

# THE VOICE

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# THE VOICE

VOLUME 32, NUMBER 8  
FRIDAY, APRIL 11, 2025

## LOOKING AHEAD

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**How Romantic Relationships Affect Mental Health**

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# Ailey II Brings Next Generation of Dance to KC

Emerging choreographers, iconic works, and a 40th anniversary celebration converge on KC's dance stage.

**By Thomas White**  
Kansas City Reporter

Ailey II dancers will storm the historic Folly Theater April 25-26, bringing their raw talent and bold vision to a community that has embraced Alvin Ailey's legacy for decades.

The acclaimed touring dance company Ailey II is comprised of talented early-career dance professionals. Under Artistic Director Francesca Harper's direction since 2021, the company continues to break new ground in modern dance.

"This season, Ailey II will thrill audiences across the country with mesmerizing premieres alongside returning

favorites and iconic dances by Alvin Ailey," said Harper.

The April performances, presented by the nonprofit Kansas City Friends of Alvin Ailey (KCFAA), will feature the world premiere of "Down the Rabbit Hole" by emerging choreographer Houston Thomas, while also celebrating the life and legacy of Ailey American Dance Theater's beloved Artistic Director Emerita Judith Jamison.

Founded in 1974, Ailey II serves as a bridge between the Ailey School and the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater as a way to make careers in dance more accessible. As a result, Ailey II boasts some of the most daring and innovative dancers and choreographers in the world.

Thomas' "Down the Rabbit Hole" expands on his earlier work "Follow the White Rabbit" (2022), examining our complex relationship with technology. Inspired by "The Matrix" film series, the piece explores how

technology transforms human interactions in daily life.

You'll also witness Harper's own creation "Luminous," a work paying homage to Ailey II's 50th anniversary and the pioneering artists who paved the way for today's dancers.

No Ailey performance would be complete without "Revelations," the American masterpiece that has moved audiences worldwide since 1960. The work pays tribute to the African-American cultural heritage that Ailey considered "one of America's richest treasures — sometimes sorrowful, sometimes jubilant, but always hopeful."

### 40th Anniversary Gala Celebration

KCFAA has embedded Ailey's vision into KC's cultural fabric. Their education initiatives, including two free summer AileyCamps and a year-round studio program, reached 20,000+ people in 2023 alone — adding to more than 1.3 million individuals served since 1984.

As KCFAA celebrates its 40th anniversary, their annual gala will

cap off the KC stretch of Ailey II performances. This year's gala, themed "Dance for The People," kicks off on Sat., April 26, at 6 p.m. at the Folly with Ailey II performing excerpts from Judith Jamison's "Divining" and "Revelations."

"Divining" was Jamison's first choreographic work for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, created in 1984.

Following the performance, the celebration continues at the Downtown Kansas City Marriott Hotel with a performance by KCFAA's AileyCamp the Group under Chief Artistic Officer Tyrone Aiken's direction. The balance of the evening includes a delicious dinner, exciting auction items, and a rousing dance party to cap off the night.

"The annual gala is not just a fundraiser; it's a celebration of dance, culture, and the incredible community that has supported us for 40 years," said Carla Williams-Evans, CEO of KCFAA. "We invite everyone to join us for a night filled with inspiration, entertainment, and unforgettable memories."

### Who's Alvin Ailey?

Alvin Ailey was a pioneering choreographer who established his now-legendary dance theater in 1958. He created works celebrating African-American cultural heritage and Black excellence, and even though he passed away in 1989, his artistic vision remains vibrant through performances worldwide with his Ailey American Dance Company and Ailey II.



### Showtimes & Tickets

Ailey II | Folly Theater  
300 W. 12th St, KCMO  
April 25 at 7:30 p.m.  
April 26 at 1 p.m.  
Tickets from \$35 at [bit.ly/AileyIIatFolly2025](http://bit.ly/AileyIIatFolly2025)

### KC Friends of Alvin Ailey Performances & Gala

Folly Theater and Downtown Marriott  
April 26 at 6 p.m.  
Tickets from \$250 at [bit.ly/KCFAAga2025](http://bit.ly/KCFAAga2025)

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# Sharpton Calls for 'March on Wall Street' Sends Warning of Boycott to Pepsi

**By The Voice News Service**

Founder and president of the National Action Network, the Rev. Al Sharpton announced a "March on Wall Street" for Aug. 28, as the organization continues to fight to protect diversity, equity and inclusion policies.

Sharpton first made the announcement on April 5, the last day of the NAN Annual Convention in New York City. It comes as PepsiCo has been given three weeks by Sharpton to reinstate its DEI commitments or face a national boycott.

"On Aug. 28, the anniversary of the March on Washington, NAN will take to Wall Street to send a message to the financial



community that we will use our dollars to abandon you if you decide to abandon us. Trump and MAGA extremists can legislate and litigate, but Black Americans have the ability to delegate their dollars away from companies that refuse to invest in us."

In a letter to PepsiCo Sharpton wrote, "You have walked away from equity," adding that removing DEI hiring and retention goals and dismantling community partnerships with minority organizations "are

clear signals that political pressure has outweighed principle."

Sharpton, who once served as a member of PepsiCo's Diversity Committee, requested to meet with PepsiCo CEO Ramon Laguarta and its leaders within the next 21 days to develop lasting solutions to restore the company's commitment to DEI and avoid a boycott.

Should that meeting not happen or new meaningful commitments not be reinstated, NAN announced it will immediately begin protesting PepsiCo's global headquarters in Westchester County, as well as its distributor locations.

In the meantime, the organization will continue to support the ongoing boycott of retail giant Target over its highly criticized decision to walk away from DEI.

# Amid Trump's Attacks on Smithsonian, Head of National Museum of African American History Steps Down

**By The Voice News Service**

The director of the National Museum of African American History and Culture left his post earlier this month. Kevin Young had led the groundbreaking Washington, D.C., institution since 2021. His resignation comes amid Trump's campaign to completely overhaul the Smithsonian and its landmark museums and cultural institutions.

Last month, Trump



Kevin Young

issued an executive order accusing the Smithsonian of promoting a "divisive, race-centered ideology."

Many people from Kansas may be surprised to know that Young was raised in Topeka.

Although he was born in Lincoln, NE, in 1970, his parents – Paul E. Young, an ophthalmologist, and Dr. Azzie Young, a chemist – settled in Topeka when Kevin was 10 years old.

According to The Washington Post, Young went on leave before Trump's order was issued. In a statement, the museum said that Young said he wanted to focus on his writing. He remains the poetry editor of The New Yorker, a post he's held since 2017.



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# Kansas House Backs Antisemitism Bill But Refuses to Condemn All Racism & Discrimination

By Sherman Smith  
Kansas Reflector

House Republicans refused to consider a plea from Democratic Rep. Valdenia Winn to send a message that there is no place for racism in the state of Kansas.

Winn, a Kansas City Democrat, proposed an amendment to House Bill 2299, which declares that antisemitism is against the public policy of the state. She wanted to expand the language to condemn all forms of racism and discrimination.

“This is not rocket science,” Winn said during a March 19 debate in the House. “This is not trigonometry. This is basic.”

Republicans wouldn’t hear it.

Rep. Susan Estes, a Wichita Republican, objected to Winn’s

proposal under a House rule that says amendments have to be “germane” to the existing bill. That sent members of the rules committee into a scramble to conceive a reason to reject the Democrat’s idea.

The way Rep. Susan Humphries explained it, the test for whether an amendment is germane is whether the amendment would expand the scope of the bill, a test rarely applied to amendments proposed by Republicans. The Wichita Republican, who serves as rules chair, explained the situation through a metaphor: You can’t expand a bill about apples to be about all fruit. Under that standard, she ruled, the House could not consider Winn’s proposal.

“I am not opposed to having an act that declares racism to be against public policy,”

Humphries said. “Like, let’s do that if we feel like it’s needed. That wording, that expanding from antisemitism to discrimination and racism is an expanding and super close call. But this amendment is not germane.”

Republicans determine which bills get a hearing and whether they advance, making it unlikely that Winn could get anywhere with a standalone bill that dealt with racism.

Rep. Stephanie Clayton, an Overland Park Democrat, argued the amendment was germane because “anyone who had the most rudimentary knowledge of history would understand is that antisemitism is racism.”

“Let’s make Kansans clear of our intent, that there’s no place for discrimination and/or antisemitism and/or racism

in the state of Kansas,” Winn said. “That’s all the amendment. There’s no ‘gotcha’ here, any place, there’s nothing else. It’s simple, people.”

Winn challenged Humphries’ ruling, but the House supported Humphries’ ruling with an 86-36 party-line vote. The House then passed the bill by a 116-8 vote.

Estes introduced the bill which outlaws encouragement, support, praise, participation in or threat of violence or vandalism against Jewish people or property. It makes it illegal for people to wear a mask to conceal their identity while intending to harass or discriminate against Jewish students, faculty or employees on school property. And it bans antisemitic curriculum in any domestic or study abroad programs or classes.



Rep. Valdenia Winn, a Kansas City Democrat, asks the House during a March 19, 2025, session to support her amendment to declare all forms of racism are against the public policy of Kansas. The House rejected her amendment on a party-line vote. (SHERMAN SMITH/KANSAS REFLECTOR)

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African woman with hands on her pregnant tummy.  
ADELE DE WITTE

### By The Voice News Service

**B**lack Maternal Health Week – celebrated annually April 11-17 – is a time to talk about an often-overlooked problem: Black women are more likely than others to have problems or even die during or after pregnancy.

It's a systemic inequality that is persistent. It can be fixed, but it will take time. This includes acknowledging that these inequities exist and being thoughtful and purpose-driven to eliminate these disparities.

Even though there has been some overall improvement in maternal mortality in the U.S.,

# Black Maternal Health Week: A Problem That Can Be Fixed

Here are some steps mothers and mothers-to-be should take, plus a schedule of BMHW activities near you.

recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) data shows that there is still a big gap in maternal mortality between Black and White women. Black women remain more than 3.5 times more likely to die from birthing complications than White women.

With more than 80% of pregnancy-related deaths in the United States considered preventable, the evidence becomes starkly clear. The crisis facing Black mothers is not new – but it is preventable.

We're seeing initiatives like providing doulas, extending health coverage after pregnancy, and even tackling tough issues like food insecurity and housing during pregnancy. These are all important steps toward better care for moms.

HOWEVER, HERE ARE SOME STEPS MOTHERS AND MOTHERS-TO-BE CAN TAKE

### Thinking about having a baby?

- Check-up before you get pregnant: See a doctor before you get pregnant to make sure you're healthy. This is called a preconception visit.

- See a specialist if you need to: If you already have health problems like high blood pressure or diabetes, see a doctor who specializes in high-risk pregnancies. They can help you have a safer pregnancy.

- Be good to your body: Eat healthy foods, exercise, and try to keep your stress levels down. Taking care of your mental health is super important too.

### Already pregnant?

- Find a doctor you like: You need a doctor who listens to you, understands you, and makes you feel comfortable.

- Speak up: You know your body best. Don't be afraid to ask questions or get a second opinion. It can really help to bring a friend or family

member to appointments for support, especially if you feel like your concerns aren't being heard.

- Learn about pregnancy: Read up on possible problems during and after pregnancy so you know what to look out for.

- Go to all your appointments: Don't miss any of your doctor visits, even if you're feeling good.

### After your baby is born:

- Take care of yourself: Get lots of rest, eat well, and let people help you. This is a tough time, and it's OK to ask for support.

- Get help if you're feeling down: Many moms feel sad or anxious after having a baby. If you're struggling, talk to your doctor. There are ways to feel better.

- Keep talking to your doctor: Let your doctor know if anything feels wrong, physically or emotionally.

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## Black Maternal Health Week Schedule of Events

For more info about most of these events go to <https://bit.ly/3FZeDBx>.

### Thursday, April 17, 6-8 pm

Fathers Matter 2  
HT's Barber Shop, 4751 Parallel Parkway, KCK  
Sponsors: Kansas Birth Equity Network

An evening of food, fun, and real conversations. Join us to celebrate Black fathers. This event is all about empowering dads with the knowledge and resources to advocate for their partner during pregnancy and beyond. Let's build a supportive community and

navigate fatherhood with confidence.

### Friday, April 18, 6-8 pm

Black Bliss: An Evening to Pause & Restore  
Painting with a Twist, 8817 West 95th St., Overland Park, KS  
Sponsors: Kansas Birth Equity Network

Sip handcrafted mocktails, express yourself through painting and poetry, and revel in a night of restoration and celebration. Enjoy a guided painting session & mocktail mixology class and stay for an evening of spoken word, conversations and fellowship. A soulful gathering to embrace rest, creativity and joy.

### Saturday, April 19, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Keeping Our Families Safe, Wellness, and Unity  
KCKCC Technical Education Center,

6565 State Avenue, KCK  
Sponsor: Kansas Birth Equity Network

### Virtual attendance is also available.

Join a community engaged conversation around safety and what that looks like for Black families. Come together to celebrate, support, and uplift Black maternal health. With keynote speaker and moderator Shanelle Dupree, executive director & cofounder of the Racial Equity Collaborative, author, speaker, lawyer, and adjunct law professor, plus additional dynamic panelists.

- Dynamic speakers sharing powerful insights on strength, wellness, and unity
- Swag bags & prizes for parents
- Local vendors & community resources to support your family
- Free lunch & childcare to make participation easy and stress-free

To make reservations go to <https://bit.ly/42DicWC>.

## Councilman Johnson Responds To Ethics Violation Ruling

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

Wichita City Council member Brandon Johnson has responded to a finding he violated the City's ethics ordinance during his altercation with KS Rep. Ford Carr at a Topeka bar earlier this year.

The Wichita Ethics Board heard a complaint filed by Brad Couch, a Wichita police officer, alleging Johnson violated four standards of the city's ethics code of conduct. After a hearing that included testimony from several witnesses and a statement by Johnson, the board found Johnson violated one standard – “be dedicated to the ideals of honor and integrity in all public and personal relationships.”

The altercation occurred at an event for public and elected



Brandon Johnson

officials and for that reason the board found “Johnson's behavior in question, in the context of a City-related event or at least in the presence of government officials in a business establishment, violated the ideals of honor and integrity in all public and personal relationships.”

Because the board found “extenuating circumstances of the repeated provocations and physical aggression of Carr,” they decided against

imposing a fine and only ruled a written report be prepared summarizing their findings and that the public be made available to the public.

Johnson issued a response saying he fully accepts the findings.

“Let me be clear: I have never - and will never back down from bullies, especially when I am standing up for what is right and what best serves the people I represent,” wrote Johnson.

In response to the alterations focus, addressing the needs of residents impacted by the 29th and Grove oil spill contamination, Johnson wrote. “The residents impacted by the 29th and Grove contamination deserve more than performative outrage and attention-seeking antics. They deserve real, sustainable solutions and justice.

In the coming weeks, Johnson said he will share more details about the plan, including the timeline and the progress on screening and testing of residents of the contaminated area.

For more information on the ethics complaint and the board's findings, read our story online at <https://bit.ly/43R9ULY>.

## Kansas House Committee Punts Punishment for Dem Rep. Ford Carr, Opting for ‘Admonishment’

By **Morgan Chilson**  
Kansas Reflector

A six-member House Select Investigating Committee on April 9 split votes along party lines and failed to reprimand, censure or expel Rep. Ford Carr for his behavior that included an altercation in a Topeka bar.

Instead, the committee of three Democrats and three Republicans voted 5-1 to write a report for the House about the committee's failure to reach agreement, potentially recommending Carr, a Wichita Democrat, be admonished. Rep. Mike Amyx (D-Lawrence) was the lone no vote. The committee will reconvene to approve the report before it is sent to the House, as there was some disagreement about asking for an admonishment of Carr.

It wasn't the result Carr expected.

Pointing to a complaint he filed against Rep. Nick Hoheisel (R-Wichita) Carr said the only options presented were dismissal, reprimand, censure or expulsion.

Carr said he expected the committee to split votes 3-3 and send the complaint to the House, where it would require a two-thirds vote to take action. Admonishment had never



Ford Carr (D-Wichita) reviews evidence in a complaint against him during an April 9 investigative hearing.  
(SHERMAN SMITH/  
KANSAS REFLECTOR)

been on the table, he said.

Whatever the term used, Carr said the committee's determination won't change him.

“I represent my people the way I represent my people,” he said. “I am in no way going to alter the way I represent my people.”

He added, referring to the fact he retained his seat after last year's election: “The people have already spoken. I am going to continue to be me.”

Carr has contended that racism and lack of acceptance for a Black man who operates in a different culture fueled the complaint and investigation, all of which the complainant denied immediately in a statement to the committee.

Rep. Leah Howell (R-Derby) filed the complaint alleging that Carr broke a House rule about using disorderly words while debating legislation. Listed in her complaint were multiple instances that she

said indicate Carr's behavior is not in line with the decorum and conduct required of a Kansas representative.

Howell pointed to an altercation at the Celtic Fox bar in Topeka in which video surfaced of Carr and Wichita City Councilman Brandon Johnson loudly arguing and calling each other names. When Rep. Henry Helgeson (D-Eastborough) tried to intervene, he was knocked to the floor, although he refused to press charges. Carr's repeated use of racial slurs and aggression were also noted in the complaint.

Carr, during his 15 minutes speaking to the committee, disagreed with Howell's assessment of what happened in each of the instances she described.

Ultimately, the committee agreed that expulsion was off the table, commenting that such a move was usually connected to a criminal act. Members debated the difference between censuring and reprimanding, but a vote on reprimanding split 3-3 on party lines.

In compliance with their 5-1 vote to write a report, the committee chair and one Democratic member of the committee will work together to prepare it. The committee did not indicate when it would reconvene to approve the report.

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# Left on Read Bookstore Amplifies Works by Authors of Color

Left on Read, a new bookstore in downtown Wichita, specializes in books by and about people of color. Owner Latasha Eley Kelly said she is planning author events, book clubs and other activities over the next year.

**W**ichita's Newest Bookshop is a Little Store With a Big Mission

"We are all about amplifying representation, cultivating perspective and empowering community," said Latasha Eley Kelly, owner of Left on Read in downtown Wichita.

"Left on read" is an internet-era phrase that means someone read your text message but did not respond. In the same way, Kelly said, authors of color are often ignored or not given priority placement.

"When you go into more traditional, mainstream

bookstores, we're relegated to a very small section, or no section," she said. "So, we're just trying to flip the script on that."

At Left on Read, authors of color take center stage. Picture books feature Black children prominently on their covers, including Tabitha Brown's "Hello There, Sunshine" and Debbie Allen's "Dancing in the Wings."

A social justice section features works by Bell Hooks, Emily Bernard and Ta-Nehisi Coates. And the fiction shelves are stocked with Colson Whitehead, Octavia Butler, Percival Everett and

Kiley Reid.

"I take a lot of customer recommendations," Kelly said. "I follow a lot of the different publishing houses, and also a lot of Black authors, so I can know when they have new releases coming out. And ... also stuff that just speaks to me."

Books by Black authors are displayed prominently at Left on Read, a new bookstore in downtown Wichita. (Photo: Suzanne Perez)

Kelly said she grew up loving books.

"I've always been an avid reader. My brothers always called me a nerd growing up, and I hated it then, but now I

embrace it," she said.

"Those were in good times, but also when things started getting rocky in our home life," she said. "Books were just an escape for me — the library, the bookstore. I just loved getting lost in a book."

All that reading led to success in school. Kelly grew up in Virginia, where she earned her undergraduate degree in sociology, a master's in educational policy, planning and leadership, and a doctorate in language, literacy and culture.

And then she moved with her husband to Wichita.

"Everything just fell into place when we came here, and it almost felt like I could breathe a sigh of relief," she said.

When a local book club recently decided to read Charmaine Wilkerson's "Black Cake," members made a point of ordering copies from Left on Read.

Kelly plans to start a book club at the store sometime this year. Until that happens, she likes when customers visit and stay awhile.

"There was a young couple



Latasha Eley Kelly owns Left on Read, a bookstore that specializes in books by and about people of color.

(PHOTO: SUZANNE PEREZ)

that came in, and I didn't know what they were doing. And then, lo and behold, they were on a date," she said.

The couple brought coloring books and supplies with them, and parked inside the store to relax and enjoy their time together.

"And that just warmed me so much because that's what I want," Kelly said.

Left on Read, a bookstore specializing in books by and about people of color, opened late last year on the ground floor of The Renfro building in downtown Wichita.

Kelly founded a media organization called the Millennial Black Professor,

and she hosts a podcast called "Black in One Piece," where she interviews local Black leaders and entrepreneurs.

She says she's gotten a warm welcome in Wichita so far.

White customers have come into the store wanting help to diversify their reading or learn more about race and social justice issues.

"They are seeking, they are wanting to learn," Kelly said. "Some are saying, 'I've read the basics already, but I want something deeper.' Or, 'I'm just starting out. I'm a little overwhelmed. Where do I start?'"

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# What Can You Do to Prepare for Impact From Tariffs

By Associated Press

President Donald Trump has pulled back for 90 days implementation of tariffs, but there's still a lot to know and a need to prepare. What can households do in the face of so much uncertainty? Here's what you need to know:

## Expect Impact Inequities

Understand, tariffs will not impact all Americans equally. Low-income families in particular will feel the costs since they spend a larger share of their income on essential goods — whether it's food or other basic products.

There will also be inequities in job losses. Even though in the long term President Trump believes tariffs will bring jobs

back to America, in the short run, as corporations suffer, layoffs will more likely come in low-paying jobs first.

## Can I Do Anything to Prepare?

Stocking up on what you know you need is a start — but with limits.

“If there are things that you're buying on a consistent basis — week to week, month to month — I think it's not a bad idea to try to stock up in advance,” Stillwagon said. But it's important to avoid panic buying like that seen at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, he and others added. That could cause shortages to emerge sooner and prices to go up faster.

You also don't want to buy a

bunch of items that will eventually go to waste.

It may also be time to look for substitutes. From electronics to clothing, consider:

- more affordable secondhand or refurbished options.
  - If you haven't already done so, start comparing prices of name-brands versus “private,” or generic, labels in major retailers.
  - Others may turn to at-home solutions, he said, such as growing their own vegetables.
- Overall, experts say you'll need to evaluate your budget and consumption.

## Is there anything to watch out for in the coming months?

Consumers should be on the lookout for even greater

use of so-called “shrinkflation” on the grocery aisle. Shrinkflation is a tactic consumer goods manufacturers use to hide cost increases by changing the design of packaging.

“Consumers can prepare for the inflation that the tariffs are likely to exacerbate by getting into the habit of checking the unit price of items on the grocery shelf,” said John Breyault, vice president of public policy, telecom and fraud at the National Consumers League. “While not all states require it, where it is required, consumers can more easily compare the per unit price of one item — cereal, for example — to another item.”



## GET READY FOR TARIFFS

*Here's What Could Cost You a lot more Due to Trump's Tariffs.*



Not just major purchase items, Americans will get hit hard by tariffs on items they consume regularly like groceries and clothing.

If you thought you wouldn't be impacted by tariffs because you didn't have plans to buy an automobile anytime soon, then think again.

There's hardly any American with a dollar to spend who wouldn't be impacted by President Donald Trump's recently launched trade war with every country via a barrage of tariffs that are set to go into effect almost immediately.

Assuming Trump proceeds with the plans he laid out — after his 90-day stay — only certain goods from Mexico and Canada have a shot at avoiding any tariffs. Otherwise, all countries' goods are subject to a minimum 10% tariff, with rates going much higher for 60 countries the administration deems the “worst

offenders” in terms of trade barriers.

At the very top of that list is China. No delay here, The U.S. has imposed a 145% tariff on nearly everything coming from China.

If you think your little dresses and items purchased from Temu, Shein or AliExpress can get around the tariffs, the answer is NO!! Starting May 2, the 145% tariff rate will also apply to packages worth less than \$800 coming to the U.S. from China and Hong Kong.

In total, the nonpartisan Tax Foundation estimated before the recent raise of tariffs to China to 145%, that the average American household would pay \$2,100 more per year for goods because of the tariffs.

## The Highest Tariffs

The United States imported \$439 billion worth of goods from China last year, the second top source of imports behind Mexico.

Among the other “worst offenders” that the U.S. relies heavily on for imported goods are Vietnam, which Trump had proposed an across-the-board tariff; and Taiwan which would be subjected to a 32% tariff rate.

Since tariffs are a tax on imported goods, it's American businesses that will have to foot the bill initially when goods from these countries reach the U.S. But it's not always the case that businesses fully pass along the additional costs they're responsible for. In some cases, they may have contracts set in advance with wholesale customers requiring

them to sell to them at a given price. Or they may opt to keep prices lower relative to the additional cost they face in order to keep customers.

Even if more production shifts to the U.S., where Trump has repeatedly said tariffs are “zero,” it can cost more to produce the same goods that were purchased from abroad, which could lead to price hikes.

Having said that, here's what has the potential to get more expensive from the new round of tariffs.

## Clothing

The clothes you buy stand to get a lot more expensive after President Trump announced new tariffs on imports from around the world, including from China,

Vietnam and Bangladesh.

Why it matters: Only 3% of clothing Americans wear is made domestically, with more than half of these items coming from China, Vietnam and Bangladesh.

**Footwear**

China and Vietnam shipped a combined \$18.5 billion worth of shoes to the U.S. last year. That's nearly 70% of all shoes the U.S. imported.

**Toys**

China and Vietnam were the top two sources of foreign toys sent to the U.S. last year, shipping a total of \$15 billion worth.

The Toy Association estimates that 77% of all toys sold in the U.S. are manufactured in China alone. "It's just not an industry that is built to be able to manage through a tariff of that magnitude," Greg Ahearn, president and CEO of the trade group, told CNN, referring to the soon-to-be 54% tariff on Chinese goods.

American consumers, he said, likely won't start seeing higher prices until late summer, when new products are typically rolled out ahead of the back-to-school period and shipped along with "staple" toys.

**Laptops & Tablets**

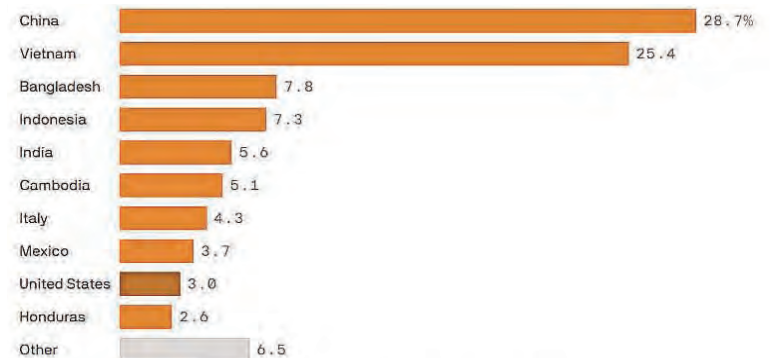
China, Vietnam and Taiwan were

the top three foreign suppliers of laptops and tablets to the U.S. last year, shipping a total of \$47.2 billion worth, according to federal trade data.

Almost all consumer electronics, including smartphones and computer monitors, are likely to see price increases.

Additionally, since the U.S. relies heavily on Taiwan for semiconductors, U.S. consumers are likely to see a price hike on laptops, cars, household appliances, medical devices, Wi-Fi routers and LED lightbulbs. And these products often don't just require one or two chips — new cars contain thousands of them.

**Origins of clothing & shoes sold in the U.S., 2024**



Data: U.S. International Trade Commission, American Apparel & Footwear Association. Chart: Axios Visuals

**Top Grocery Items That Would Have Higher Prices Due to Tariffs**

**By The Voice News Service**

If a recent trip to the grocery store puts you in shock, then brace yourself with something sturdy. The prices coming as a result of President Trump inciting a trade war might knock you out.

Prices for items such as seafood, coffee, wine, nuts and cheese are all expected to rise. And if you're tempted to grab a candy bar while you're in the checkout line, you'll probably have to pay more for that as well.

Food industry website supermarketguru.com, estimates almost half of the products in

a supermarket — about 40,000 products — will be affected by tariffs, whether it's the entire product or just an ingredient.

It's impossible yet to know how much the tariffs will affect prices. However, the 10% tariff as a minimum on any country and higher "reciprocal tariffs" on other nations, could provide some clues.

Here are 10 most common grocery items you can expect to see a price increase in. (The tariff rates by country proposed by Trump early this month are in parentheses).

**Seafood**

Some top sources: Chile (10%), India (26%), Indonesia

(32%) and Vietnam (46%) are the largest suppliers, according to the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture.

This category is likely to take a big hit because the U.S. imports the majority of its seafood — up to 85% according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration — and several countries that supply fish and shellfish to the U.S. have been among the hardest hit by the tariffs.

**Coffee**

Top sources: Brazil (10%) and Colombia (10%), according to USDA.

Coffee prices are already higher than ever and tariff prices will continue that

upward trend.

The U.S. is the world's largest importer of coffee, with about 80% of U.S. roasted imports coming from Latin America — predominately Brazil and Colombia.

**Fruit**

Some top sources: Guatemala (10%), Costa Rica (10%) and Peru (10%)

Guatemala and Costa Rica are leading exporters of bananas to the U.S. Guatemala also ships melons, plantains and papayas, according to USDA, while Costa Rica exports pineapples, avocados and mangoes.

Because these products don't have a long shelf life, Americans should begin to see the impact on prices pretty soon.

**Alcohol**

Top sources for wine: the European Union — France, Italy and Spain (20%). New Zealand (10%) and Australia (10%), according to USDA.

Top sources for beer: Mexico (25%), the Netherlands and Ireland (both with the EU's 20% tariff) and Canada (25%)

In addition, beer — and any other items sold in cans — will

be further impacted by tariffs on China and other aluminum producers.

**Rice**

Top sources: Thailand (36%) and India (26%), according to USDA.

Although most rice sold in the U.S. is domestically produced, nearly a third is imported, mainly jasmine rice from Thailand and basmati rice from India.

**Cheese**

Top sources: Italy, France, Spain and the Netherlands (all subject to 20% EU tariff).

Kraft and most store brand cheeses are made in America from milk sourced from American dairies. However, if you have a taste for fine imported cheese, such as Parmigiano-Reggiano, brie and Gouda, look for these prices to rise.

**Nuts**

Top sources: Vietnam (46%), Côte d'Ivoire (21%), Brazil (10%), Thailand (36%), according to the World Bank.

Cashews, pecans and macadamia nuts are likely to see large price increases.

**Chocolate**

Top source: Côte d'Ivoire (21%) and Ecuador (10%), according to USDA.

The Hershey Company, one of the largest U.S. importers of cocoa beans, says it sources from Brazil, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Ghana, Indonesia, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea and Peru.

The tariffs come on top of serious increases in cocoa beans for the past two or three years due to weather and the political climate in Africa.

**Olive Oil**

Top sources: European Union (20%), particularly Spain, Italy and Greece.

Olive oil prices have been rising quickly and can be expected to rise even higher.

**Beef**

Some top sources: New Zealand (10%) and Australia (10%), according to USDA.

Although 90% of beef consumed in the U.S. is domestically produced, tariffs will likely add to existing price pressures. The cost of ground beef for consumers, for example, is already at historic highs and according to the USDA, the U.S. cattle herd is the



Due to their short shelf life, fruit and other fresh produce will be among the first items where Americans will be impacted by higher prices due to the tariff wars.



Winners of this year's G.I.F.T. KC Pitch Black competition pose with G.I.F.T. administrators: (L-R) Brandon Calloway, G.I.F.T. CEO; Alan Kneeland, The Combine; Geodfrey Riddle, Civic Saint; William Fondren, Hive + Harvest; and Karris Harrington, G.I.F.T. COO. (COURTESY PHOTO)

## G.I.F.T. Awards \$60K at 2025 Pitch Competition

By The Voice News Service

The owners of 10 innovative Black-owned businesses took the stage at the 2025 annual Pitch Black Competition sponsored by KC G.I.F.T. and three of them walked away with a combined \$60,000 in grant funding.

The competition is the culmination of the day-long Pitch Black Business Summit, which also includes breakout workshops, networking and lunch. More than 100 people attended.

The Pitch Black competitors shared their visions for impact, growth and community transformation which including bold ideas and

The winners of the pitch competition were:

- Civic Saint – \$30,000
- The Combine – \$20,000
- Hive + Harvest – \$10,000
- About the Winners:

### Civic Saint – \$30,000 Grant Winner

Geodfrey Riddle is the founder of Civic Saint, a local social venture that aims to create sustainable, ultra-affordable homes directly for consumers. Civic Saint uses a combination of compressed earthen blocks (CDBs) and prefabricated home designs. This method not only promotes environmental sustainability but also aims to revitalize historically marginalized

neighborhoods by increasing Black homeownership.

### The Combine KC – \$20,000 Grant Winner

Located at 2999 Troost Ave in KCMO, The Combine is a neighborhood pizzeria and bar that offers a welcoming atmosphere for all. Known for its diverse menu featuring deli sandwiches, pizzas, and a wide selection of beverages, The Combine also serves as an event space with both indoor and rooftop areas. The \$20,000 grant will assist The Combine in enhancing its facilities and expanding its role as a community hub, fostering connections and cultural experiences within the neighborhood.

### Hive + Harvest – \$10,000 Grant Winner

Hive + Harvest, led by William Fondren, is a Kansas City-based enterprise specializing in the production of local honey, brittles, and candied pecans. Committed to sustainable practices, the company focuses on harnessing beehives to create high-quality products while promoting environmental stewardship. The \$10,000 grant will enable Hive + Harvest to increase production capacity, broaden its market reach, and continue contributing to the local community through mentorship and advocacy initiatives.

## ProX Hiring Fair Opens Doors for KC High School Students

The annual event helps teens land summer jobs, build professional networks & explore career paths.

By Thomas White  
Kansas City Reporter

Nearly 1,000 Kansas City high school students flooded the Kansas City Convention Center on April 5, eager to secure paid summer internships with 99 local employers. For many, the ProX Hiring Fair represented their first step into professional life.

Solissa Franco-McKay, ProX's executive director, watched as students from 118 invited schools across Kansas and Missouri navigated the bustling venue.

"This is our fourth summer of programming, so we're still in infancy," Franco-McKay said. "We started off as an itty bitty initiative that just wanted to offer some summer internships, and now we're a full-blown 501(c)(3) nonprofit."

The Kauffman Foundation affiliate gained nonprofit status only recently but has already made a substantial impact. Franco-McKay noted the program's impressive reach.

"To date, we've been able to place 1,500 interns, and we've been able to work with over 150 different employers since our inception," she said. "We'll just add on to that this year, and we'll be well over to the 2,000 mark by the end of this summer."

The energy electrified Tony Temple — former area football star and founder of the Temple Made Foundation, which focuses on youth literacy and wellness. Temple says this was his first ProX event, and he planned to hire four summer interns.

Franco-McKay emphasized that compensation makes these opportunities accessible to all students. Each intern works 25 hours weekly over five weeks, earning a \$1,250 stipend upon completion.



Lee's Summit North freshman Shyanne Watson celebrates after securing a summer internship with KC Heartland Chamber at the ProX Hiring Fair.

"Being able to pay students for their labor is really important," says Franco-McKay. "The stipend is just an extra added incentive and it's something that the program picks up and the employer is not responsible."

Beyond work experience, ProX builds crucial professional networks. Franco-McKay sees this as perhaps the program's most valuable aspect.

"Having a network is really important, we know that as adults, but I think they can start learning that here," says Franco-McKay.

Franco-McKay says ProX specifically brings in local employers that understand their developmental role.

"There's a certain amount of investment that you have to make with your interns throughout those five weeks in order for this to be a worthwhile experience for you and for them," says Franco-McKay.

"We have some employer mentors who stay connected with the kids past the five-week internship," says Franco-McKay. "That's you building your network. That's you having an extra adult in your corner who believes in you and



Former football star Tony Temple, founder of the Temple Made Foundation, shares his excitement at the ProX Hiring Fair, where he planned to hire four summer interns.

who has been able to see your skills front and center."

The fair featured 22 different industries spanning healthcare, government, nonprofits, and businesses of all sizes. Franco-McKay

See **FAIR** Page 15 →

# Wyandotte Primaries Are Next Big Metro Elections

Mayor and District 1 races already have enough candidates filed to require a primary election on Aug. 5.



Tom Burroughs



Darnell Busch



Korri Hall



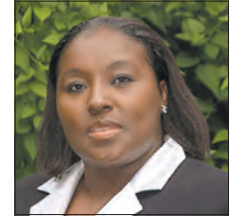
Victor Harris



Jermaine Howard



Christal Watson



Janice Witt

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

With the April elections on the Missouri-side of the Metro behind us, the election cycle switches to Kansas with municipal elections set for November. But, before we get to the general elections, the actions will really escalate leading up to the Aug. 5 primaries.

In Wyandotte County, one at-large seat and four district seats on the Board of Commissioners are up for election. In WYCO's unique unified government,

there is a combined position of CEO & mayor - and that seat is up for election.

That position, currently held by Tyrone Garner, who has chosen not to seek reelection, serves as mayor of Kansas City, KS, and the CEO of Wyandotte County.

The deadline to file to run for office is June 2. Three candidates for a position triggers a primary. So far, three candidates have filed for CEO/mayor and four candidates have filed for the District 1 seat that covers heavily African-American, Northeast Kansas City.

### District 1 Candidates

So far, incumbent **Gayle Townsend**, who was first elected to the position in 2013, has not filed for reelection. Here are the candidates who have already entered the race:

**Darnell Busch** has a long history of work in the information technology arena. He currently serves as IT manager at Jade Alarm Company. He's a graduate of Lincoln Academy and Alcorn State University.

**Korri Hall** is a WYCO native who graduated from Schlagle and Kansas State

University. After working as an educator for a number of years, for the past 13 years she's served as director of KU Gear UP program in KCK.

**Victor A. Harris**, is owner of Harris Lawn Care and Snow Removal and is active in the Wyandotte community and previously had an unsuccessful run for this seat in 2017.

Jermaine Howard, a fresh young candidate for the position and KC native, has worked in the community for years as a "teacher, coach, housing navigator and advocate."

### CEO / Mayor Candidates

When he made his retirement announcement via The Voice in November, Mayor Tyrone Garner indicated he was making the announcement early to allow time for prospective candidates to launch effective campaigns. So far, three candidates have responded and are off and running.

**Tom Burroughs** is the current District 2 At-Large representative on the Wyandotte Board of Commissioners. He is currently serving a second term in this position. He also represented WYCO in the

Kansas Legislature, serving from 1996 to 2022.

**Christal Watson** has held leadership positions in a number of nonprofit and for-profit organizations in the KC Metro, and currently serves as executive director of Kansas City Kansas School Foundation For Excellence, Inc. She gained valuable experience about the city's operation when she served four years as deputy chief of staff for neighborhood/small business development under former KCK Mayor David Alvey.

See ELECTIONS Page 15 →



Photo Courtesy of Paula Green

**First African American pilot hired by a major passenger airline.  
Joins Continental Airlines in 1966.**



AMERICAN DREAMS OF FLIGHT

on exhibit at the  
**Bruce R. Watkins Cultural Heritage Center**  
3700 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd KCMO

**February 4, 2025 – May 3, 2025**  
**Tuesday – Saturday, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.**

ADMISSION – FREE

Learn about the history of African Americans in flight through this stirring collection of historical and contemporary photographs, first-hand interviews and inspiring stories of triumph and tragedy.

 Smithsonian **MetLife Foundation**

*Black Wings: American Dreams of Flight* is organized by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service in collaboration with the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum.

The exhibition was made possible by the generous support of  
**MetLife Foundation.**

Call 816.513.0700 for more information  
**BRUCEWATKINS.COM**



**WICHITA**

**Sun., April 13, 3 - 10 pm: Henry Walker's 90th Birthday Party,** Mort's Martini Bar, 923 E. 1st St. Let's celebrate a Wichita music legend. Many of Wichita's greats will come together on Mort's patio to make sure Henry feels the love. There will be food, music and lots of great memories. **FREE**

**Sun., April 13, 12 - 4 pm: Open Streets ICT -** WSU & Shocker Neighborhood, 17th St - Oliver to Volutsia. An exciting event that transforms nearly two miles of 17th Street into a vibrant hub of activity, connection, and wellness. With the streets closed to traffic, you'll have the perfect space to walk, bike, run, skate, or dance your way through the day, all while embracing the joy of movement and promoting a healthy lifestyle. **FREE**

**Wed., April 16, 12 - 2 pm: Food Secure Communities Initiative,** Wichita Learning Library, 711 W. 2nd St. A community listening session to dive deeper into economic inequality in a guided facilitation. You will have an opportunity to meet others interested in addressing economic inequality, and to share your experiences and ideas on how to address this large and complex issue. If you are interested in attending, please register using this link: <https://bit.ly/42gfeGq>. Space is limited. **FREE**

**Thu., April 17, 12 - 1:30 pm Informational Partnership Luncheon Meeting,** Urban League, 2418 E. 9th St. N. During this engaging luncheon, you will have the unique opportunity to connect with the Urban League team and learn about valuable resources. To register: please email me at [frankie.kirkendoll@urbanleagueks.org](mailto:frankie.kirkendoll@urbanleagueks.org) or call me at (316) 512-1071.

**Fri., April 18, NOON, Reflections at the Cross.** Greater St Mary's Missionary Baptist Church, 1648 E 17th. Good Friday celebration with Pastor Ronda Kingwood, Pastor Leon Jiggetts, CeeJay Bruce, Associate Pastor Deontae' Hayden, Next Level Ministry, Joseph Shepard & Pastor Yolanda White-Oliver. With Bishop Mark L. Gilkey, GWML. **FREE**

**Fri., April 18, 5 - 8 pm: The Declaration: Trade Show & Pitch Competition.** Brick & Mortar, 230 S Topeka. TEN business owners will compete for YOUR Declarative Dollars by pitching their company, during the Trade Show. Of those ten, only FIVE entrepreneurs will advance to the Pitch Competition later that night, where they'll compete for cash prizes, in front of a live audience. COST: \$15+ <https://bit.ly/42bPzOT>

**Sat. April 19, 7 pm: All White After Dark,** Holiday Inn East, 548 S. Rock Road. Dress to Impress in your finest all-white attire and get ready to mix, mingle, and move to the rhythm of the night. Step into a night of smooth vibes, classic hits, and nonstop dancing as we take you on a musical journey through the best of the '70s, '80s, '90s and 2000s. Must be 35 or older. Cash bar, appetizers, prize drawings every hour. For tickets call 316-617-3251. COST \$35+; VIP Table of 10 \$375.

**Sat. April 19, 7 - 9 pm: Black Trivia Night,** Connect Center, WSU. Come out for an evening

of family fun, meet & greet, prizes and even learn some culture specific history. Hosted by The Community Voice & the Wichita Branch NAACP. COST: \$10 Per person or 2 for \$15 purchase tickets @ <https://bit.ly/4cCtJcf>

**Sat. April 19, 10 am - 2 pm: One Penny at a Time.** WSU Connect, 1845 Fairmount. This workshop will focus on educating the youth in the community on the importance of money and how to save and manage it. Bradley Dyer Jr. with Credit Union of America will be the guest speaker. This event invites all youth and youth groups to attend. Refreshments will be provided. **FREE**

**Sat. April 19, 9 am - 4 pm: Easter Eggstravaganza,** Sedgwick County Zoo, 5555 W Zoo Blvd. The Easter Bunny has hidden GIANT eggs around the Zoo. As you make your way around the Zoo, count how many eggs you see and receive a prize on your way out. Included in general admission, you can help us search for eggs, receive Easter goodies, and even take FREE photos with the Easter Bunny. \$18+

**Sun. April 20 10 am: Easter Egg Hunt 2025.** Wichita First Church of the Nazarene, 1400 E Kellogg. Bring the whole family and invite your friends! Kids from birth through 5th grade can join in the fun, and there's something for everyone—games, giveaways, photo ops, tons of eggs (sorry, they're not real ones), candy, and more. Open to everyone **FREE**

**Thu. April 24, 7 pm: Bring Back The Love Tour with Levelle.** Cotillion, 11120 W Kellogg. Concessions and full bars open! Doors open at 5 pm. All Seats reserved. COST: \$45+

**Sun. April 27, 11 am - 4 pm: Shop & Grub.** Exploration Place, 300 N McLean. Wichita's premier outdoor shopping and food market. This one-of-a-kind event brings together over 40 incredible vendors. Explore an eclectic mix of offerings, including vintage clothing, stylish women's apparel, handcrafted jewelry, unique accessories, home goods, stunning art, and a delicious variety of food. **FREE**

**Tue. April 29, 11 am - 1 pm. Power Brunch,** The Canopy at Fountain Grove, 2333 E 21st. An electrifying experience at the Power Brunch, featuring Dr. Kaye Monk-Morgan, KLC President. This is where bold ideas collide, ambitions soar, and connections turn into unstoppable collaborations. Unlock game-changing insights, Network with power players, Ignite your next big idea and Brunch. Connect. Conquer. COST \$25. [gocreate.com](https://gocreate.com)

**TOPEKA**

**Sat. April 19, 10 am - 3 pm: 10th Annual EasterFest 2025.** Great Overland Station, 200 NW Railroad St. Dozens of churches, businesses and non-profit organizations set up vendor booths and kids' activities in the park as part of the family fun fair. There will also be Food Trucks, Inflatables, a Petting Zoo and Live Music. A Health Fair will also be featured! And once again there will also be a 5K Run/Walk to fight Diabetes starting around

8:30am at Garfield Park! **FREE**

**Sat. April 19, 11 am - 1 pm: Easter Eggstravaganza,** Faith Lutheran Church, 1716 SW Gage Blvd. For kiddos up to 5th grade! Inflatables, Easter crafts, Easter games, a telling of the Easter story, an Easter egg hunt, and lunch! **FREE**

**KANSAS CITY**

**Fri., April 18, 8 pm: We Them Ones Comedy Tour.** T-Mobile Center, 1323 Grand Blvd. With Mike Epps, Kountry Wayne, Karlous Miller, Lil Duval, Corey Holcomb, Tony Roberts, Mojo Brooks. COST: \$69+ <https://bit.ly/3XKLAaO>

**Sat. April 19, 2 - 6 pm: What's the Tea - Black Girl Tea Party,** Magnolia at Brookside, 624 E 63rd St. This chic garden party is all about celebrating sisterhood, building connections, and creating meaningful memories. It's high tea, ladies! Pull out your favorite dresses, hats, and gloves for this stylish garden gathering. With: Cassandra Bruington, M.Ed. - Shelia Johnson, MBA & Kayla Rogers, LMFT COST: \$65 <https://bit.ly/4lh72hM>

**Sat. April 19, 12 pm: Easter Egg Hunt.** Vine Street Brewing, 2010 Vine St. This year, the fun is tripled with more eggs (1500 to be exact) and prizes for everyone, including parents. Stick around for the Parents' Sack Race after hunt—because fun is for all ages! The Easter Bunny will be there, and KC Que will be serving up lunch all day. Bring your family for a joyful day of celebration **FREE**

**Sat. April 19, 2 - 5 pm: Brown Sugar Lab: network Collaborate, Create.** Brown Sugar Collective, 430 Nichols Rd. A space where women come to work on their goals while co-working with other like-minded women. Several labs provided: - Build Connections: Collaborate & Grow: Empower & Inspire: You are encouraged to: Seek Feedback: Contribute: Share resources or advice & - Engage. Snacks and drinks will be provided COST \$20 <https://bit.ly/3YgfhR4>

**Sat, April 19, 2 pm: Easter In Art.** Nelson-Atkins Museum, 4525 Oak St. This beautifully crafted film explores the Easter story as depicted in art, from the time of the early Christians to the present day. Shot on location in Jerusalem, the U.S., and throughout Europe, the film uses the prism of religious tradition to explore shared cultural history. COST: \$13 <https://cart.nelson-atkins.org/44750/47567>

**Sat. April 19, 1 pm: A. Phillip Randolph and the Organizing of the First Black Union:** The Kansas City History, Black Archives of Mid-America, 1722 E 17th. Speakers: Well-known community activist and labor leader, Ms. Patricia A. Jones Macklin will be the featured speaker. She is the Past President of the Greater Kansas City Chapter of the A. Philip Randolph Institute. Jones Macklin is a graduate of the University of Kansas and began her career as a Special Education teacher in the Kansas City, Missouri School District. **FREE**

**Fri, April 25, 6:30 pm: Gala - Black Achievers Society of Greater Kansas City 50th Celebration,**

Museum at Prairiefire, 5801 W. 135th St. Kick off the evening with a warm welcome and a brief showcase of the Black Achievers Society's tremendous impact over the past five decades in Kansas City. Following the welcome, the silent auction will open, featuring a diverse selection of items generously donated by local businesses, supporters, and partners. Guests will then enjoy a specially curated dinner, providing an opportunity to connect with fellow attendees while supporting our primary fundraising initiative. COST \$75+ <https://bit.ly/4aKZJdb>

**Fri., April 25, 7:30 pm & Sat., April 26, 1 pm: Ailey II Dance Concert,** Folly Theater, 300 W. 12th. Come see Ailey II, the renowned second company of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater from NYC, as they take the stage under the direction of Francesca Harper. An unforgettable performance featuring Kansas City premieres, along with Alvin Ailey's powerful "Streams" and "Revelations," a timeless masterpiece that celebrates hope and resilience. COST \$41+ Tickets on sale at [follytheater.org/event-category/ailey-ii](https://follytheater.org/event-category/ailey-ii).

**Sat., April 26, Noon - 4 pm: Gumbo Fest 2025,** The ProspectKC, 11 E. 40th St. Live gumbo tasting contest, prizes & giveaways, tons of local vendors, live music, games & family fun ... and more. COST \$15

**Sat. April 26, 11 am - 3 pm: KC Parks Swing Fling,** Swope Park Bandstand, 4177 Pavillion Rd. Attendees will enjoy performances by Stone Lion Puppet Theatre, our Green Carpet Fashion Show, and hands-on learning activities for all ages. If you are interested in being an exhibitor, please complete this form: <https://forms.office.com/r/ZHpTwwT3xQin> The Green Carpet Fashion Show will feature community makers of all skill levels and ages who create article(s) of clothing using eco-friendly or sustainable practices. **FREE**

**Sat. April, 26, 10 am - 2 pm: Safeguarding Churches' History Workshop.** Black Archives of Mid-America, 1722 E 17th. Keynote speakers: Dr. Doretha Williams, Center Director, The Center for Digitization and curation of African American History; Christien Peoples, Outreach minister, and education coordinator, Springfield-Greene County Park Board; Dr. Carmalotta Williams, CEO, Black Archives of Mid-America. RSVPs are requested and should be sent to [kblackhistory2@gmail.com](mailto:kblackhistory2@gmail.com). **FREE**

**Sat., April 26, 9 am - 2 pm: Legacy of Excellence - Honoring Trailblazing Black Women,** 1700 Linwood Blvd. Attendees can choose two out of three available workshops. Each session will last 40 minutes, offering valuable insights and personal growth opportunities. Workshop facilitators include The Nia Project, a registered BSN (Bachelor of Science in Nursing), and a successful business owner, awards ceremony and keynote address where we honor outstanding individuals who embody excellence and resilience. A live performance will celebrate the richness of Black culture, making this a truly unforgettable moment of recognition, inspiration, and celebration. **FREE**

# In the Midst of a Viral Controversy, Marvin Sapp Announced as Wichita Gospelfest Headliner

Online followers of The Voice responded favorably to the announcement of Sapp as the headliner for GospelFest despite a growing number of negative viral videos and memes that had just begun to circulate.

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

Wichita Riverfest officials had a great announcement – or at least they thought they did – when they announced Gospel music legend Marvin Sapp as the headliner for this year’s GospelFest, to be held the evening of Mon., June 2, from 5 to 10 p.m.

After working for months to finalize Sapp’s contract, the announcement of Sapp as a headliner would come at a difficult time in the Gospel artist’s career.

## The Viral Slam

Earlier this year, a summer 2024 video clip began making the

rounds on various platforms. It showed Sapp requesting a \$20 offering from what seems to be attendees at a church service. He tells the ushers to “close the doors” and sets a fundraising goal of \$40,000.

By the time social media stand-outs got through with edits and comedic routines and their remixes began making the rounds on X and TikTok, any context of the original video had evaporated – leaving only the optics of a spiritual shakedown.

“The online firestorm over a video of Bishop Marvin Sapp during a fundraising appeal has become a case study in

how social media’s speed leaves no room for nuance – and spreads dangerous misinformation. It has also sparked reflections about transparency in church giving and the realities of church hurt,” wrote the Rev. Dorothy S. Boulware, in an article



for the website Word in Black.

## Misrepresentation & Assumptions

What wasn’t shared as the video went viral is that the clip was from a Pentecostal Assemblies of the World International Summer Convention with 4,000 attendees – not Sapp’s church – and PAW leaders had asked Sapp to raise money to defray the convention costs.

The presiding prelate of the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, Inc., noted that closing doors “is an internal security protocol that was, unfortunately, taken out of context. No doors were locked and no one was held



People have called my church and cussed me out.”

**MARVIN SAPP**

in the room against their will.

Yet, despite these explanations, the memes, jokes, criticisms, and conspiracy theories continued to

See **SAPP** Page 15 →



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# April May Webb and Sounds of A&R Will Help Close Out 53rd Wichita Jazz Festival

“Sassy” April May Webb returns “near home” as award winning jazz vocalist for Wichita Jazz Festival April 22-26.

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

There are a lot of ways to describe jazz vocalist April May Webb’s style.

Jazz pianist Mulgrew Miller described her as “at once, lyrical and soulful.”

Reviewer Rob Lester noted that she “sings, whoops, and impressively scats.”

Overall, Webb is an innovative voice in contemporary jazz. But we’re going to refer to her style as Sassy.

Why Sassy?

Because Webb is the 2024 winner of the Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition, also known as the Sassy Award after Vaughan’s nickname.

The Sassy competition, which last year began with more than 200 entrants from

21 different countries, is one of the top annual vocal contests in jazz, and winning has become a building block for many artists’ careers.

Webb, who is 33 and has three albums with her band and two solo projects, told a reporter for UK Jazz News, “I’ve been doing this for a very long time. ... You just need that attention grabber for people that literally just didn’t know who you are.”

It’s that kind of exposure that helped land her a spot on the closing night of the 53rd Annual Wichita Jazz Festival. But, what also caught the eye of festival planners, is Webb’s Kansas roots.

She was born and raised just up the road in North Newton, Kansas, and her parents – Stanley and Felecia Webb – still live there.

So, an appearance at the Wichita Jazz festival is a trip home for April May and her brothers Nathan and Jacob Webb, who are members of her group Sounds of A&R. They’ll join her onstage at the festival, along with pianist Yayo Ikawa.

Rounding out the group is trumpeter (and



Married couple April May Webb and Randall Haywood are the “A” and “R” in the group Sounds of A & R, who will bring their blend of jazz with country, R&B, and gospel influences to closing night of the Wichita Jazz Festival.

April May’s husband) Randall Haywood, voted Male Rising Star at Hot House Jazz Magazine and Jazzmobile NYC.

Brother Jacob, an award-winning producer, pianist and multi-instrumentalist who founded Next Paradigm Records, will be on bass. Nathan, who champions music education, will be on drums and percussion.

Together, the Sounds of April & Randall will S.O.A.R., blending jazz with country, R&B, and gospel influences. Their music has earned national acclaim with the group’s third album, “Questions Left Unanswered,” released in 2021, peaking at No. 12 on the National Jazz Week Charts. The album landed on Jazz Week’s Top 50 Jazz Albums for the year.

## Kansas Roots

The Webbs grew up in a musical home and like many professional musicians and singers, sowed their musical roots in the church. In this case, April and her two brothers, who are older, got their musical start at Second Baptist Church in Newton, but they also toured the Midwest with their group Webb 3, singing both gospel and jazz.

However, April May credits her brothers for driving her interest in jazz.

## Festival Finale

Sounds of A&R will open the final night of the 2025 jazz festival on Sat., April 26, at the

## Wichita Jazz Festival Lineup

### Jazz in the Round

Tuesday, April 22, 7 - 9:30 p.m.  
Northwest High School  
Free

Experience “jazz in the round” as bands from eight Wichita high schools surround you with swinging sounds. Don’t miss this chance to see and support local up-and-coming jazz musicians.

### Donna Tucker & the Delano Jazz Orchestra

Wednesday, April 23, 7 - 9 p.m.  
Wichita Art Museum  
\$40 General Admission – Half-price for students at the door with student ID  
An internationally known jazz vocalist and musician, Donna Tucker’s musical roots span blues, swing and Latin jazz. Paired with the big sound of the Delano Jazz Orchestra, this evening promises big entertainment.

### Drum legend Peter Erskine with Alan Pasqua on piano and Scott Colley on bass

Thursday, April 24, 7 - 9:30 p.m.  
Wichita Art Museum  
\$60 General Admission – Half-price for students at the door with student ID  
Combine two Grammy awards and numerous Grammy nominations, and you’ll get an inkling of this concert’s star power. Drummer Peter Erskine has played with the likes of Weather Report, Stan Kenton, Joni Mitchell, Diana Krall, Steely Dan and the BBC Symphony, among others. He was voted “Best Jazz Drummer of the Year” 10 times by readers of Modern Drummer Magazine. Erskine brings together for us two equally accomplished musicians, jazz and rock pianist Alan Pasqua, and bassist / composer Scott Colley.

### WSU Jazz Invitational Headline Concert featuring guest artists Pat Bianchi and Dan Wilson

Friday, April 25, 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.  
WSU Duerksen Fine Arts Center  
\$40 Admission - Half price for students at the door with student ID  
The WSU Jazz Invitational will culminate in a headline concert featuring renowned jazz artists Pat Bianchi on organ and Dan Wilson on guitar, performing with WSU’s Jazz Arts 1 Ensemble and the Mid-Kansas Jazz Ensemble, the region’s only auditioned high school honor jazz band.

### 53rd Annual Wichita Jazz Festival Grand Finale

Saturday, April 26, 7 - 10 p.m., doors open at 6 p.m.  
Orpheum Theater  
Tickets \$45, \$60 & \$75  
Top off the Wichita Jazz Festival with an evening of outstanding artistry featuring amazing performances from vocalist April May Webb with Randall Haywood, Jacob Webb, Nathan Webb and Yayo Ikawa, followed by Matt Wilson’s Good Trouble.



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See JAZZ FESTIVAL Page 15 →

**JAZZ FESTIVAL,**  
from Page 14 ↓

Orpheum Theater, from 7 to 10 p.m. Closing out the night will be legendary drummer

Matt Wilson's Good Trouble – another jazz act with Kansas roots.

Come find out why this New York-based drummer – and Wichita State University

grad – is among the most-in-demand players and educators on the modern jazz scene.

Wilson has released 13 albums as a leader, appeared on more than 400 others as a

sideman, and has played with an impressive array of the most legendary jazz names.

As noted by Downbeat magazine: “Good Trouble finds Matt Wilson as boisterous and

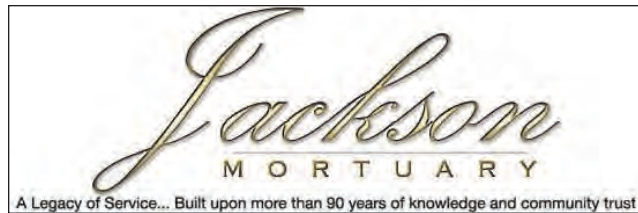
hard-swinging as ever.”

Good Trouble features Anisha Rush on alto sax, Dawn Clement on piano and vocals,

Jeff Lederer on tenor sax

and clarinet, and Ben Allison on bass,

Tickets to the festival finale are on sale through Select-A-Seat. Tickets start at \$45. Doors open at 6 p.m.



**Robert Burton, 61**

Dec. 7, 1963 - April 7, 2025  
Service will be held at 10 a.m. Sat., April 19, at New Jerusalem Baptist Church, 1625 N. Madison.

**Graham Cain, 88**

April 23, 1936 - April 3, 2025  
Graveside Service will be held at 11 a.m. Mon., April 14, at Winfield Veterans Cemetery, 1208 N. College St., Winfield, KS.

**Charles E. Carlis, 81**

Sept. 22, 1943 - April 3, 2025  
Service will be held at 1 p.m. Fri., April 18, at Jackson Mortuary Chapel, 1125 E 13th St.

**Bob Causey, 78**

Jan. 13, 1947 - April 3, 2025  
Viewing was held April 9 at Jackson Mortuary. Celebration of Life will be held April 12 in Alabama.

**Regina Nwokeji-Munonye, 83**

May 8, 1941 - April 2, 2025  
Visitation was held April 11 at Jackson Mortuary.

**Juliette Woods, 70**

Oct. 9, 1954 - March 27, 2025  
Service was held April 10 at Jackson Mortuary.

**Margalean Hubbard, 64**

Dec. 11, 1960 - March 24, 2025  
Service will be held at 11 a.m. Fri., April 18, at St. Mark Cathedral COGIC, 1018 N. Dellrose.

**Laura A. Witherspoon, 79**

May 13, 1945 - March 24, 2025  
Service was held April 8 at Mount Olive Church of God In Christ.

**Charlie Rowe, 79**

July 20, 1946 - March 22, 2025  
Visitation was held March 27 at Jackson Mortuary. Celebration of Life was held March 29 in York, Alabama.

**Lavern Baker, 78**

Dec. 31, 1946 - March 21, 2025  
Service was held April 3 at Mt. Olive Missionary Baptist Church.

**Prentice Johnson, Sr., 87**

Nov. 13, 1937 - March 21, 2025  
Service was held April 11 at Tabernacle Bible Church.

**Berry Jean King-Esters, 101**

March 7, 1924 - March 20, 2025  
Service was held April 12 at North Heights Christian Church.

**Robert Mingo Jr., 56**

Nov. 3, 1968 - March 15, 2025  
Service will be held at 4 p.m. April 14 at Jackson Mortuary Chapel, 1125 E. 13th St.

**Myrtle Lee Triplett, 92**

July 8, 1932 - March 12, 2025  
Service was held April 2 at St. Anthony Catholic Church.

**FAIR,** from Page 10 ↓

stressed that early career exposure is critical.

“Research shows that the sooner you can expose these young people to different jobs, different fields, different industries, it really can expand their horizons,” says Franco-McKay,

“You can’t be what you can’t see,” Franco-McKay added. “A lot of students may not have

access to certain professions or industries and have no idea that it could be something in their wheelhouse.”

Temple says the only “draw back” to the event was that he found the hiring decisions difficult.

“So many kids are passionate about just working and serving their community,” says Temple. “It’s really hard to not take everyone we’ve talked to and interviewed today.”



Hundreds of eager high school students fill the Kansas City Convention Center, networking with potential employers at the ProX Hiring Fair.

**ELECTION,** from Page 11 ↓

**Janice Witt** is a perennial candidate for mayor in KCK. She ran for the position in 2013, 2017 and 2021, and she’s running again. She returns with her message about the need for major change in Wyandotte County.

Garner says he will not endorse a candidate in the race to replace him.

The top two candidates in the primaries advance to the general election on Nov. 4.

**Other Seats**

Among the seats up for election on the Wyandotte County Board of Commissions is District 5, occupied by **Mike Kane**, who’s served on the council since 2005. So far he has not filed for re-election to the seat that

covers far west WYCO predominantly north of Parallel and west of 77th Street. **Alma Hall**, athletic director for the Piper School District, is the only candidate so far for that seat.

Incumbents in the two other district seats, District 7 and 8, are the only candidates to file for those races. They are **Chuck Stites** and **Andrew Davis**, respectively. Both are

completing their first terms on the commission.

The District 2 At-Large seat, currently occupied by **Melissa Bynum**, is also up for election. She has one opponent, **Jordan Michael Tyner-Mackey**, who ran against her in 2017. He was a former councilmember in Bonner Springs. Bynum has served in her current position since 2015.

**SAPP,** from Page 13 ↓

swirl online.

“Marvin Sapp started playing on my Pandora and now my car doors won’t unlock,” one Facebook commenter quipped.

**Threats on Sapp**

Sapp says he even chuckled at some of the posts, but he didn’t find the results a laughing matter.

“People have called my church and cussed me out,” Sapp said. “My staff are afraid because I’ve received death threats over \$20 and ‘shut the door.’ People have come to our campus — they have come to my church to try to cause problems, issues, challenges.”

Sapp believes the extreme reaction is due to people who

have been “church hurt” and “that’s the reason why they have a certain level of vitriol and bitterness as it pertains to the church.”

**Sapp & Riverfest**

Wichita’s Riverfest, Kansas’ largest outdoor celebration, is scheduled May 30 to June 7 in downtown Wichita. This nine-day festival offers a diverse array of activities, including live music performances, cultural events, food vendors, and river-related activities along the Arkansas River.

Attendees can enjoy concerts featuring national and local artists, parades, fireworks displays, and family-friendly entertainment, all accessible with the purchase of a festival button.

Sapp’s announcement

filled-out the daily mainstage concert lineup for the festival. Sapp is known for his chart-topping hits and spirit-filled performances and has built an incredible legacy over the years, with timeless songs like “Never Would Have Made It,” “The Best in Me,” and “My Testimony.”

The festival lineup also includes Flo Rida, who will bring his signature blend of hip-hop, pop, and party anthems to the heart of Wichita. His hits include: “Low,” “Right Round,” “My

House,” and “Good Feeling.”

This year, Riverfest adult buttons are \$15 and child buttons (ages 6-12) are \$10. Children 5 and under are free. Limited VIP special seat tickets to both Sapp and Flo Rida concerts are available for \$30 on Eventbrite.com.

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## Wichita Jazz Festival Grand Finale

Saturday, April 26 • 7 p.m. • Orpheum Theatre

Featuring April May Webb with Randall Haywood  
Jacob Webb, Nathan Webb and Yayoï Ikawa



Randall Haywood  
Trumpet

April May Webb  
Vocals

Sarah Vaughan International Jazz  
Vocal Competition Winner



Jacob Webb  
Bass



Nathan Webb  
Drums



Yayoï Ikawa  
Piano

Followed by  
Matt Wilson's Good Trouble



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