance to qualify for the finals. The dance partners will two-step in a group with the other contestants, then again as individual couples before a panel of judges.

The entry fee for those interested in participating is \$45 per couple; for those who just want to watch the talented dancers, tickets start at \$20.

Contestants are evaluated on five key categories of traditional Kansas City two-step, as shown on the judges’ scorecard:

**1. Technique/Style:** Judges assess “the command of the fundamental elements of two-stepping. The evident ease and clean execution of the steps.”

**2. Timing/Rhythm:** This category looks at the “appropriate matching of body motions and footwork to the meters and rhythms of the music.”

**3. Compatibility:** Judges evaluate the “execution of steps and balance in the showmanship of the choreography - leading and following.”

**4. Crowd Appeal:** This category asks, “Is the crowd feeling the couple as a whole? Do they seem engaged?”

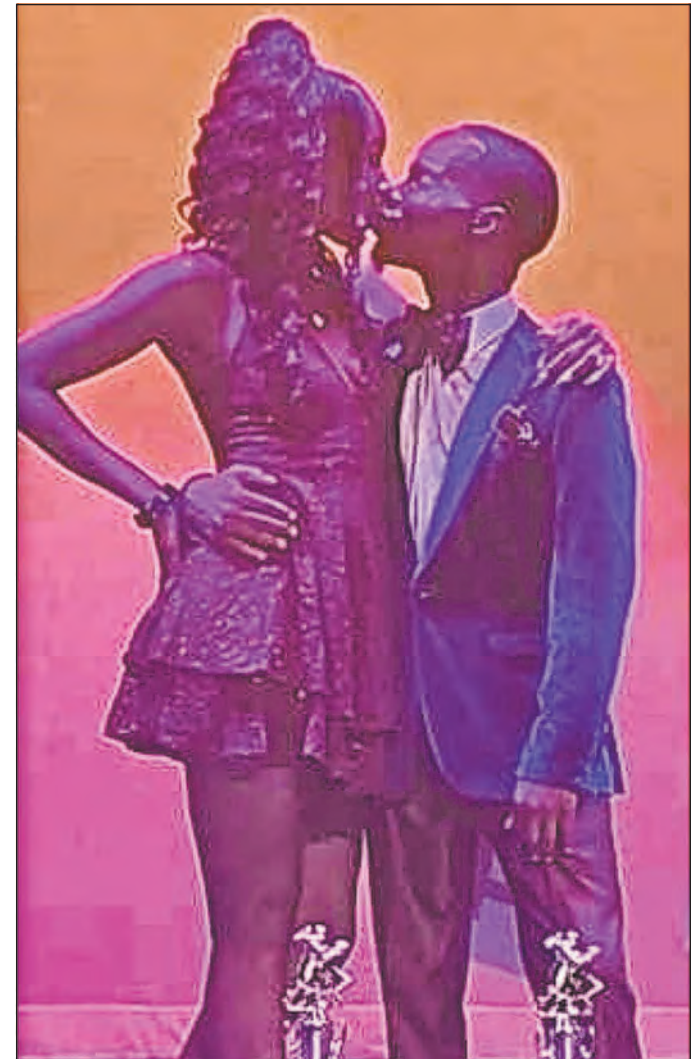
**5. Overall Presentation:** This is “based on all categories in general.”

Each category is scored on a scale from 1 (Needs Work) to 5 (Perfect). Barker strongly emphasizes the integrity of the judging process. To ensure fairness, judges are rotated yearly and carefully selected to avoid any conflict of interest or ties to the contestants.

“I get judges based on their ethics,” says Barker. “They must not have any biased opinions regarding any contestant creep into their ability to judge fairly and accurately.”

**What it Takes to Win it**

Moses says he and Tripp won last year because the two were in synch with each other, and by two-stepping with ‘the greats’ who had decades of experience, they were pushed to a level they didn’t know they could reach.



Asiel Moses and Ivory Tripp were the winners of the 2023 Big Step Off. “It was almost like we were celebrities or something.”

**The Big Step Off 2024 Preliminary Round:**

Sat., July 20, at The American Jazz Museum  
1616 E. 18th St., KCMO  
7 p.m. to Midnight with DJ Groove  
Sign up for \$45 at [bit.ly/SteppingSignUp](https://bit.ly/SteppingSignUp)  
Tickets \$20 available at [bit.ly/Two-Step2024](https://bit.ly/Two-Step2024)

**Finals:**

Sun., Aug. 25, at The Gem Theater  
1615 E. 18th St., KCMO  
6 to 10 p.m. with DJ Foots  
General Admission \$25, VIP

packages \$35-\$55  
Tickets on sale soon. Follow [facebook.com/2StepKC](https://facebook.com/2StepKC) for updates.

**Big Step Off After Party:**

Sun., Aug. 25 at The American Jazz Museum  
1616 E. 18th St., KCMO  
10 p.m. to 1 a.m. with L.S. Flash  
Tickets \$15 or \$10 with a finals ticket  
Tickets on sale soon. Follow [facebook.com/2StepKC](https://facebook.com/2StepKC) for updates.

“Even though we had been two-stepping for a shorter period of time, it was our connection

that won it,” says Moses. “If you put your mind to it, you can do it.”



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— Dr. DeAngela Burns-Wallace  
*President and CEO, Kauffman Foundation*

Together with our community, the Kauffman Foundation is committed to help position Kansas City as a national model for equitable economic mobility.

Mr. Kauffman's core values remain at the heart of our mission, shaping our approach to increasing college access and completion, strengthening workforce opportunities, and improving access to business ownership.

Learn more about the  
Foundation's strategic refresh at  
[Kauffman.org/our-strategy](https://www.kauffman.org/our-strategy)



# A Fan's Guide to Chiefs Training Camp 2024

Everything you need to know to get a preview of the Chiefs new season in St. Joseph.

**By Thomas White**  
Kansas City Reporter

This year, the Kansas City Chiefs are trying to become the first team to win three consecutive Super Bowls. While the Chiefs — and their fans — hope their season ends with an early February victory in New Orleans, the season really starts in St. Joseph, MO.

For the 14th year, Missouri Western University in St. Joseph plays host to the Chiefs training camp, where the players come together for classes, practices, and preparation for the season. The whole team moves into dorms to eat, sleep, and breathe football.

This year, the camp runs July 21 through August 15, with a few days off in between.

Training camp provides a unique opportunity for fans to get up-close views of morning practices and their favorite players, get player autographs, take pictures, and much more.

Here's a helpful guide to make the best of Chiefs training camp.

## Cost

Nearly every practice session is free to attend. There are three exceptions (July 21, July 27, and Aug. 4), but on those days, admission is \$5 per person.

Every day, parking costs \$5 and needs to be purchased online in advance. A ticket is also required for admission to practice sessions — even if they are free. To reserve tickets and parking, go to [Chiefs.com/TrainingCamp](https://chiefs.com/TrainingCamp).

## Things To Do

- Watch the Chiefs practice. You'll get to see the players up close and in action as team members run drills, learn new plays and compete with each other.

- Get autographs. Each day, designated position groups sign autographs for free. Often many of the other players join in the free autograph sessions, even if it isn't their required day.

- Activities for kids. On a nearby field, the Chiefs have football challenges where kids can throw passes at targets, kick field goals, tackle a dummy or try to scoop up fumbles. There's also a rock climbing wall, a giant inflatable Chiefs Kingdom-themed obstacle course, and a

bounce house.

- Grab a photo with the Chiefs cheerleaders or KC Wolf. Cameras with lenses smaller than six inches are allowed, and training camp provides plenty of opportunities for photos. But recording Chiefs' practice is against the rules.

- Get new Chiefs Gear. The pro shop has just about every piece of officially licensed Chiefs memorabilia you can imagine.

## How To Get There

Chiefs training camp is held at Missouri Western University. Plug "4525 Downs Dr., St. Joseph, MO" into your GPS, and you'll see that training camp is about an hour north of Kansas City and around a 3.5-hour drive from Wichita.

## Tips For Training Camp

If there's a particular player or group of players you want to see, check the schedule. Most practices are dedicated to specific units, i.e. defense, lines, running backs, etc, but there are five full team practices scheduled. . It gets hot, so bring sunscreen. Look for the misting stations if you need to cool off.

You can bring in one sealed water bottle, but water, soda, snow



Fans can get up close and personal with the action at Chiefs Training Camp

cones, and the like are available for purchase.

Practices generally last 1 hour 40 minutes.

Small bags are allowed, but like at the stadium, if the bag isn't clear, it may be searched at security, or, more likely, you'll be turned away and sent back to leave the noncompliant bag in your car.

Bleacher seating is available, but you may bring a folding camping chair if you like. No coolers or outside food and drink — aside from one bottle of water — are allowed.

## Schedule

Practice schedules are subject to change, so it's advisable for fans to check [Chiefs.com/TrainingCamp](https://chiefs.com/TrainingCamp) for up-to-date info on practice times and other event details.

With two exceptions, all practices begin at 9:15 a.m. The practice session on Aug. 12 starts a little later (10:15 a.m.) since the team will be returning from a preseason game. On the last day of training camp, the session begins at 8:15 a.m.

# Satchel Paige Was the Star of Inaugural World Baseball Congress in 1935

Paige's role in the tournament is being celebrated this summer as part of the NBC's 90th anniversary.

**By Bonita Gooch**  
Voice editor-in-chief

There are dozens, if not hundreds, of stories about the pitching prowess of Satchel Paige, but it wasn't until this year that a story about Paige's accomplishments in Wichita, KS gained much-deserved attention.

It turns out that during his second season as a member



As a member of the semi-pro, integrated Brunswick Churchills, Satchel Paige played in Wichita at the inaugural National Baseball Congress.

of the integrated Bismarck Churchills, Paige played in the inaugural National Baseball Congress.

That was 1935, 12 years

before Major League Baseball integrated and well before most baseball parks allowed Black people into the seats, let alone onto the field.

In the series, by all reports, Paige was a huge draw. He was a star; winning four games and striking out 60 batters. The semi-pro Churchill's won the tournament. Their success and the fans they drew to Wichita were the catalysts for what would become the NBC World Series, which will kick-off its 90th tournament July 25.

As part of the anniversary celebration, NBC World Series organizers have planned a celebration that includes recognition of the role Paige played in making the tournament and the history of African-American baseball.

On opening night, there

will be a Satchel Paige bobblehead giveaway to the first 1,000 fans. Individuals who purchase tournament passes for the NBC series, are guaranteed a Paige Bobblehead.

Passes to the Evergy NBC World Series are \$75 for upper general admission and \$99 for lower general admission. Passes are good for all 36 games of the 2024 NBC World Series.

Also on opening night, there will be a reception in the stadium's All-American Club at 6 p.m. At the reception, Paige's grandson will talk about his famous grandfather's life and legacy. Dinner and your game ticket are included in the \$50 reception

price. Tickets to the reception are expected to sell out so buy early.

This July, The Kansas African American Museum and the NBC Baseball Foundation have teamed to celebrate the history of African American baseball, and the legacy of Paige. Stop by TKAAM to learn more about the history of players like Paige, Bobby Boyd, Ozzie Smith and Tim Anderson, and explore everything else the museum has to offer.

FYI, the year after the Churchill's won the tournament with Paige, the tournament returned to a segregated policy.



Mayor Quinton Lucas with 'Baby Q.' PHOTO CREDIT: MAYOR LUCAS TWITTER

## KC Mayor Lucas Welcomes 2nd Child

Lucas will take a reduced schedule, highlighting KC's 12-week paternal leave.

**By Thomas White**  
Kansas City Reporter

Kansas City Mayor Quinton Lucas and wife Katherine Carttar have announced the arrival of their second child, son Quinton Carttar Lucas, born June 19.

"Katherine and I are excited to announce the arrival of a new addition to our family, our son Quinton Carttar Lucas. I am fortunate each day to be mayor of Kansas City, but my greatest blessing is being a father," said Lucas. "I will be working a reduced schedule over the weeks ahead to spend time with Baby Q, his older brother Bennett, and my amazing wife."

The newborn, affectionately referred to as "Baby

Q" by the mayor, joins older brother Bennett Carttar Lucas, who was born in June 2021. Mayor Lucas and Carttar were married in a civil ceremony in April 2021, just a few months before welcoming their first child.

Lucas' plans to work a reduced schedule to spend time with his expanding family aligns with the family-friendly policies he has championed since taking office.

"In Kansas City, we are proud to support mothers, fathers, and caregivers as they take on our community's most important job — raising and spending time with our families," Lucas stated.

The mayor highlighted

See **MAYOR** Page 20 →

# 'Black in One Piece'

New locally based podcast offers platform for Black people to share their Black experience.

**By P.J. Griekspoor**  
Wichita Reporter

### Key Points:

- Dr. Tasha launches digital platform TMBP Media, a platform amplifying marginalized voices through storytelling.
- The platform includes "Black in One Piece," a podcast featuring guests discussing various aspects of the Black experience - available on many platforms.
- Dr. Tasha aims to show that every Black story has value.

Dr. Latasha N. Eley Kelly, or "Dr. Tasha" as she prefers to be called, is launching a new project of "The Millennial Black Professor" called TMBP Media, which she founded after receiving one of three Wichita Foundation Info Challenge Grants awarded in 2023.

TMBP Media is a digital platform designed to amplify marginalized voices through storytelling, ethical journalism and community engagement. Dr. Tasha says the goal of her new platform is to give people a chance to share their stories and insights with the community and help listeners understand that there is a wide range of Black experiences and your story still has value even if your experience is different.

At a gala event on June 17, Dr. Tasha introduced her concept to Black community leaders and representatives of Black media and launched her new podcast, "Black in One Piece."

The podcast will introduce a cross-section of guests who share their thoughts on the experience of childhood, school, employment, success, failure, disappointment, celebration, pride, shame and ultimately holding it all together to create a life that is "Black in One Piece."

The June 17 event included a screening of the first podcast episode, which dropped on Juneteenth, and introductions to the three guests who appear in the first three episodes.

The guest for the initial episode



Dr. Latasha N. Eley Kelly, aka "Dr. Tasha," and her first "Black in One Piece" guest, Joseph Shepard

is Joseph Shepard, the chief of staff for the Kansas chapter of Lead for America, an organization that encourages young professionals to be leaders in their own communities.

Her upcoming guests will be Zoe Stone, Spark Community Business Academy graduate and founder and owner of Charcutistry Catering, and Dr. Kevin Harrison-X, The Breathe Project founder and director of diversity, equity and inclusion in the Wichita State University Cohen Honors College. He also owns Power Storytelling LLC.

Guests at the launch party were treated to samples of Stone's culinary talent at a table loaded with sandwiches, meatballs, hot dip and a wide array of veggies and desserts.

Anyone interested in being a guest can complete the form found at <https://forms.wix.com/f/7189593598579441754>

or send an email to [dr.tasha@tmbpmedia.com](mailto:dr.tasha@tmbpmedia.com). Her website is [TheMillennialBlackProfessor.com](http://TheMillennialBlackProfessor.com)

"Black in One Piece" is available on YouTube, Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Amazon Music, and Audible.

Dr. Tasha is a first-generation college graduate. She coaches and prepares students from high school through doctoral level for academic and postgraduate success. She

is originally from Newport News, VA, but is now happily settled in Park City, KS, with her husband, Corinthian. She's a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority. She says she loves to read, bake and spend time with family as well as attending concerts and seizing every chance to spoil her two godchildren and six nieces and nephews.

Other Info Challenge Winners

The three Info Challenge Grants Winners received a \$30,000 grant from the Wichita Foundation to help them launch a platform to amplify the voices of minority communities and two years membership in the Tiny News Collective that provides tools, resources and community of learning to help people build sustainable news organizations that reflect and serve their communities

Other winners include Planeta Venus, founded by Claudia Amara to serve the area's Spanish-speaking community, and The Shout, founded by Emily Christensen and Teri Mott to engage with artists.

The Wichita Foundation entered into a partnership with Wichita entrepreneur Ti'juana Hardwell of Mamarazzi Communications and the Tiny News Collective for the implementation of the Info Challenge, which attracted 22 applicants.

## WICHITA

**Tue., July 16, 10 - 11 am: Social Security: Understanding Your Benefits**, The Center, 1914 E. 11th. Join AARP for a Social Security workshop focused on building an understanding of the implications of Social Security claiming decisions. **FREE**

**Tue., July 16, 5 - 7 pm: Chips Dips & Business Tips**, Fuzzy's Taco Shop, 206 N. Rock Rd. Connect with fellow entrepreneurs, business professionals, and community leaders in a relaxed and vibrant atmosphere with food and drinks. **FREE**

**Fri., July 19, 5 - 10 pm: Shop & Grub Market**, Exploration Place, 300 N. McLean Blvd. Variety of vendors selling vintage clothing, jewelry, accessories, home goods, wine, food and more. The Ultimate Outdoor Market in ICT. Booze & Music. Full market schedule and vendor application available at shopandgrub.com. **FREE**

**Fri., July 19, 8 pm: D'Aydrian Harding - The Stay Sober Summer Tour**, TempleLive, 332 E. First. The Wichita-born content creator has been thriving on social media since 2020. He is also into music and has released a few rap songs. **COST \$22**

**Sat., July 20, 8:30 am: 9th Create Campaign Forum**, Wichita State University - Woolsey Hall, 2050 N. Mid Campus Dr. The Create Campaign Forum is the signature business development event for minority entrepreneurs and business owners. This annual event features workshops, panel discussions, keynote speakers and more to provide resources, insight and inspiration to diverse entrepreneurs. **COST: \$25+** <https://bit.ly/3W9K7KT>

**Sat., July 20, 11 am: KS Black Leadership Brunch Series**, Hyatt Regency, 400 W. Waterman. See story Page 8 for more details. Keynote speaker: Mark McCormick. **FREE** - must preregister at <https://bit.ly/3VNqisn>.

**Sat., July 20, 4 pm: Sunset Summerfest**, McAdams Park, 13th & Cleveland. An evening of music Headliner BIG BUB, Kimberly Paige, NEW Funk, LaMesia, Romeo Villa, DJ Ricky Rick, Merge N Traffic, plus get your blood pressure checked, open a bank account and more. **FREE**

**Sun., July 21, 2 - 4 pm. Candidates Forum**, St. Paul AME, 1756 N Piatt. Check out candidates running for office in person. Ask questions about the candidates' position on issues that affect you.

**Tue., July 23, 9 am: When Everyone Leads, Kansas Leadership Center**, 325 E. Douglas. This six-hour, same-day course makes leadership radically accessible and inclusive, and helps unleash capacity for collective leadership in teams, organizations, coalitions and communities. Register at <https://zfrmz.com/pr8mSrQ6G8lG2GRVGNRO>.

**Thu., July 25, 5 pm: Satchel Paige Reception** - NBC World Series at Eck Stadium,

WSU. Join the National Baseball Congress to celebrate the legacy of Satchel Paige at opening night of the NBC World Series with a special reception. See story this issue. **COST \$50** (limited) <https://bit.ly/4cI9RDk>.

**Thu., July 25, 5:30 - 8:30 pm: Taste of Africa**, Distillery, 244 N. Mosley. "An immersive experience, where you can engage in the rhythms of African music, traditions, history, and culture! It's an opportunity for guests to embark on a journey of discovery while sampling delicious African cuisine. Reserve your spot today - tickets limited. **COST: \$125** <https://bit.ly/3Xd9jkr>.

**Fri., July 26, 6 - 10 pm: The Bazaar-nival**, Revolutsia, 2721 E. Central. A vibrant celebration that combines the magic of a carnival with the charm of local vendors. Dancing, live DJ, food and drinks, plus handmade treasures at the "Bazaar-nival Market" featuring 15 local vendors.

**Sat., July 27, 10 am - 2 pm: Kansas Literacy Festival**, Urban Prep Academy, 2821 E. 24th. This fun-filled event will use art and storytelling to spark a lifelong love of reading for all ages. Jam-packed day of activities, vendors, live performances and books for the whole family. **FREE**

**Sat., July 27, 11 am - 1 pm: Koko Burgers Fundraiser for Aonya Kendrick Barnett for KS House 85**, The Center, 1914 E. 11th. A delicious and impactful event dedicated to supporting Barnett's campaign. Order and pay at [www.mealtrain.com/trains/3zkk1w](http://www.mealtrain.com/trains/3zkk1w).

**Sat., July 27, 11:30 am - 1:15 pm: ICT Childcare Entrepreneurs Summit**, Rhatigan Student Center, WSU. This summit brings together business leaders and childcare providers to discuss innovative strategies, partnerships and tax credits that can support employees and their families. **FREE**

**Sat., July 27, 6 pm: Words From the Candidates** + Gospel Music, McAdams Park. Bring friends, family, grills and lawn chairs. **FREE**

**Sat., July 27, 6:30 pm: "I'm So Glad" Kansas City & The Roots Of Black Gospel Music**: The Untold Story - documentary film at Historic Dunbar Theater, 1007 N. Cleveland, **COST \$16** - adults /\$6 -12 and under <https://bit.ly/3wqvGrJ>.

**Fri., July 28, 7 pm: Soulful Sounds of Wichita**, The Venue, 3201 E. 31st. You've probably seen "NYC's Jazzy R&B Duo" on HBO or Amazon, but this is your chance to experience their fun personalities at one of their shows. This playful couple might remind you of Lucy & Ricky, and if you like everything from Erykah Badu to Billie Holiday, you'll love grooving to their Soulful sounds. **COST \$10 - \$30** <https://bit.ly/3zge9TT>.

**Sat., Aug. 3, 10 am - 3 pm: Health & Wellness Fair**, The Center, 1914 E. 11th. Wellness across generations - empowering

families together: workshops, vendors, health screening, check with the candidates, prizes, food, music, and fun. **FREE**

**Fri., Aug. 16, 5 - 10 pm: Shop & Grub Market**, Exploration Place, 300 N. McLean Blvd. Vendors selling vintage clothing, jewelry, accessories, home goods, wine, food and more. The ultimate outdoor market in ICT. Full market schedule and vendor application available at shopandgrub.com. **FREE**

**Sat., Aug. 31, 4:30 pm: Wichita Gospel Music Hall of Fame**, Progressive Missionary Baptist Church, 2727 E. 25th. Honorees: Pastor Ronda Kingwood; ARISE, Inc.; Paul White Sr.; Pastor Tommy Wade; evangelist Stephanie Vann; Exalt Chorale/Jermane Milton; the late Brandon McCray; and Roberta Jackson Durant. **FREE**

**Sat., Sept. 14, 10 am: Business Launch & Book Signing**, Aroma Coffeehouse, 2243 N. Ridge Rd. Interested in having your book or personal story written? Meet Ty Davis and learn all about the ghostwriting service that he provides. Ty will be reading from the two books that he has written describing his life story. Door prizes plus Aroma Coffeehouse's handcrafted coffee, drinks, house-made goods, and snacks for purchase.

## TOPEKA

**JULY 25 - 28, 6 pm: For the Culture FEST**, Every Plaza, 630 S. Kansas Ave. Brings the state of Kansas together to celebrate the essence of African-American culture in a four-day festival. Kicked off with a scholarship gala featuring music, artists, creatives, impactful speakers, businesses, vendors, and much more. This event will provide a welcoming space for everyone to experience the joys, history, and identity of African American culture through art. Together we can: Rejoice in the past - Embrace the present - Inspire the future. <https://bit.ly/4cwz77>

## KANSAS CITY

**Wed., July 17, 5:30 - 8 pm: KCYP Summer Social on Vine Street**, Vine Street Brewing, 2000 Vine St. Network with other emerging and mid-career professionals, learn about all the different musical stylings in the 18th & Vine Jazz District to add a little groove to your summer, and help celebrate the one year anniversary of Vine Street Brewing, Kansas City's first Black-owned brewery. **COST: \$5+** <https://bit.ly/3VUv4Db>.

**Sat., July 20, 12 - 3 pm: Summer Vibes + Black Art**. The BLAKK Co., 1108 E. 30th. An art auction event benefiting the youth arts students at Village KC. This year, it's a day party. Ticket includes entry and food. Drinks will be available for purchase, courtesy of Blakk Co. **COST \$25** <https://bit.ly/4eU8SBS>.

**Sat., July 20, 11 am - 4 pm: Christmas In July**: The Connection Fair, Smith-Hale Middle

School, 9010A Old Santa Fe Rd, Non-profits, food trucks, & diverse vendors, showcase your offerings & connect with the community.

**Sat., July 20, 5 pm: R&B Summerfest Presents Surface and Friends Tour**, Power & Light District, KC, 13th & Grand Blvd. Starring Surface, plus Kut Klose, Michel'le, Public Announcement, Rome, and more. **COST \$55** [axs.com](https://axs.com).

**Sat., July 20, 8 pm: D'Aydrian Harding - The Stay Sober Summer Tour**, The Truman 601 E. Truman Rd. The Wichita-born content creator has been thriving on social media since 2020. He is also into music and has released a few rap songs. **COST \$22** [bit.ly/4aSNz10](https://bit.ly/4aSNz10).

**Sun., July 21, 4 pm: Kansas City's Lawn Party**, Nelson-Atkins Museum, 4525 Oak St. An evening of live music, food trucks, art activities, mini golf, and lawn games. Festivities stretch from the Donald J. Hall Sculpture Park through Brush Creek in Theis Park. In a special celebration of the museum's 90th anniversary. **FREE**

**Fri., July 26, 6 - 9 pm: A Matinee with Amber "Flutienastiness" Underwood**, The Ship, 1221 Union Ave. A matinee with jazz flutist Amber Underwood featuring her band. Doors 6pm, showtime 7pm. **COST \$10+** <https://bit.ly/4cAaPCc>.

**Sat., July 27, 11 am - 4 pm: Stop the Violence Basketball Tournament**. Gregg/Klice Community Center, 1725 The Paseo. 2nd annual basketball tournament to create further awareness around the violence that is experienced in KC. Check-in and food will be at the Black Archives of Mid-America, 1600 E. 17th Terr. **REGISTER** <https://bit.ly/4cGTC9S>.

**Sun., July 28, 2 pm: 6th Annual Kansas City People's Choice Awards**, Arvest Bank Theater, 1228 Main St. The Kansas City People's Choice Awards is an annual ceremony created to recognize & honor excellence. Dress code enforced. Performances by KC Young Boss, Miss Kush, Yocelyn Ali, Malik Williamson, Dr. Tiff Sings & The Band, Rosae Michellee, JJTHRULA, Roblo Da Star, Rob Ruckus, & Ashley Brewer. **COST \$20+** <https://bit.ly/4bwUXPh>.

**Sat., Aug. 3, 12 - 8 PM: 2024 KC Brew Fest**, Union Station, 30 W. Pershing. More than 50 breweries, 150 beers, food trucks, and much more. **COST \$50+** <https://bit.ly/3VNPWx9>.

**Sat., Aug. 24, 5 8 pm: Kijji World Art & Fashion Show**, Gem Theater, 1615 E. 18th. Get ready for a mind-blowing fusion of art and fashion. Witness a fusion of art and fashion like never before. **COST \$30+** <https://bit.ly/3za4v5t>.

**Sat., Sept. 28, 6 pm: The G.I.F.T. Of Color Gala**, The Lex at the Municipal, 301 W. 13th. "A Night to Remember: Uplifting Our Community's Entrepreneurs" - not just an evening out, it's a statement of support and a celebration of what we can accomplish together. Sponsored by G.I.F.T., **COST \$100** <https://bit.ly/4eqQdgX>.

## 'I'm So Glad' Shares Little-Known Impact of KC on Gospel Music

By Bonita Gooch  
Editor-in-Chief

The board of the Historic Dunbar Community Center in Wichita is hosting a showing of the acclaimed documentary "I'm So Glad: Kansas City and The Roots of Black Gospel Music, The Untold Story."

This film, which last year was previewed and earned Best Heartland Documentary Feature at the Kansas City FilmFest International, will be showcased on Sat., July 27, at 7:30 p.m. at the Dunbar, 1007 N. Cleveland in Wichita. For advance tickets, visit <https://shorturl.at/GzZJv>. Admission is \$16 for adults and \$6 for kids under 12.

The film - directed by Overland Park-based journalist Paul Wenske - is an illuminating exploration of the rich, yet often overlooked, history of Black gospel music in the KC region. It paints a vivid picture of the development of the Black community in and around Kansas City, MO, and Kansas City, KS, as seen through the lens of the music.

The movie goes all the way back to Western University, the historic Black college in KCK, and its music department,



The Whitney Singers were just one of many nationally recognized gospel groups that got their start in Kansas City.

whose graduates introduced African-American folk traditions into the mainstream.

There is the story of Winston Holmes, who launched a record company to compete with the larger White-owned labels that controlled the "race records" market in the 1920s. The documentary profiles gospel stars of the 1960s, '70s, and '80s, such as Michael Charles, Genetter Bradley, and Alma Whitney.

"I saw the preview last year and was just amazed

at the national and international impact Kansas City had on gospel music," said KC resident Jim Coleman. "It was totally engaging."

For more info, read our story that digs further into the documentary and the history of gospel in Kansas City. <https://bit.ly/4eYP4gE>

The Historic Dunbar Theatre opened in 1941 as a hub in the community. The effort to bring it back as a community-based cultural performing arts center continues, with the first phase of restoration complete.

## Jazz Museum Receives Large Miles Davis Donation

By Thomas White  
Kansas City Reporter

The American Jazz Museum in Kansas City has received a significant collection of Miles Davis recordings, artifacts and memorabilia. The donation was made by collector Rodman Marymor of San Francisco, and includes 1,200+ items related to the legendary jazz trumpeter and composer, spanning his entire career and showcasing his influence on music and culture.

The extensive collection features diverse materials that offer unprecedented insight into Davis' life and work. To help catalog and contextualize this vast collection, the American Jazz Museum brought in world-renowned Miles Davis expert Enrico Merlin from Italy. An accomplished musician, author, and scholar, Merlin has spent decades studying Davis' work and impact.

"Miles Davis was not just a trumpet player from Alton, Illinois," says Merlin. "He was an inventor, a genius, and an incredible leader who transformed the careers of many great musicians."

Jordan Malhiot, collections manager at the American Jazz Museum, expressed excitement about the acquisition.

"Having Enrico here and bringing Rodman Marymor's collection to Kansas City is incredible," says Malhiot. "Miles Davis' connection to music, culture, and society in so many different avenues gives us numerous ways to engage with that history. We're still kind of learning all of the opportunities we have as an institution to engage with that history and all the people connected to him."

### Securing the Collection

The donation process itself has an interesting backstory. Marymor, a longtime collector and jazz enthusiast, had sought the right home for his collection for some time.

He was looking for an institution to preserve the materials and make them accessible to researchers and the public. After considering various universities and conservatories, Marymor found the perfect fit with the American Jazz Museum.

"Per his words, the vibes were right," Malhiot recalled of Marymor's visit to the museum in February. This connection and the museum's commitment to jazz history and education were key factors in securing the donation. The donated Miles Davis collection features:

- 300+ magazines and journals
- 100+ books
- 150+ original photographs
- 500+ CDs of both official recordings and unreleased live performances
- Cassette tapes and an unopened 8-track tape



A large collection of Miles Davis artifacts has been donated to the American Jazz Museum.

- Concert programs and tickets

One standout piece is a 1982 CEBA (Communications Excellence to Black Audiences) Award presented to CBS Records for the production of Davis' album "Directions." The award from The World Institute of Black Communications was given for excellence in Black representation in advertising or public relations.

Malhiot and Merlin marveled at the sheer scale of the collection. Merlin noted that the donated recordings — previously released records plus rare and unreleased live recordings — if played back to back, would take more than eight days of continuous 24-hour playback to complete.

Merlin's expertise has been crucial in understanding the full scope of the collection. He noted that the magazines, in particular, offer valuable insights into Davis' career and public perception.

"You sometimes find a little interview that was forgotten, maybe you have some information about the man, about the music, about certain circumstances," says Merlin. "For example, I found this quote from Miles [in one of the magazines] that says more about him than many many words, he says 'I don't play rock, I play Black.'"

Malhiot says that, as a rule, the museum doesn't automatically say that a donation will be featured in an exhibition but hints that the public could be seeing some of these items soon.

The American Jazz Museum is exploring a range of possibilities, including exhibitions and educational programs around the collection, aiming to highlight Davis' significance in jazz history and his broader cultural impact.

Merlin suggested several approaches to presenting the collection, including a sound-focused exhibition allowing visitors to explore Davis' evolving style throughout his career. He also proposed mixing chronological and thematic elements to create a comprehensive narrative of Davis' life and work.

"I hope this collection sparks people's curiosity," says Merlin. "Because if you don't feel something when you hear Miles' trumpet, your heart is stone."



Sylvester Thompson

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**MAYOR**, from Page 17 ↓

that KC employees are now eligible for up to 12 weeks of paid parental leave upon the birth or adoption of a child. This policy, implemented by Lucas, places KC at the forefront among government employers and local businesses in supporting work-life balance for new parents.

On social media, Lucas expressed appreciation for the city's parental leave policy, saying, "Proud to work for an employer that gives us the time."



In this August 2023, Quinton Lucas is being sworn in for his second term as mayor while his wife Katherine Carttar and son Bennett look on.

**DUPREE**, from Page 7 ↓

Brown v. Board was one of the biggest parts of the Civil Rights Movement, and everything catapulted after that.

Judge Gwynne Birzer, who along with Dupree is a Washburn Law School graduate, noted that the lawyers in the Brown v. Board were also Washburn graduates.

"I can't help but believe the Brown v. Topeka Board of Education ruling paved the way for this very moment in KBA's history," said Birzer following the convention. "I am particularly proud of Mark for his continued involvement in the KBA. The fruits of his labor have resulted in change."

**Another Historic First for Dupree**

This isn't Dupree's first historic appointment. In 2016, at just 35 years old, he was elected district attorney in Wyandotte County, the youngest person and also the first African American to hold this position.

As district attorney, he is Wyandotte County's top law enforcement official.

During his tenure, Dupree has opened a Community Integrity Unit to investigate citizen

complaints against individual officers of the various Wyandotte County Law Enforcement Agencies, and was instrumental in freeing Lamonte McIntyre, who served 23 years for a

murder he didn't commit. In addition, he established a cold case unit to look at the nearly 300 open homicides in Kansas City, KS, all while adding more diversity to the DA's staff.

## Director/CEO Position Opening

Reports to  
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The Wichita Art Museum boasts a permanent collection showcasing over 12,000 artworks, spanning historical to contemporary pieces, celebrating the essence of American artistic heritage.

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# Why FAFSA is So Hard This Year and Where to Get Help in Wichita & KC

An updated financial aid form has led to website glitches and widespread confusion. High schools, colleges and nonprofits are here to help.

**By Maria Benevento**

The Beacon

**Edited by Thomas White**

Kansas City Reporter

Most years, May 1 marks “decision day” when many colleges ask students to let them know whether they’ll be attending.

But this year, problems with the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA, it meant delays and many students don’t know whether they can afford college, much less enroll.

An updated version of the FAFSA, shorter and intended to be easier than previous editions, was released months later than usual. Then website malfunctions hindered families trying to complete the application.

That red tape tangle is keeping some students from submitting the form and is leaving others waiting for results.

“We anticipate that we’re going to see a drop in how many students are actually attending college because of this,” said Joyce Nguyen Hernandez of Kansas City Public Schools.

The National College Attainment Network reports that FAFSA completion rates sit 32% below last year in Missouri and more than 36% lower in Kansas. They’ve dropped most sharply in urban districts, in areas where incomes are lower and places with more students of color.

Counselors and others who work with students say the problems hit particularly hard with first-generation college students, families with language barriers and with parents whose immigration status is different from the student’s.

“You can see it across the board, how it affects different schools and different locations,” said Rachel Schmeidler of Wichita North High School. “A lot of it has to do with



Students had a tough time with the FAFSA this year, and priority deadlines have passed, but you can still enroll and get financial help.

demographics, unfortunately.”

If you’re a student or family member struggling with the FAFSA, experts say there’s still hope as issues with the form are fixed or workarounds are discovered. High school counselors, colleges and nonprofits can share the latest hacks.

“There are people here to help you,” said Camry Ivory of the Missouri College and Career Attainment Network (MOCAN). “Advocate for yourself. Contact everybody you can. If you are stuck, keep trying. Don’t give up.”

Here’s what you need to know about this year’s FAFSA and how to tackle any issues.

## Remind me what the FAFSA is

The FAFSA is a form that high school seniors and college students fill out each year to determine whether they’re eligible for federal financial aid such as grants, loans

and work study.

Other scholarship programs often use the FAFSA as well if they take financial need into account. That includes programs sponsored by states, universities and colleges.

## Why is the 2024 FAFSA so hard?

The U.S. Department of Education introduced a simplified version of the FAFSA in late 2023, but its rollout has been problematic.

Since the FAFSA opened — months later than usual — students have seen website glitches, changes to the application and processing delays.

Until recently, families weren’t able to submit corrections when they made a mistake or decided to send their results to more schools.

Taken together, the problems have kept many students in the dark about how much money they’ll receive for school.

## Where can I find help if I run into FAFSA trouble?

If you’re a high school student, one place to start is with your counselor, who can help you directly or refer you to other resources.

If you’ve been admitted to college, or you know where you’re interested in attending, it’s also a good idea to stay in touch with that school’s financial aid office.

Colleges want students to be able to enroll. Tuition money will eventually end up in their hands, after all. So they’re motivated to help with FAFSA problems.

That can include making sure students can complete the FAFSA — some are hosting FAFSA help events — and, in some cases, changing deadlines.

## Wichita FAFSA help

Wichita Public Schools have web pages with information about the FAFSA and college and career counselors can assist you with problems.

Federal Student Aid has lists of FAFSA tips and you can call Federal Student Aid at 800-433-3243 or try the chat bot at [studentaid.gov](https://studentaid.gov), which some families have found faster than the phone line.

## Kansas City FAFSA help

- MOCAN, 10 a.m.-noon and 5-7 p.m. Wednesdays on Zoom
- Kansas City Kansas Community College FAFSA assistance, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays, financial aid office in the Jewell Building
- Donnelly College FAFSA assistance, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Thursdays in the Main Building, Student Services Suite, Room 114
- See MOCAN’s calendar of FAFSA help events for more options over the summer at [mofafsa.org/kansascity](https://mofafsa.org/kansascity). MOCAN keeps a list of FAFSA help events in the Kansas City area, including both Missouri and Kansas events.

## Who’s having the most trouble with the 2024 FAFSA?

One of the biggest challenges has been submitting information for parents without Social Security numbers.

While students generally need a Social Security number to complete the FAFSA, their parents aren’t supposed to need one to turn in required financial information.

At first, those family members weren’t able to enter their information at all. While that issue has improved, some families are still finding the process challenging.

Since the new form puts more responsibility on parents to provide information through a separate login, it can also pose challenges if those parents aren’t willing or able to cooperate.

First-generation college students may also need extra support navigating the FAFSA because their families have less experience with the application process. Language barriers can create another layer of difficulty.

## Is there any good news about the 2024 FAFSA?

Yes. The revised FAFSA is fewer than 40 questions long, down from more than 100.

It also directly retrieves tax information, meaning no one has to worry about whether they’re entering those numbers in the right location.

When all goes smoothly, it can take 15 minutes or less for each person to complete their portion of the form.

The Department of Education continues to work on fixing issues.

“This has been, hopefully, the worst FAFSA season of our lives,” Ivory said. “It only gets better from here.”

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# Wichita School to Offer a New Approach to Learning

Khan Lab School Wichita will open this fall in downtown with a diverse student body that provides a new opportunity for learning, designed for students who need something different.

**Key Points:**

- Wichita's new Khan Lab School offers innovative, less structured learning environment for students.
- Students work in achievement-based groups, not age groups, with flexible classroom configurations.
- School is committed to diversity at all levels and to providing an opportunity for those who need it the most.

The school is patterned after the online Khan Academy learning platform and the brick-and-mortar Khan Lab School in Palo Alto, CA, and offers students the opportunity to learn in an environment far less structured than typical classrooms.

Students work together in groups that are assembled by achievement level, not by age. In the new space, rooms are configured so they can become larger or smaller to fit the project at hand.

Khan Lab School will be based in Learning Lab Wichita, a new creative learning space housed on the upper floor of the old Union Station railroad building at 703 E. Douglas. The space is being transformed into a light, airy space that will feature classrooms, a recording studio, digital photography equipment, a computer lab, a science lab, and an outdoor learning space overlooking downtown Wichita.

"In a sense, Wichita will be our classroom," he said. "The idea of this curriculum is to allow kids to see people doing different jobs and learn what careers are available and see exactly how the jobs are done with internships and job shadowing starting far earlier than the usual offerings for high school juniors and seniors."

This year, classes will be offered for students in grades 4 through 9, but the plan is to expand each year until it is available for students from kindergarten through high school.

"We want to provide opportunities for kids from different backgrounds and all social classes," Ellison said.

According to Ellison, everyone involved with the school, the backers, the staff and the families who have been

accepted into the program so far, are committed to diversity and providing an opportunity for all, especially those who wouldn't typically have it, but need it the most.

Ellison is working hard to ensure the school is a "melting pot," by actively reaching out to diverse families, including some he met through his days as executive director of Heroes Academy, a Wichita-based mentoring program.

He encourages families who have students they feel would benefit from the school's alternative and creative teaching model to reach out to him and to not let the school's \$12,000 per year tuition keep them from applying. The school offers needs-based scholarships.

Khan Lab School Wichita is only the second brick-and-mortar school location for Khan Academy. It is a private educational institution.

**Learning Lab Wichita**

Learning Lab is designed to host three additional programs offering alternative educational opportunities, including micro schools in partnership with local school districts. Individuals can apply for a Learning



Kyle Ellison is the founding school director for Wichita's new Khan Lab School.

Lab membership that gives them access to the facilities as a place to offer learning programs.

Learning Lab, which was started in 2022, is supported by Stand Together, a Koch family philanthropic foundation to "help changemakers tackle the root causes of our country's biggest problems." Among the problems the foundation chose to address was the country's one-size-fits-all educational structure.

Stand Together launched Learning Lab to offer and explore alternative learning structures and, after being impressed with the Khan educational model, partnered with Khan to open a Khan Lab School in the Learning Lab.



Khan Lab School will provide opportunities for kids from different backgrounds. Needs-based scholarships will help make the private school accessible.

By P.J. Griekspoor  
Wichita Reporter

Kyle Ellison had a flashback to his school days when he was visiting a classroom several months ago.

"I walked in and there it was – the desk – separated from the orderly rows ... up front, close to the teacher's desk," he said. "And I could instantly see the kid who would sit there, fidgeting and squirming. That was me. I was that kid."

Ellison said what he didn't know as a young student was that he didn't have a problem with self-control or a behavioral issue.

"I was simply bored," he said. "I didn't want to sit there and read, or worse yet, listen. I wanted to get up and do something."

Understanding that is what led him to his current position as founding school director for Wichita's new, innovative Khan Lab School, which is now accepting applications through KLSWichita.org for the fall session, which will start in August.

**NOTICE OF PUBLICATION**  
 IN THE EIGHTEENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT  
 DISTRICT COURT, SEDGWICK COUNTY, KANSAS  
 IN THE MATTER OF THE MARRIAGE OF  
 Carissa Elizabeth Boyd (Petitioner)  
 and  
 Rico Teron Boyd (Respondent)  
**Case No. 23DM4158**  
 PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 23 OF KANSAS STATUTES  
 ANNOTATED NOTICE OF SUIT THE STATE OF KANSAS TO:  
 YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that a petition has been filed in the District Court of Sedgwick County, Kansas by Petitioner, praying for an absolute decree of divorce, and you are hereby required to plead to such petition on or before the 12th day of July, 2024, in said court at Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas. Should you fail therein, judgment and decree will be entered in due course upon said petition.  
 Carissa Elizabeth Bilson  
 Petitioner

**Rau Construction Company** is accepting bids for Moline Plow Building located at 1015 Mulberry Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64101. The project is a historic renovation to loft apartments consisting of historic renovation of the existing building and interior finishes; (cabinets, utilities, concrete, structural repairs, steel, masonry, roofing, glass, drywall, painting, finishes and related trades). The project has 15% MBE and 15% WBE subcontractor participation goals. Certified MBE/WBE firms are strongly encouraged to bid. This is a sales tax-exempt project (owner is requesting an add if sales taxes are to be included). Request for pricing documents and questions should be directed to Rena Manixai rena@rauconstruction.com, Evan Green evan@rauconstruction.com and Andy Meyer andy@rauconstruction.com or contact 913-642-6000.  
**Bids must be submitted to Rau Construction no later than Thursday, August 1, 2024, by 10:00 AM.**



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