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Royals Stadium at Crown Center Gets a Thumbs Up — But the Details Matter

The location makes more sense than past proposals, but Kansas City must make sure the community benefits match the promise.

By Bonita Gooch

After years of speculation, false starts, and several proposed locations, the Kansas City Royals have finally announced where they want to build their new stadium — near Crown Center.

At first glance, this location makes far more sense than some of the earlier proposals.

The failed Jackson County ballot plan would have moved the Royals from the Truman Sports Complex into the Crossroads, but that proposal came with major concerns about displacing a strong small business district and limited onsite parking.

Just weeks ago, the city turned attention to a stadium in Washington Square Park, a site that never seemed realistic given its size, terrain, and the steep drop near the rail lines.

The Crown Center location feels far more practical.

One of the strongest advantages is parking. Unlike the previous downtown proposal, this site already has significant parking infrastructure. With 9,000



A rendering of the proposed new Kansas City Royals stadium near Crown Center shows plans for a downtown ballpark designed to connect fans to surrounding entertainment, dining, and business districts while helping revive one of Kansas City's historic destination areas.

existing spaces, including large multi-level garages and surface lots, fans can realistically attend games without creating complete chaos for nearby neighborhoods.

The design also appears smarter because it works with the land instead of against it. By building into the site's natural slope — nearly 90 feet of elevation change — the stadium can avoid becoming an overwhelming concrete wall towering over the surrounding community. That matters. A stadium should enhance a neighborhood, not dominate it.

Even more important is location.

The Kansas City Royals have long wanted a stadium connected to the life of the

city — a place where fans arrive early, stay late, and spend money nearby. A game should be part of a full evening out, not a standalone trip to the parking lots of the Truman Sports Complex.

Near Crown Center, fans could combine baseball with dinner, entertainment, shopping, or even a ride on the expanded streetcar to the Power and Light District, the River Market, or the Plaza. That creates real economic activity for the city and gives both residents and tourists another destination.

A stronger Crown Center could also help revive an area that has slowly lost momentum over the years. What was once one of Kansas City's premier destinations has been

challenged by newer, more active districts. This project could help restore energy there.

Still, the devil is in the details.

The financing, ownership structure, surrounding development, and especially the community benefits agreement must be right. This project cannot simply benefit wealthy investors like the Hall family and ownership groups. It must create real opportunities for neighborhoods, Black businesses, Black workers, and communities that too often get promises instead of results.

Kansas City should welcome the location.

Now it must demand the right deal.

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NAACP Calls For 25th Amendment to Remove Trump

Concerns over the president's rhetoric and behavior are growing — but invoking it would be difficult.



By Bonita Gooch
Editor-in-Chief

The NAACP has taken an extraordinary step, calling for the removal of Donald Trump through the 25th Amendment — the first time in the group's history it has made such a demand.

The call comes amid growing concern over Trump's recent statements and behavior, which critics say raise questions about judgment, stability, and the potential consequences for national and global security.

Among the types of statements raising concern are several recent posts and remarks that have drawn widespread attention. In one Easter message — which the NAACP did reference — Trump wrote:

“Happy Easter to everyone, including the Radical Left Lunatics... who are trying to destroy our Country... May they rot in hell.”

In another post tied to escalating tensions in the Middle East, he warned:

“Open the f***ing Strait, you crazy bastards, or you'll be living in hell — JUST WATCH! ... Praise be to Allah.”

By calling for the 25th Amendment, the NAACP is stepping into a national leadership role, pushing a conversation many have avoided about presidential responsibility and limits of power.

Critics argue that this type of language — particularly when directed at foreign nations — risks inflaming tensions and could have real-world consequences far beyond political rhetoric.

The NAACP has also pointed to what it describes as a broader pattern, including reports of verbal slip-ups, slurred speech, moments of confusion, and falling asleep during meetings.

Last week, Trump released an AI-generated image widely perceived to depict him as Jesus laying hands on and healing someone. About the photo, released shortly after a post in which Trump attacked Pope Leo XIV, Trump said the image was meant to portray him as a doctor.

Calls to invoke the 25th Amendment are not entirely new. Similar discussions surfaced after the January 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol and during Trump's continued claims of widespread voter fraud following his 2020 election loss. However, most of those efforts remained limited to individual lawmakers, commentators, and smaller advocacy groups.

What makes the NAACP's call different is its size, history, and influence. As one of the

nation's most prominent civil rights organizations, its statement could signal a shift — especially as Trump's rhetoric continues to escalate.

Still, invoking the 25th Amendment would be extraordinarily difficult.

Ratified in 1967, the amendment allows a president to be removed from power if the vice president and a majority of the Cabinet determine the president is unable to perform the duties of the office. In that case, the vice president — currently J.D. Vance — would assume the role of acting president.

The president can contest that decision, triggering a vote in Congress, where a two-thirds majority in both the House and Senate would be required to uphold the removal.

In practical terms, that means any effort would have to begin with Trump's own inner circle — the very people most politically aligned with him.

For now, the NAACP's call stands as a warning — one that raises a difficult question: whether growing concerns about rhetoric and behavior will remain isolated criticism, or build into something more.

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East High Graduate Named CEO of Fortune 500 Giant Dow

Karen S. Carter joins rare group of Black women leading Fortune 500 companies

By Bonita Gooch

A Wichita native with deep roots in the community is stepping into one of corporate America's most powerful roles.

Karen S. Carter, who grew up in northeast Wichita and graduated from East High School, has been named Chief Executive Officer of Dow, one of the world's leading materials science companies. Her appointment, effective July 1, marks a historic milestone—not only for Wichita, but for representation at the highest levels of corporate leadership.

Carter joins a small group of women leading Fortune 500 companies. While a record 55 women now serve as CEOs, only two are Black women.

“Only two Black women currently lead Fortune 500 companies, including Carter and Thasunda Brown Duckett of Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association (TIAA).”

Black Leadership Still Rare at the Top

Black leadership across Fortune 500 companies remains limited overall.

Although representation has increased over time, only about nine Black CEOs are currently leading Fortune 500 companies, and just 28 Black executives in total have ever held those roles since the list began in 1955. Those numbers underscore how rare it remains for Black leaders—men or women—to reach the top of America's largest corporations.

Rooted in Wichita

Long before she rose



Karen S. Carter

through the ranks of a global company, Carter was a Wichita student, church leader and young worker learning the fundamentals of business.

Born Karen Shepard, she grew up near 27th and Fairmount and later near 13th and Crestway. She attended Buckner Elementary, Minneha Elementary, Robinson Middle School and East High School, where she was part of the International Baccalaureate program.

After graduating from East High, Carter earned a degree in business marketing from Howard University and later a master's degree in international business from DePaul University.

Her first job came at Ken Mar Family Drugs at 13th and Oliver, where she learned how to count money and observed what it takes to run a business from the store's owners, Darrell and Sylvia Steinshouer.

She was also active in Wichita Children's Theatre and modeled during her time at East High.

Much of her leadership foundation, she said, came from her involvement at St. Paul AME Church, where she

served as president of the Young People's Department.

“Having matriculated through USD 259 from grade school all the way to high school, I'm a proud East High Blue Ace,” Carter said. “But I learned a lot of my leadership lessons from St. Paul AME Church growing up there and then of course my Mom. She is the greatest example that I have of leadership.”

Deep Family Roots in Wichita

Carter's ties to Wichita remain strong through her immediate family, many of whom continue to live and serve in the community.

Her mother, Karen Cayce, still lives in Wichita and remains active in the community and at St. Paul AME Church.

Her sisters are also well-known locally. Carla Eckels serves as Director of

Organizational Culture at KMWU and is the host of the nationally syndicated show *Soulsations*. Carol Cole recently retired after a 44-year career in local city and county government.

Her father, Jesse Shepard, died when she was 12. In his honor, Carter and her siblings adopted Shepard as their middle name—a lasting tribute to his influence.

Together, their presence reflects a family deeply rooted in public service and community engagement in Wichita.

A Career Built for the Top Role

As CEO, Carter brings more than three decades of experience at Dow, where she most recently served as Chief Operating Officer overseeing business and operational performance across the company.

She previously led Dow's

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Karen with sister Carol Cole, mother Karen Cayce and sister Carla Echols.

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Trump EO to End DEI in Federal Contracts; Black Contractors File Suit

Minority business groups say the order threatens decades of progress and fair access to government work.

By Bonita Gooch
Editor-in-Chief

President Donald Trump's latest executive order targeting diversity, equity and inclusion in federal contracting is creating serious concern for Black-owned businesses that have long relied on those opportunities to compete fairly.

For many Black entrepreneurs, supplier diversity programs and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) certifications were never about special treatment — they were about finally getting access to doors that had historically been closed. These programs helped create pathways into industries where Black businesses were routinely excluded, especially in construction, transportation, technology and government services.

Now, that access feels threatened.

The March 26 executive order, titled "Addressing DEI by Federal Contractors," directs federal agencies to penalize contractors who consider diversity or equity factors when selecting subcontractors. Companies found engaging in what the administration calls "racially discriminatory DEI activities" could face canceled contracts, suspension from future federal work and False Claims Act investigations. Contractors must also certify in writing that they are complying.

Joel Wilson, a Black business owner in Philadelphia, said his application for DBE



A Black contractor works on a job site as minority business groups challenge President Trump's executive order aimed at ending DEI considerations in federal contracting.

certification was abruptly halted after the order. His IT company had used certification programs to compete for government contracts, helping level a playing field that was never level to begin with.

"This was once a way to give credible, diverse businesses a fairer chance," Wilson said. "Historically, Black-owned companies weren't even given a shot."

Programs designed to encourage minority participation in federal contracts were built because discrimination was real and measurable. From construction firms locked out of bids to Black-owned media companies

shut out of advertising contracts, these policies were meant to correct decades of exclusion — not provide unearned advantages.

Trump's administration argues DEI has become discriminatory against white contractors and says contracts should be awarded strictly on merit. Critics argue that ignores how often "merit" has historically been shaped by access, relationships and systems that excluded Black businesses from the start.

Legal advocates say the executive order has limits.

NAACP Legal Defense Fund attorney Donya Khadem said the order does

not change federal civil rights law. Race-based discrimination in contracting remains illegal, but contractors can still choose Black-owned businesses for legitimate business reasons such as skill, cost and performance. In limited cases, race-conscious remedies for past discrimination also remain lawful.

That distinction is central to a federal lawsuit filed April 21 in Maryland by the National Association of Minority Contractors and other groups. The suit argues Trump's order violates First Amendment protections by forcing businesses to choose between discussing race and keeping federal contracts.

Plaintiffs say the administration is treating all DEI efforts as illegal discrimination, when many are lawful efforts to correct historic inequities.

If courts block enforcement, the policy could be delayed or stopped. If not, Black-owned firms may have to change how they bid, hire, advertise and compete for federal work.

The larger fight is about more than contracts. It is about whether America chooses to confront the barriers Black businesses have faced — or pretend they never existed.

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Killings Renew Urgency Around Domestic Violence in Black Communities

High-Profile Cases Expose Disparities in Resources, Mental Health Access and Safety

By Associated Press

Two headline-grabbing, deadly domestic violence cases, one in Louisiana and the other in Virginia targeting Black mothers, have sparked a national conversation about domestic violence prevention resources and mental health care available to Black communities.

Many advocates in the aftermath of the deadly shootings have said the tragedies pointedly highlight troubling trends in which Black women are more likely to experience domestic violence — and they see the killings as an opportunity to confront how disparities in access to care and resources make some women and children more vulnerable to violence in the home.

On Sunday morning, a man police identified as Shamar



A growing memorial of stuffed animals and balloons marks the front porch of a Shreveport home where eight children were killed, reflecting the community's grief.

Elkins fatally shot seven of his children and another child in Shreveport, Louisiana. A relative has said Elkins was in the midst of separating from his wife who was wounded.

And last Thursday, police found the bodies of former Virginia Lt. Gov. Justin Fairfax and his estranged wife, Dr. Cerina Fairfax, in their suburban Washington, D.C., home. Justin Fairfax shot his

estranged wife and then himself, and their two children in the home at the time were unhurt, police said. Like Elkins, Fairfax was in the process of separating from his wife and had faced a judge's upcoming deadline to move from the house.

While it's not clear what prompted the Shreveport killings or the apparent murder-suicide in Annandale,

Virginia, experts say that the harrowing details of the killings echo familiar patterns

that play out in homes across the country — and underscore the need for solutions that

address the root causes of the disparate violence.

A 'Silent Epidemic'

Sunday wasn't the first time that Elkins' family had suffered from gender-based gun violence: Shaneiqua Elkins and the other woman who was shot, Keosha Pugh, were sisters, and lost their mother to gun violence when they were under age 10, according to their uncle Lionel Pugh.

"It's sad. It just breaks you down," Pugh said.

Shreveport Councilman Grayson Boucher said at a news conference Monday that the Louisiana killings were emblematic of "a true epidemic of domestic violence"

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Former Virginia Lt. Gov. Justin Fairfax and his wife, Dr. Cerina Fairfax, are shown in this undated photo. Police say Fairfax killed his wife and himself in a case highlighting ongoing domestic violence concerns.

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VIOLENCE, from Page 6 ↓

across the small southern city of roughly 180,000 people.

Those trends go well beyond Shreveport as experts have pointed out how both race and gender make Black women in particular more vulnerable to domestic violence.

More than four in 10 Black women experience physical violence from an intimate partner during their lifetimes — a much higher rate than women who are white, Hispanic, Asian or Pacific Islander — according to a 2014 study by the Centers for Disease Control.

Paméla Tate is the executive director of Black Women Revolt, which runs programs to prevent abuse and offers survivors' resources. She said a logical skepticism about police and government child services agencies based on a history of institutionalized racism makes Black women reluctant to seek help — and especially vulnerable to domestic violence.

Additionally, Black women are two times more likely to be murdered by men than their white counterparts, according to a 2025 study published by the Violence Policy Center, based on federal government data from 2023. Those men are more often than not familiar to their victims, according to the study, which found that more than nine in 10 Black female victims knew their killers, with the majority of those killings being carried out

with guns.

Ultimately, Tate said, “domestic violence doesn't see color,” and is primarily driven by the prevalent belief among men — across racial demographics — that women are subjects or property.

“Domestic violence is about exerting power over someone that you profess to love and controlling their behavior,” Tate said.

Lack of Resources for Black Men

There has been intense speculation about the role that mental health crises might have played in both shootings.

A relative of Elkins' wife told The Associated Press that Elkins had voluntarily checked into a Department of Veterans Affairs hospital in January for about a week and a half for mental health help.

In Virginia, Justin Fairfax was a rising star in the Democratic Party until two women accused him of sexual assault, casting doubt on his trustworthiness as a political leader. The former lieutenant governor's “mental and emotional health” suffered before he killed his wife and himself, according to court documents, which say he drank heavily and withdrew from his family after the allegations were made public in 2019.

Dr. Christine Crawford, an adult and child psychiatrist, hasn't examined the killings in Shreveport or Annandale, but said financial troubles, marital issues and problems at work



Two women comfort each other outside a crime scene, reflecting the emotional toll on family and community members following a violent incident.

— in addition to underlying mental health vulnerabilities — can lead someone to “crack.”

“It makes some think about the amount of pain, distress and hopelessness they found themselves in at that time,” said Crawford, who practices at the Webster Clinic in Boston and is interim chief medical officer at the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

She noted many Black people find themselves priced out of programs and care for mental health for such reasons as private care costs and a lack of insurance.

That level of desperation can make some people feel “completely out of options on how to deal with the pain he was in at that moment,” Crawford said.

Some have said that there are social dimensions to these economic trends, too.

“Mental health disparities

in the Black community is not accidental,” said University of Michigan Social Work Professor Daphne C. Watkins.

CARTER, from Page 4 ↓

largest division—Packaging & Specialty Plastics—and held leadership roles across business, commercial and corporate functions, giving her broad experience across the company's operations.

Her appointment reflects a leadership progression that has increasingly defined successful CEO selections—deep operational experience, cross-functional leadership and direct responsibility for core business performance.

At Dow, Carter has already been leading efforts tied to performance and transformation.

“We are in the middle of a

“They are the predictable result of structural racism” in schools, employment and other aspects of society.

Watkins, founder of the YBMen Project which provides young Black men with a safe place to discuss their mental health, manhood and social support, said studies show that 10% of Black adults experience moderate to severe depression, while 18% experience anxiety disorders.

But Black men tend to forego mental health treatment due to cultural expectations, in addition to costs, said Watkins. Without an outlet, stressors from family, work and relationships can pile up.

“For a long time, in the Black community, we didn't talk about anxiety. Now, you have to talk about it hand in hand along with depression.”

significant transformation ... called ‘transform to outperform,’” she said. “It's going to deliver more than \$2 billion of earnings uplift over the next two years.”

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Mental Health Not an Excuse, Some Say

Others have emphatically said that mental health is not an excuse for domestic violence.

“To say they're mentally ill, that doesn't cut it,” Tate said. “There are people who are depressed or people who have schizophrenia and don't harm their partners, much less kill them.”

Shaneiqua Elkins and Cerina Fairfax could have been struggling with mental health challenges too, Tate added, and they both “had the same access or ability to go and purchase a gun” but chose not to.

“The mental illness is not what we're talking about here,” she said.

Associated Press writer Sophie Bates contributed in Shreveport, Louisiana.

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In many cases, consumers interact with Dow products daily—without ever seeing the company's name on the label.

A Full-Circle Moment

Wichita has every reason to take pride in one of its own—someone who has reached the top of corporate America while still holding tight to the city that helped shape her.

“Wichita is the place that I call home,” Carter said. “I'll be proud to retire here.”



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Westport Discrimination Lawsuit Expands, Gains New National Attention

Third amended complaint adds new conspiracy claims as attorney says national exposure helped bring forward more witnesses and evidence.

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

Federal discrimination lawsuit accusing Westport business owners of using liquor licenses, lease agreements and so-called Good Neighbor Agreements to keep Black-owned businesses out of one of Kansas City's most popular entertainment districts has taken a major new turn.

Civil rights attorney Cecilia Brown said a third amended complaint filed in March significantly expanded the case, adding new civil conspiracy allegations tied to what plaintiffs describe as efforts to cover up discrimination claims rather than correct them.

Brown discussed the new filing last week during the lawsuit's second appearance on Roland Martin's Roland Martin Unfiltered daily digital show. The case was first featured on the national program in November 2025, and Brown said that national attention helped generate new witnesses, recordings and evidence that led directly to the latest amendment.

"What we found in discovery — and quite frankly media, your show, Roland — has allowed witnesses to come forward," Brown said. "This RICO, this conspiracy, just continues to grow, and we are so fortunate that we keep ending up with all of the evidence."

Brown said the third amended complaint was filed after plaintiffs uncovered recordings showing business owners allegedly tried to recruit another Black entrepreneur with a \$300,000 investment offer — not to create opportunity, she said, but to help undermine the discrimination case.

She said the goal was to "refute the discrimination claim."

Brown further alleged the offer was made to someone they believed they could control because of his criminal record.

"What you're doing is hiring a house Negro to do what you want to

do and to be the mask of 'we're not racist,'" Brown said on the show.

The lawsuit was originally filed in early 2025 and has since grown through multiple amended complaints. It was brought by three Black business owners — Christopher Lee of Euphoric LLC, D'Mario Gray of UniKC LLC and Robert Thorpe of The Sourze LLC — against the Westport Community Improvement District (CID), its all-white board and several business owners and landlords connected to the district.

The complaint alleges a coordinated effort to use race-neutral sounding rules in discriminatory ways to prevent Black entrepreneurs from opening or keeping businesses in Westport, a nightlife-heavy entertainment district near downtown Kansas City.

At the center of the case is what is known as the Good Neighbor Agreement.

Westport has had real safety concerns over the years, including late-night fights, shootings and violence tied to the entertainment district.

The CID has argued the



A crowded nightclub scene reflects the kind of late-night entertainment spaces at the center of ongoing conversations about access, inclusion, and who feels welcome in popular nightlife districts.

agreements were intended to improve safety and accountability.

Per a November 2025 article in The Kansas City Star, the agreements require bar owners to maintain a no-weapons policy, fund and maintain security cameras, share footage with police, and pay financial penalties to the CID for repeated violent tavern disturbances involving police. Businesses that do not sign must instead pay an additional fee that can be as much as 20% of their annual CID assessment.

The agreements were

designed to give Westport stakeholders a way to enforce safety standards through contracts and financial leverage instead of relying only on police or city departments.

Brown argues the problem is not that safety rules exist, but how those rules were enforced.

"I think if you look at U.S. history, you'll find a lot of covenants and agreements drawn up with seemingly neutral terms that actually held a very racist intent and were enforced in a very racist way,"

Brown told The Star.

The plaintiffs argue the Good Neighbor Agreement became a gatekeeping system used to decide who could and could not succeed in Westport.

According to the federal complaint, recorded statements show business owners were told that signing the agreement meant agreeing to strict CID control over operations — including language that if they violated the agreement, they could be forced to surrender their liquor license and pay the CID's legal costs. One recording described it as "written pretty one-sided," and another stated, "If we don't have a contractual agreement, we do everything we can to put them out of business."

The lawsuit says "99 percent" of property owners would not sign consent forms for a liquor license unless the Good Neighbor Agreement was signed.

That pressure is central to the plaintiffs' civil conspiracy, extortion and racketeering claims.

Thorpe says his planned Daiquiri Shop was blocked after he was told Westport did not want more bars "especially those patronized by the hip-hop crowds," which were said to

"equate to violence." After paying rent and expenses, he says he was told the concept would no longer be allowed.

Gray says after signing a lease for a club space, neighboring business owners questioned him about whether he would attract an R&B and hip-hop crowd and what "type of crowd" would come.

Young Black patrons like these are at the center of the Westport discrimination lawsuit, where plaintiffs say efforts were made to limit Black customers in the district.



May Day Protests Push Workers-First Agenda Across Kansas & Missouri

Friday rallies focus on taxing billionaires, lowering living costs, and building economic power for working families

By Bonita Gooch
Editor-in-Chief

Across the nation, workers, students and families are preparing for May Day protests on Friday, May 1, built around a simple message: America should work for working people — not just billionaires.

Unlike the recent “No Kings” protests, which focused largely on opposition to President Donald Trump’s growing authoritarianism, the May Day Strong movement is centered on a specific economic platform: tax the rich, reduce corporate power, and use that money to make life more affordable for everyday Americans.

Organizers say this is not just another protest. It is being promoted as “a day of action,” with calls for “No Work. No School. No Shopping.” The goal is to disrupt business as usual and remind the country how much power ordinary

people have when they act together.

National organizers expect more than 3,500 actions across the country under the May Day Strong banner, with demands focused on workers over billionaires, taxing the rich, expanding democracy, removing ICE from communities, and shifting money away from war and toward people’s everyday needs.

At the center of the platform is the belief that billionaires and large corporations should pay more in taxes so families can better afford housing, child care, health care, education, groceries, transportation and utilities.

Supporters point to examples like Massachusetts, where voters approved a surtax on income above \$1 million that now helps fund education and transportation programs. Advocates argue that workers create much of the nation’s wealth but receive a shrinking share

of its benefits, while billionaires continue to grow richer through investments and tax systems many say favor the wealthy.

May Day itself — International Workers’ Day — has long been tied to labor rights movements around the world. Organizers say this year’s protests are meant to reclaim that tradition and connect it to today’s affordability crisis.

Several events are planned across Kansas and Missouri.

Kansas City Events No Billionaires in Our Backyards

4:30 p.m. Friday Oppenstein Brothers Memorial Park
1123 Walnut St., Kansas City, MO

This rally focuses on the rapid growth of data centers and the power of Big Tech billionaires like Jeff Bezos and Elon Musk. Organizers are demanding stronger environmental protections, no tax incentives for data centers, full transparency about data collection, and requiring billionaires to cover the full utility burden instead of passing costs to residents.

How The Bus Will Save Us

1:30–3:30 p.m. Friday Inner Space Yoga
2711 Troost Ave., Kansas City, MO

Hosted by Sunrise Movement Kansas City, this event connects public transportation, labor rights and climate justice, with discussion about how stronger bus systems can support workers and reduce environmental harm.

May Day Rally and March

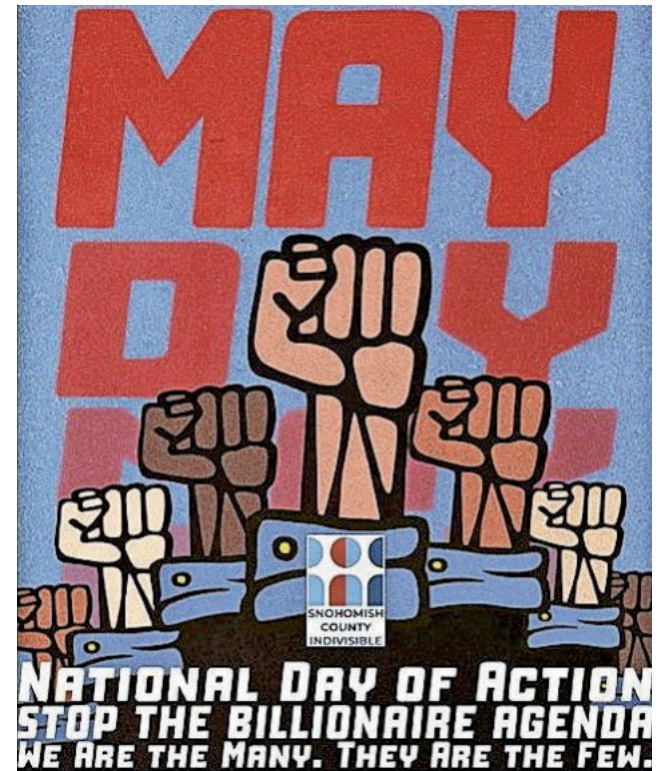
5:30–7:30 p.m. Friday
Washington Square Park
100 E. Pershing Rd., Kansas City, MO

Hosted by Indivisible Kansas City and the Missouri Workers Center, this rally emphasizes protecting democracy and ensuring tax dollars support working people instead of billionaires and corporations.

Wichita Events

ICT May Day — A Day of Action

6–7:30 p.m. Friday Chester I. Lewis Reflection Square Park
205 E. Douglas Ave., Wichita
Hosted by Defend



Friday, May 1, 2026

Democracy ICT, organizers say this event is focused on helping people move beyond protest by connecting with campaigns, candidates and organizing efforts across Kansas.

Tax Big Oil Rally

Noon–1:30 p.m. Friday
Delano Clock Tower
601 W. Douglas Ave., Wichita

This climate-focused rally calls for taxing fossil fuel companies, stronger

environmental protections, and public investment that benefits families instead of corporate profits.

Organizers say the message behind all of the events is the same: when billionaires shape public policy through wealth and influence, working people must answer with collective action.

Because when billionaires break every rule, they say, it takes more than a rally to stop them.

LAWSUIT, from Page 8 ↓

The next day, he says he was locked out. His landlord later paid him \$100,000 to walk away from the lease.

Lee says after signing a lease to reopen the former Ale House space, he was denied keys after Westport leaders objected to what they called his “type of crowd.” He says he was later told he should target “an older crowd” and “not that young hip-hop crowd.”

The lawsuit took another

major turn in October 2025 when U.S. District Judge Roseann Ketchmark approved a significant expansion of the case, allowing plaintiffs to add racketeering claims alleging the CID used coercion, extortion and liquor license pressure to control business access and limit Black ownership in the district.

The case now reaches beyond Westport merchants and directly to City Hall.

Gwen Grant, president and CEO of the Urban League

of Greater Kansas City, said Kansas City became complicit by turning too much authority over to the district itself.

She said the city passed a street vacation ordinance that effectively gave the merchants control over the streets and security decisions in Westport, allowing them to determine who enters the district and how rules are enforced.

“The city has ceded its responsibility,” Grant said. “They vacated their responsibility.”

Brown said discovery also

showed former Kansas City Regulated Industries Director Jim Reddy helped the CID learn how to work around city ordinances involving liquor license approvals.

She alleges he showed them how to use Good Neighbor Agreements to effectively bargain for liquor license approval — something the city’s own consent forms explicitly prohibit.

“We are currently naming Jim Reddy and the City of Kansas City in our third

amended complaint,” Brown said.

The Urban League of Greater Kansas City and the NAACP have filed an amicus brief supporting the plaintiffs. An amicus brief, often called a “friend of the court” filing, allows outside organizations to formally support one side of a case because of its broader public importance.

For Brown and Grant, the case reflects a much larger national pattern.

Martin noted similar tactics

have happened across the country — from discriminatory dress codes to businesses changing music formats or shutting down when too many Black customers arrived.

Kansas City is not alone. Wichita’s Old Town entertainment district faced similar complaints for years over dress code enforcement and Black musicians saying they struggled to get gigs.

“It’s 2026 and we’re seeing the exact same patterns,” Brown said.

Jackson County Executive Race Shifts After Two Frontrunners Withdraw

Phil LeVota and DaRon McGee exit the race, leaving Stacy Lake and Bill Baird as likely leading contenders ahead of the critical August primary.

By Bonita Gooch
Voice Editor-in-Chief

The race for Jackson County executive has shifted dramatically after two of its early frontrunners — Phil LeVota and DaRon McGee — both withdrew, leaving the contest wide open in one of the region's most closely watched local races.

LeVota, the current acting Jackson County executive, was appointed after former Executive Frank White Jr. was removed in a recall vote. His candidacy drew immediate attention because, before being appointed, he had signed an agreement stating he would not run for the full term. Still, on the final day of filing, he entered the race, saying he needed more time to decide.

A few days after McGee stepped aside, LeVota officially withdrew and explained why in a public statement. He said serving as county executive properly requires at least



Bill Baird



Stacy Lake

60 hours a week and leaves no room for the demands of campaigning. He said trying to govern while running for office would compromise the quality of service residents deserve. LeVota also said he has “never aspired to run for public office,” disliked fundraising and political maneuvering, and wanted to prioritize his well-being and family over another four-year commitment. “My heart is not in a campaign,” he wrote.

McGee was actually the first candidate to file for the race and was widely viewed as a serious contender. He currently represents the

4th District in southeastern Kansas City and Raytown on the Jackson County Legislature and has served as legislature chair in both 2023 and 2025. Before joining the legislature, he led Jackson County's COMBAT violence prevention program, served as president of the Hickman Mills School Board, and spent two terms in the Missouri House of Representatives.

McGee said he withdrew because he wanted to spend more time with his wife, Dr. Jamesia Donato, and family. He said his dedication to the people of Jackson County had not changed, but family needed more of his time.

With both men out, attorney Stacy Lake quickly moved to highlight her consistency in the race. Lake has run for county executive twice before and came close to defeating White in the 2022 Democratic primary, earning 47% of the vote in one of the closest races in recent county history.

Lake is the owner of The Lake Law Firm, where she handles both civil and criminal litigation. As an attorney and small business owner, she has built her campaign around government accountability, transparency, and modernizing Jackson County government. Her

campaign has also focused heavily on addressing property tax spikes, stalled county budgets, housing concerns, and restoring public trust in county leadership. She has picked up several endorsements this year, helping strengthen her standing in the race.

She said Jackson County residents are tired of instability and deserve leadership they can count on, saying the county does not need “a leader that steps in at the last minute, tests the waters, and walks away.”

The other candidate who could emerge as a major contender is Bill Baird, the mayor of Lee's Summit. Baird is

now the only remaining candidate with major government leadership experience. In addition to serving as mayor, he is a commercial real estate broker and former school board member. His executive leadership background could make him especially attractive to voters looking for stability after months of county government turmoil.

The remaining field also includes Ryan Meyer, a marketing consultant and Streetcar Transportation Development District board member; Holmes Osborne, a financial analyst and Metropolitan Community College trustee; Erik Steffen, a cybersecurity executive; and Alan Rohlfing,

a former U.S. military service member and the race's only Republican.

With the August primary approaching, the withdrawals have reshaped the race and created a clearer path for Lake and Baird to emerge as the frontrunners.

Because Jackson County is heavily Democratic, the August primary will likely be the most important election in the race. While one Republican remains in the field, countywide races strongly favor Democrats, meaning the Democratic primary could effectively decide who becomes the next county executive long before the November general election.

CORRECTION

In our April 10, 2026 article, “More Candidates, More Turnover — Jackson County Races Take Shape,” we incorrectly stated that several candidates were not running again for the Jackson County Legislature because they were “term limited.”

That was incorrect. Jackson County legislative seats are not term limited. Legislators may run for reelection without term limits.

The only Jackson County offices with term limits are county executive, limited to two four-year terms, and sheriff and prosecutor, each limited to three four-year terms.

For comparison, members of the Missouri General Assembly — the house and the senate — and the Kansas City, Missouri, City Council are limited to two four-year terms.

Thanks for the correction. Please let us know when we get something wrong. Our goal is always to be accurate, but sometimes we err.

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Jada Aberi

Parents/Guardian
Philip and Melody
Aberi

Southeast High School



Samira Barber

Parents/Guardian
Sherri Barber

Northeast
Magnet High School



Savannah Brown

Parents/Guardian
Kneeland and
Tearrah Brown

East High School



Journee Fisher

Parents/Guardian
Carletta Fisher and
Chavous Nichols

Rose Hill High School



Azaria Gray

Parents/Guardian
Shamela Jackson
and Courtland Gray

North High School



Deena Holmes

Parents/Guardian
Dominica Galloway
& Alvin Holmes

Southeast High School



Sumariah Ingram

Parents/Guardian
Josie Ingram / Brittan
Bobbitt

Heights High School



Akeelah Jackson

Parents/Guardian
Bridgette Warren
and George Jackson

East High School



**Nayomey
Jennings-Smith**

Parents/Guardian
Jessica Jennings,
Joshua and April Smith

South High School



Aleah Johnson

Parents/Guardian
Sherice Johnson

South High School



Jea'Nee Lowery

Parents/Guardian
Alicia Allen and Larry Ellis Jr.

Northeast Magnet High
School



Emma McDonald

Parents/Guardian
Matthew and
Jennifer McDonald

Wichita Collegiate School



Jhourne Mitchell

Parents/Guardian
Brittney Young, Kyle Young
Sr., Shane Mitchell Sr.

East High School



Jordan Mitchell

Parents/Guardian
Jasmine Mitchell
and Shawn Mitchell Sr.

East High School



Julianna Moore

Parents/Guardian
Leone McClinton Moore
& Joseph Moore

South High School

Fashionetta Returns With New Format, Continued Focus on Scholarships

Historic Wichita Program Back With Changes, New Venue, And Expanded Scholarship Support

By **Bonita Gooch**
Voice Editor in Chief

After a pandemic pause, one of Wichita's most recognized scholarship traditions is returning — with a new format, a new location, and a renewed focus on preparing young women for the future.

Fashionetta, a program that has served the Wichita community since 1984, is back as a public event for the first time since COVID. Long known for blending pageantry with purpose, the program

continues its mission of encouraging high school girls to pursue higher education while gaining cultural and social enrichment.

Historically presented by the Beta Kappa Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., this year's event is hosted by the sorority's Building Knowledge and Opportunities Foundation. While the public showcase paused in recent years, organizers continued the behind-the-scenes programming of the annual program — holding workshops and meetings to help participants, known as Pearls, prepare for college and life.

Now, the program's ending presentation is back — but with some noticeable changes.

The traditional elements many remember will still be

there: talent presentations, formal introductions, escorts, and proud moments with families. However, the large fundraising books that once defined the competition are gone, and with them, the crowning of Miss Fashionetta.

In its place is a broader scholarship focus.

While there is no single overall winner, more than a dozen scholarships will be awarded, supported by businesses, families, and foundations. The Amanda Phillips Talent Scholarship will recognize top talent performance, while academic achievement remains a priority, with awards for Pearls maintaining a 3.0 GPA or higher, including the Enterprise Academic Scholarship for the top scholar.

Additional honors include

Miss Congeniality, presented in memory of LaShea and A-niah Bell, and an Audience Choice Award based on attendee on-site donations to participants.

Another major change is the venue. The event moves from Century II to Wichita State University's Hughes Metroplex, signaling a fresh chapter for the long-running program.

Fashionetta is this Saturday, April 25. The reception is from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., and the program begins at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$50 and include the reception, reflecting a shift in how the program is funded — and supported.

Even with the changes, the heart of Fashionetta remains the same: investing in young women and opening doors to their future.



RayIn Moore-Williams

Parents/Guardian
Kiaeshia Williams
and Kundayi Williams

Northwest High School



Arayah Pitts

Parents/Guardian
Delana Cleveland & Roshaun
Pitts Sr.

Northeast Magnet High School



Zaria Reagans

Parents/Guardian
Milton Reagans (Dad) Tiffany
Johnson (Aunt) Grandma
Verna, Grandma and Granddad

South High School



Samiah Williams

Parents/Guardian
Brianna Harbin & Ronnie Williams

Heights High School

Record Hall Of Fame Class Highlights Black Athletes From Wichita, KCK, Topeka And Beyond

Inductees Range From Negro Leagues Pioneers To Modern Pros With Deep Roots In Kansas Communities

By Ty Davis
Wichita Reporter

The Kansas Sports Hall of Fame will induct its largest class in history in 2026, honoring 32 individuals across three ceremonies this summer.

The class, announced earlier this month, includes professional athletes, Negro Leagues pioneers, Olympic competitors, coaches, and contributors whose careers span decades of Kansas sports history.

According to Hall of Fame chair Jeff Bollig, the expanded class reflects a deliberate decision by the organization.

“We have a considerable backlog of outstanding nominees,” Bollig said. “The board thought it was important to recognize individuals who may have missed out when selections were dormant for several years.”

The honorees—including 12 posthumous selections—will be recognized at three ceremonies:

- July 18 in Kansas City, Kansas (Negro Leagues inductees)
- July 25 in Wichita
- August 16 in Kansas City

A Larger Class Reflecting a Broader History

In most years, the Hall of Fame inducts approximately 10 to 12 individuals. The 2026 class expands that number significantly,

reflecting both a backlog of nominees and an effort to recognize contributors across multiple eras.

The group includes individuals whose careers reached the highest levels of professional competition, as well as those whose impact was felt at the high school, collegiate, and community levels throughout Kansas.

Negro Leagues Legacy: Restoring What Was Overlooked

One of the most significant elements of the 2026 class is the continued recognition of Negro Leagues players—athletes who competed at a high level during segregation and whose contributions were not always fully documented at the time.

Among the headlining inductees are Bullet Rogan and Chet Brewer.

Rogan was widely regarded as one of the greatest two-way players in baseball history. Rogan, who attended Sumner High in KCK, was a great pitcher and an equally great hitter. Brewer, born in Leavenworth, KS, was a standout pitcher. He played 19 non-consecutive seasons of professional baseball at various levels between 1925 and 1953, most notably for the Kansas City Monarchs.

Their selection continues the Hall of Fame's effort to more fully document Kansas' role in baseball history.

Other 2026 Negro League inductees are:

George Giles – A Negro Leagues catcher who later contributed to the game through coaching and player development.

Dink Mothell – A Negro Leagues infielder whose career included play with multiple teams during the early

years of Black professional baseball.

Edward Dwight Sr. – A baseball figure whose contributions extended beyond playing, influencing the sport at multiple levels. was a utility player in Negro League baseball from 1925 to 1937. A KCK resident, if the name sounds familiar, it's because his son Ed Dwight, Jr. is a well-known sculptor.

Diego Seguí – A Cuban-born Major League pitcher had a length career with the Kansas City/Oakland Athletics. After his long career he return to KC and in 2024 he was given the Lifetime Achievement Award by the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum.

National Spotlight: Kansas Athletes on the Big Stage

These members of the 2026 class reached national prominence through collegiate and professional careers.

DeAngelo Evans: A standout at Wichita Collegiate, DeAngelo Evans was one of the most highly recruited running backs in the country during his high school career. His speed and playmaking ability earned national attention before he continued his career at the University of Nebraska.

Evans' performance helped establish Kansas as a source of high-level football talent, contributing to his selection to the Hall of Fame.

Maurice Evans: After playing collegiately at Kansas State, Maurice Evans – a Wichitan – went on to build a 10-year NBA career, appearing in more than 500 games with teams including the Los Angeles Lakers, Orlando Magic, and Atlanta Hawks.

Known for his defensive



Maurice Evans, a Wichita native and former Kansas State standout, built a 10-year NBA career playing for teams including the Los Angeles Lakers, Orlando Magic and Atlanta Hawks. Known for his defense and consistency.

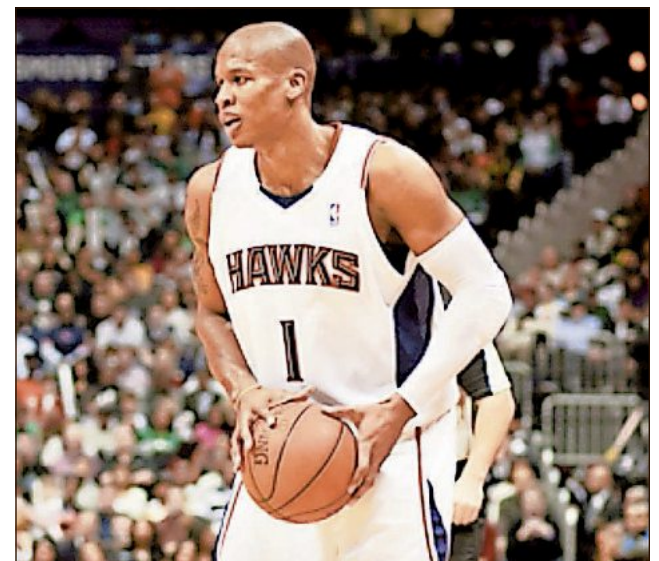
ability and professionalism, Evans developed a reputation as a consistent contributor. His sustained career at the professional level is a key factor in his induction.

Earl Watson: A Kansas City native, Earl Watson played 13 seasons in the NBA as a point guard, appearing in more than 800 games. Following his playing career, Watson served as head coach of the Phoenix Suns from 2016 to 2017 and has remained active in player development and mentorship.

Local Impact: Contributions Beyond the Spotlight

While some inductees reached national stages, others are recognized for their impact within Kansas communities.

Ricky Ross – A South High standout is recognized as one of the city's best high school players ever. He played at both the University of Kansas and Tulsa. Ross was originally selected for the hall in 2023, but had been unable to attend the ceremony in the past.



DeAngelo Evans became one of the nation's most highly recruited high school running backs while starring at Wichita Collegiate. His speed and playmaking ability earned national attention before he continued his football career at the University of Nebraska.

Nino Samuel – Honored posthumously, Samuel was a standout at Salina High School before playing at the University of Kansas and later contributing to the game as a coach and mentor.

Judy Dyer – In 1966, the Topeka native became one of

the six original TSU Tigerettes to start the women's track and field team. She was part of the 4x100-relay and sprint medley team that set many records, and she was an indoor NAIA Champion in the 60-yard dash and 80-meter hurdles.

James Gadson, Kansas City-Born Drummer Who Defined The Groove, Dies At 86

From Kansas City Roots To Global Impact, Gadson's Steady Groove Shaped Soul, Funk And Modern Music

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

James “Gat” Gadson, a Kansas City-born drummer whose steady, hypnotic grooves helped define generations of soul, funk and R&B music, has died at age 86.

Over a career spanning more than six decades, Gadson became one of the most recorded drummers in R&B history, laying down the rhythm on iconic songs for artists including Bill Withers, Marvin Gaye, Diana Ross and the Jackson 5.

His influence didn't stop with the hits of the 1970s and '80s. Gadson's drum work became a foundation for DJs and producers, with grooves that could be looped, sampled and reimaged in new music. That ability kept his sound relevant across generations, extending his impact well beyond his prime years.

Even in later decades, Gadson remained in demand, contributing to projects by artists including D'Angelo, Beck and Norah Jones — a testament to a style that never went out of place.

His catalog reads like a soundtrack of modern music. Among the songs carrying his unmistakable groove are “Use Me” and “Lean on Me” by Bill Withers, “Dancing Machine” by the Jackson 5, “Love Hangover” by Diana Ross, Cheryl Lynn's “Got to Be Real,” Gloria Gaynor's “I Will Survive,” Thelma Houston's “Don't Leave Me This Way,” Peaches & Herb's “Shake Your Groove Thing,” Marilyn McCoo and Billy Davis Jr.'s “You Don't Have to Be a Star

(To Be in My Show),” Rose Royce's “Wishing on a Star,” and “Express Yourself” by Charles Wright and the Watts 103rd Street Rhythm Band.

Tributes poured in from across the music world following his death, many pointing to a quality that set Gadson apart: his feel.

“The beat goes on, but the pocket will never be the same,” read a tribute shared by the Bill Withers camp.

Among the most notable tributes came from Questlove, drummer for The Roots and musical director for “The Tonight Show,” who credited Gadson with shaping an entire style of drumming.

“Some drummers are soulful. Some drummers are funky... but no drummer has impacted the art of break-beat drumming — danceable drums — like James Gadson,” Questlove wrote. “James Gadson is breakbeats defined.”

In a tribute circulating on social media, Red Hot Chili Peppers bassist Flea captured the emotional connection many felt to his work: “His legacy will live on through a zillion joyful dances humans will do to his beats, to heal and feel free.”

That idea — groove as something people feel — speaks to what made Gadson's playing so enduring.

His drumming had a way of pulling listeners in. The rhythm was steady and continuous, creating a groove you could settle into almost instantly. But within that repetition, Gadson added subtle touches — light ghost notes and slight shifts in timing — that kept the beat alive without



crowding it.

It was a balance that made his work especially valuable. His beats were strong enough to carry a song, yet open enough to leave space for vocals, instrumentation and, later, sampling. Long before producers built songs around drum loops, Gadson was creating grooves that naturally invited repetition without ever feeling mechanical.

Born June 17, 1939, in Kansas City to Thomas Harold Gadson and Arlethia Hopson

Gadson, he grew up in a musical household where talent ran deep.

He was one of seven children in the family, part of a close-knit upbringing shaped by music, faith and discipline.

After the military, he returned to Kansas City and began performing with his brother in a group called the Derbys. The band played locally and traveled across the country, performing primarily in Black clubs and venues but also in some white

establishments, where they often encountered racism.

Gadson's path to drumming was unconventional. When the group needed a drummer, he stepped in and taught himself, developing a style rooted more in feel than formal training.

He later moved to Los Angeles, where his career took off. Though he initially struggled to adapt from jazz to R&B, he soon developed the steady, pocket-driven approach that would make him one of the most sought-after studio drummers of his time.

Despite his global reach, Gadson remained deeply connected to Kansas City.

He returned often and stayed close to family. His sister, Robbie Herndon, who divides her time between Kansas City and Houston, is the last surviving member of his original siblings.

He also leaves behind nieces Eartha Byrd and Lis Ellis, and nephews Maurice Gadson and Brice Herndon, along

with other extended family members in the Kansas City area. His legacy also reaches Wichita, where his niece, Judge Gwynne Birzer, serves on the bench.

Family members have described Gadson as humble and soft-spoken — a man whose influence far exceeded his public profile. His wife, Barbara, remembered him not only as a legendary musician but as a devoted husband, father and grandfather.

That humility showed in his music. Gadson never overplayed. He didn't need to.

Instead, he created grooves that listeners could live in — rhythms that felt as natural on the hundredth listen as they did on the first.

And as Questlove's tribute suggests, those grooves didn't just support songs — they helped define the sound of modern music.

Even now, long after the recording stops, the beat goes on.

Luther Vandross Earns Rare First-Ballot Rock Hall Induction

After decades of being overlooked, the R&B legend finally gets in — as other major nominees, including Mariah Carey, fall short again.

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

After decades of being overlooked, Luther Vandross has finally been inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame — and in one of the most exclusive ways possible: a first-ballot induction.

For an artist whose career defined modern R&B, the honor is both historic and long overdue.

Vandross, who became eligible in 2006, waited nearly 20 years just to receive his first nomination. Yet once he made it onto the ballot, voters wasted no time. His immediate induction places him in rare company among artists who were selected the first time they were nominated — a list that includes legends such as Aretha Franklin, James Brown, Madonna and U2.

That distinction makes Vandross' journey even more remarkable: ignored for years, then instantly embraced once finally recognized.

Who Made It — And How Many Got In

From a ballot of 17 nominees, the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame selected a group of performers that included Vandross, Phil Collins, Sade, Wu-Tang Clan, Oasis and Iron Maiden, among others.

Typically, only five to seven artists are inducted in the performer category each year, making selection highly competitive. The final class is chosen by more than 1,200 artists, historians and music industry professionals.

First-Time Nominees Who Broke Through

Alongside Vandross, the Wu-Tang Clan also earned induction on their first nomination, reflecting the group's lasting impact since their groundbreaking 1993 debut.

Phil Collins also made it in on his first solo nomination, adding to his earlier induction



Luther Vandross is headed to the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame as a rare first-ballot inductee after years of being overlooked.

as a member of Genesis.

Who Didn't Make It — Including Mariah Carey Again

Not everyone on the ballot was successful. **Mariah Carey** — despite 19 No. 1 hits and more than 200 million records sold worldwide — was passed over once again. This marked her **third consecutive nomination without induction.**

Other notable nominees who fell short included:

- **Lauryn Hill** — whose 1998 album *The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill* won five Grammys in one night and remains one of the most acclaimed albums of its era
- **New Edition** — the Boston group that helped define the modern R&B

boy-band sound with hits like “Candy Girl” and “Cool It Now,” selling more than 20 million records

- **Shakira** — a global pop star whose crossover success has made her one of the most influential Latin artists of her generation
- **P!nk** — known for her powerhouse vocals and genre-blending catalog that spans pop, rock and R&B

Other Ways To Get In

Beyond the performer category, the Hall also inducts honorees through three special committee pathways:

- **Early Influence**
- **Musical Excellence**
- **Ahmet Ertegun Non-Performer Award**

This year, **Queen Latifah** was inducted through the Early Influence category, recognizing her groundbreaking role in shaping hip-hop and culture.

She was joined in that category by pioneer including MC Lyte.

More than 50 years after his death, Ed Sullivan will be honored with the Ahmet

Ertegun Non-Performer Award.

Why The Hall Isn't Just About Rock Music

Despite its name, the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame has never been limited to traditional rock artists.

The Hall defines “rock and roll” as a broad cultural movement rooted in rhythm and blues — one that has expanded over time to include **R&B, soul, hip-hop, pop, country and other genres.**

That's why artists like Luther Vandross and Wu-Tang Clan are recognized alongside rock acts. Their influence, innovation and cultural impact all trace back to the same musical foundation.

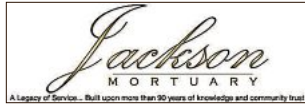
Similarly, figures like Ed Sullivan are honored for helping bring groundbreaking artists — including Black performers — into mainstream American homes, shaping the trajectory of modern music.

When And Where The Ceremony Will Be Held

The 2026 Rock & Roll Hall of Fame induction ceremony will take place **November 14 at the Peacock Theater in Los Angeles**, with a televised broadcast expected to air in December on ABC and Disney+.



Wu-Tang Clan earned Rock & Roll Hall of Fame induction on their first nomination, highlighting hip-hop's lasting influence.



Rose Turner - Earp, 74 • April 28, 1951 – April 10, 2026

Service was held April 18 at St. Mark Cathedral Church of God in Christ

Claude Daniels Jr., 74 • February 26, 1952 – April 13, 2026

Service was held April 22 at Winfield Veterans Cemetery

Darrin L. Walker, 61 • October 13, 1964 – April 7, 2026

Service will be held at 1 pm on April 25 at St. James Missionary Baptist Church, 1350 N Ash

Betty Gracey, 93 • April 22, 1932 – April 15, 2026

Service will be held at 1 pm on May 1 at Church of God

(Evening Light), 2509 N Grove.

Jimmy F. Guinn Sr., 82 • August 18, 1943 – April 15, 2026

Service will be held at 12 pm on May 2 at Tabernacle Church of God In Christ, 1502 E 17th

Robert Lee Hilliard, 83 • March 8, 1943 – April 15, 2026

Service will be held at 11 am on April 30 at Jackson Mortuary, 1125 E 13th

Jessie Parker, 80 • August 15, 1945 – April 13, 2026

Service will be held at 10 am on May 2 at St. James Missionary Baptist Church, 1350 N Ash

David Reynolds, Jr., 80 • April 13, 1945 – April 11, 2026

Service was held April 23 at Jackson Mortuary Chapel

Andrew Simpson, Jr., 76 • December 26, 1949 – April 11, 2026

Service will be held at 10 am on May 5 at Jackson Mortuary, 1125 E 13th.

Lester D. Richardson, 91 • January 25, 1935 – April 10, 2026

Service will be held at 11 am on May 1 at Greater Holy Temple COGIC, 1706 E 11th

Barbara Woodard, 68 • December 23, 1957 – April 10, 2026

Service will be held at 10 am on April 25 at Jackson Mortuary Chapel, 1125 E.13th

Naomi L. Walton, 102 • September 28, 1923 – April 4, 2026

Service was held on April 21 at Holy Savior Catholic Church.

Andrew Summers Jr., 1948 – 2026

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of our beloved friend and family member, Andrew Summers Jr., also known as “Dru,” on April 2, 2026.

His strength, kindness, and compassion touched the lives of all who knew him.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Andrew Summers Sr. and Clara Johnson Summers; his sister, Brenda K. Summers Banks; and his brother, Charles Edward Summers.

He is survived by his daughter, Andria Bell; son, Ty West; stepbrother, Gabriel Maxwell; and several grandchildren. In addition, Bezley IV and Adam



Ellison, whom Andrew co-parented, as well as a host of honorary nieces and nephews, relatives, friends, and his long-time lady companion, Tasleem M. Muqtasid.

Andrew’s unwavering support, warmth, and sense of humor brought comfort and joy to family, friends, and all who crossed his path. Many people were with Andrew

during the later days of his struggle with cancer, especially Quinlyn Foules, a dear friend, and his cousin Belinda Hayes.

Though our hearts are filled with sorrow, we find solace in the memories we shared, and the legacy Andrew Summers Jr. leaves behind.

Andrew will be deeply missed and forever remembered.

Memorial Service
Saturday, May 2, 2026
12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Carl Brewer Community Center 1329 E. 16th Street N. Wichita, Kansas 67214

For information, tributes, monetary donations, or flower delivery, please contact 682-207-4473.

HUNT MIDWEST REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT, INC.
8300 N.E. UNDERGROUND DRIVE, SUITE 100
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI 64161

Hunt Midwest, Logistics VII
In partnership with Port KC



portkc



INVITATION TO BIDDERS

Bids for the Hunt Midwest Logistics VII (the “Project”) for Hunt Midwest Real Estate Development, Inc. (“Owner”) to be located in Clay County, 8701 NE 48th Street, Kansas City Missouri 64161 (see map attached) will be received by Chris Reasoner, Assistant Vice President of Construction Management for the Owner, via email at creasoner@huntmidwest.com (“Representative”) RFP pricing window begins on Wednesday April 1st, 2026 and ends at 3:00pm on Thursday April 23rd, 2026. The proposed Work is set forth in the Bidding Documents. All bids must be in accordance with the Bidding Documents. Copies of the Bidding Documents, including, without limitation, Drawings, Specifications, Addenda and the Bidding Documents Manual, may be obtained from the Representative at the email address listed above, or download at the link provided in this document. The Bidding Documents Manual contains, among other things, the Instructions to Bidders, Bid Form, the Agreement Between Owner and Contractor, General Conditions of the Contract between Owner and General Contractor and certain approved forms for use in connection with the Project.

A Contractor’s Qualification Statement is required with the submission of a bid. Bids will be received on a stipulated sum basis, including the alternates described in the Contract Documents, if any.

Project has Port KC MBE/WBE subcontractor participation goals of MBE 14.7% and WBE 14.4%. Project is part of the Port KC Construction Workforce Program with workforce goals of Minorities 10%, and Women 2%. Right of way or Public Work is Prevailing Wage. Port KC required monthly documentation is provided in the project manual for General Contractor compliance reporting.

The purpose of this RFP is to obtain proposals for the selection of a general contractor for the Hunt Midwest Logistics VII building.

Questions. Any general questions must be submitted to Chris Reasoner at creasoner@huntmidwest.com before Thursday, April 16th, 2026 at 9:00 AM Central Standard Time. Responses will be issued no later than April 20th, 2026 at 1:00 PM. All questions will be answered through an addendum to this RFP, and will be posted on the link listed below. Questions will be addressed as they come in and addendums will be issued along the way, until April 16th, 2026 at 9:00 AM.

Meet and Greet/Site Visit Conference Rain or Shine, we will host a Meet and Greet/ Site Visit Conference on Thursday, April 9th at 10:00am. We will meet at a location adjacent to the site, please see in the link provided below. Please use the map to find the site, as the building address is not currently recognized by map applications. I will create an attendance list with contact information for those who attend. I will publish that list in an addendum so that everyone will be able to contact each other for bidding purposes.

The Successful Bidder may be required to furnish a Performance and a Payment Bond in a form approved by Owner as security for the faithful performance of, and the payment of all bills and obligations arising from the performance of the Contract.

In submitting a Bid, Bidder recognizes that Owner is not bound to award the Contract to any Bidder pursuant to any process or criteria established by any law or any other requirements, and Owner may reject any and all bids in its sole discretion. Owner may award the Contract based upon any criteria Owner believes is in its best interest.

If Owner accepts a Bid submitted, Owner will submit to the selected Bidder a fully completed Agreement Between Owner and Contractor, and the selected Bidder shall sign and deliver the required number of counterparts of the Agreement Between Owner and Contractor and any related documents to Owner within five (5) days of receipt of such documents.

Drawings can be downloaded beginning April 1st, 2026 at:
<https://app.box.com/s/zqjbcmb5thop9dr1i80cpreywm6rvmr>

Recap of Important Dates

- Out for RFP 4/1/2026
- Site Visit/Meet and Greet Conference 4/9/2026 at 10:00am
- Addendum Questions Due 4/16/2026 at 9:00am
- Addendum Answers Issued 4/20/2026 at 1:00pm
- RFP Due Date 4/23/2026 at 3:00pm



Fraud Prevention

I was hunting for deals. What I found was fraud.

AARP Fraud Watch Network® helps you recognize online shopping scams, so your money, health and happiness live longer. The younger you are, the more you need AARP. Learn more at aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork.

