

Available at your local



# Philadelphia *Observer*

50 Cents

Speaking Truth to Justice

PhiladelphiaObserver.com

Vol. 27 • No. 24

June 18 – June 24, 2020

# FOUND DEAD

## 19-YEAR OLD BLACK LIVES MATTER ACTIVIST



@virgingirltoyin/twitterage;

**19-year-old Black Lives Matter activist, Toyin Salau was found dead in Tallahassee, Florida following protests for the death of George Floyd. Salau's body was recovered in a house along with Mary Sims, 75 who was also found dead. Aaron Glee, the suspect has been apprehended, p3**

## Louisville bans no-knock warrants with 'Breonna's Law,' but her killers still haven't been arrested

Philadelphiaobserver.com

The Louisville Metro Council unanimously passed a law banning "no-knock" warrants in the city on Thursday. The measure was named after Breonna Taylor, the 26-year-old woman who was shot and killed in March after officers from the Louisville Metro Police Department that entered her home with one such warrant.

Under "Breonna's Law," law enforcement in Louisville will no longer be able force themselves into homes unannounced, as they allegedly did on the night Taylor was killed, according to the

Washington Post. Cops will also be required to wear body cameras when serving warrants.

The three cops, who shot Taylor at least eight times, were not wearing body cameras on the night she was killed, and they have yet to be arrested or even charged with her death.

Still, the passage of the law codifies the current suspension of "no-knock" warrants that Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer had initially announced in May. Mayor Fischer says he will immediately sign the Council's measure into law and calls it a critical step to "create a more peaceful, just, compassionate, and equitable community."



## US Navy latest military force to ban the Confederate Flag

Philadelphiaobserver.com

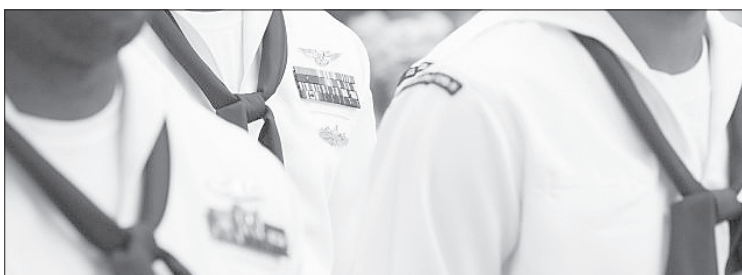
The nationwide protests against police brutality and systemic racism have caused many long-standing American institutions to look inward and figure out how they can do the bare minimum to support the cause. The Marines have ordered the removal of Confederate flags from their bases; the Army has expressed openness to the idea of renaming bases named after Confederate generals; and now, the Navy has joined in with its own performative gesture.

CNN reports that an order is being crafted to ensure the removal of all Confederate iconography from Navy institutions. "The Chief of Naval Operations, Adm. Mike Gilday, has directed his staff to begin crafting an order that would prohibit the Confederate battle flag from all public spaces and work areas aboard Navy installations, ships, aircraft and submarines," Cmdr. Nate Christensen, Gilday's spokesperson, said in a statement.

Initially, U.S. Army Secretary

Ryan McCarthy, Secretary of Defense Mark Esper and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Mark Milley expressed openness to holding bipartisan discussions to rename approximately a dozen military bases named after Confederate generals—but President Trump shut that shit down with the quickness, though. In a series of tweets sent out Wednesday, the president said: "my Administration will not even consider the renaming of these Magnificent and Fabled Military Installations..."

If I seem cynical about these moves, well, that's because I am. While these are cute gestures, until the military makes active efforts to combat white nationalism within its ranks, the gestures will ring hollow. Last year, a measure designed to combat white nationalism in the armed forces had the phrase "white nationalism" removed. In March, an active duty member of the Army plotted with a white nationalist to bomb a Kansas City hospital as the COVID-19 pandemic intensified. There's a clear problem here that the military just seems content to ignore.



## Struggle seen in Belgium over racist historical statues

(GIN) –

Some of the largest anti-racism protests in Europe have taken place in Belgium, the birthplace of King Léopold II, whose brutal rule of Congo from 1885 to 1908 caused an estimated 10 million Congolese deaths through murder, starvation and disease.

This past week, close to 12,000 people gathered in central Brussels. They were targeting the King Leopold statue outside the royal palace and more than a dozen others. The most egregious one depicts a group of Congolese people kneeling below Leopold in "gratitude."

Many of these statues were built in the 1930s when the Belgian government created a mythology around Leopold II, erasing the public memory of the Congo atrocities and replacing it with a narrative of a benevolent king who brought glory to Belgium.

But as calls for the statues removal grow louder, Belgian's political class is raising objections to the dismay of Afro-Belgians and other citizens.

"You should see what Leopold II has done for Belgium!" Prince

Laurent, younger brother of the current Belgian King Philippe, was quoted to say. "He had parks built in Brussels and many other things."

"I don't see how he could have made people (in the Congo) suffer," Laurent said. "There were many people that worked for Leopold II, and they were really abusive — but that does not mean that Leopold II was abusive."

"You won't erase the history by removing statues," said District Mayor Koen Palinckx of Antwerp. "You won't turn back the clock." He scolded activists destroying objects that are public property saying: "That's a line you do not cross."

"This is not how we proceed in a democracy," added Auderghem Mayor Didier Gosuin. "This is not how we put history back on the right track."

In 2010, former Belgian foreign minister Louis Michel, the father of future prime minister and present EU Council president Charles Michel, called Leopold "a hero with ambitions for a small country like Belgium" and described the Congo stories as "exaggerations".

Belgians have been unwilling to confront colonialism, said



Idesbald Goddeeris, a professor of history at Leuven Catholic University. When he was a student in the 1990s, instructors spent only one or two minutes on the country's role in Congo, he recalled.

"Slavery is still very real history for black people—we are still living with the consequences of it, with a racial hierarchy that puts black people at the bottom," said Mary Ononokpono, who is doing a PhD at the University of Cambridge on the British-Biafran slave trade.

"Britain, Europe and America—and Africa—have to confront their history," said Ononokpono. "We urgently need to have a long-overdue and honest discussion about the history of slavery and its legacy of impoverishment."

## Capping week of protests, slave trader statue toppled by UK activists

(GIN) –

Years of inaction over the fate of an 18 foot statue of Edward Colston, a 17th century slave trader with the Royal African Company (RAC) was decided this week with the toppling of Colston's bronze statue in Bristol, England.

The statue was pulled down by protestors at a demonstration in solidarity with Black Lives Matter and George Floyd. The figure was dragged to the Bristol harbor and flung into the River Avon.

During Colston's employ at the RAC between 1672 and 1689, some 80,000 men, women and children were trafficked of whom 19,000 died on voyages from West Africa to the Caribbean and the Americas. After retiring from slave trading, Colston turned to philanthropy, leaving a trail of schools, a concert hall, a highrise office building, a street and an avenue with his name.

Activists have argued for years that his connections with slavery meant his contribution to the city should be reassessed.

"He was a slave trader and a murderer," declared David Adetayo Olusoga, a British-Nigerian history professor at the University of Manchester, prize-winning writer, broadcaster and filmmaker who supported the figure's removal.

"Statues are not about re-

membering history," he declared in a BBC interview. "They're about saying 'this man was a great man who did great things'. That's not true. He was involved in the Royal African Company, the company that trafficked more people into slavery than any in British history."

Still, some government officials stood up for Colston's statue and denounced its removal. "Utterly disgraceful," said home secretary Priti Patel. "Sheer vandalism and disorder are completely unacceptable."

Health Secretary Matt Hancock claimed that the UK protests were fuelled by events in America "rather than here". But Shadow justice secretary David Lammy, a Black man, observed that racism and prejudice exist in the UK, as well as across the Atlantic, and that to suggest there is only a problem in the US "shows real ignorance".

Mr Lammy tweeted: "People in



this country are not only showing solidarity with George Floyd and other African Americans. We must turn this moment into one of change and justice in the UK too."

A young Britisher caught on CNN echoed Lammy's remarks: "This is not a trend. This is not a hashtag. We're not here for a fashion. We're here to change something. Racism cannot be tolerated in our society. We need to change this." w/pix of empty pedestal



# Oluwatoyin 'Toyin' Salau, missing Black Lives Matter activist, reportedly found dead

Philadelphiaobserver.com

Social media users powered the name of Oluwatoyin "Toyin" Salau to become a top trending topic Monday morning as thousands of tweets were mourning the life of the young Black Lives Matter activist reportedly found dead in Florida over the weekend. Salau, 19, was last seen in Tallahassee on June 6 before unconfirmed social media reports of her death emerged more than a week later.

The Tallahassee Police Department announced Sunday that it was investigating a double homicide and had made an arrest in the case but neither revealed the identities of the victims nor the suspect.

During "the course of a follow up investigation in a missing person case" on Saturday night, Tallahassee police found "two deceased people," the Tallahassee Police Department posted on its Facebook page on Sunday. "The deaths are being investigated as homicides and have been turned over to TPD's Violent Crime Unit."



Photo credit @virgingirltoyin/twitter

People on Twitter quickly pointed to the Facebook post as verification of Salau's death. It was unclear who the other victim might be.

One Twitter account purportedly belonging to someone helping Salau's mother tweeted late Sunday night that "Toyin is no longer with us."

# Wisconsin man spotted walking his dog in KKK robe, hood

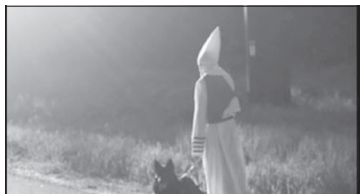
Philadelphiaobserver.com

A photo emerged online over the weekend showing a man wearing a KKK hood and robe while walking his dog in rural Wisconsin.

Charles Michael Booth, 50, has been identified as the suspected Klansman in the photo, that was first posted on Facebook by user Rachel Byington, Heavy reports.

"Hey Vilas County folks. A friend took this photo near the Lakota boat landing off of Highway K in Conover," Byington captioned the image. "Be careful. I did not take the picture and the person who did wants to remain anonymous," she added.

Booth's agitator stunt



comes amid ongoing civil unrest over the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and Rayshard Brooks, whose deaths have fueled ongoing debate about race relations in America.

The image of the Klansman and his pooch has been widely shared across social media, with some users noting that the Ku Klux Klan has a strong presence in that area of northern Wisconsin.

Vilas County Sheriff Joe Fath said wearing a KKK robe and hood in public is not a crime, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reports.

"It should not have bothered anybody. I realize that that may be offensive to some people, but it's not a crime," said Faith of the handful of complaints the department received about a man in a KKK gown walking his dog June 12.

"He was walking down Highway K, which is about two to three miles out of Conover," he added. "It's a country road. It's not in anybody's particular neighborhood."

Deputies reportedly contacted Booth about the incident and he explained that he was simply "taking his dog for a walk."

# NASCAR joins growing list of those taking stand against racial injustice

By Stacy M. Brown, NNPA Newswire Senior Correspondent

Since protestors and demonstrators have taken to the streets around the globe in the aftermath of the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis, many businesses and organizations have issued statements and taken measures to communicate their stand against racial injustice.

On Wednesday, June 10, NASCAR joined that ever-growing list with the announcement that it's removing the Confederate flag from all of its events.

"The presence of the Confederate flag at NASCAR events runs contrary to our commitment to providing a welcoming and inclusive environment for all fans, our competitors and our industry," NASCAR officials wrote in a statement.

"Bringing people together around a love for racing and the community that it creates is what makes our fans and sport special. The display of the Confederate flag will be prohibited from all NASCAR events and properties."

Companies and organizations like the National Basketball Association, Goldman Sachs, Amazon, Ben & Jerry's, and Nike have also issued statements condemning racial injustice.

However, skeptics say it remains too early to tell if the growing list of businesses will support African American-owned businesses and the continued cry for racial equality.

"NASCAR isn't a museum. It's a sport. And on race day, it's a sport that invests more time and pageantry honoring America than anyone," writer Dan Wolken wrote in an Op-Ed for USA Today. "The people who insist the Confederate flag is an important part of that



NASCAR driver Bubba Wallace stands on pit row at Martinsville (Photo: nascar.co)

pageantry are not amplifying the values inherent to American sports. They're mocking the long road to progress that has once again arrived at a defining, historic moment."

While many took to social media to voice their surprise about NASCAR's decision, one of the sport's premier drivers and NASCAR's lone Black competitor joined in to applaud the move.

"I'm just really proud of the efforts of NASCAR for stepping up and wanting to be a part of the change," Bubba Wallace, who's No. 43 Chevrolet car has the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag painted over the vehicle, told Good Morning America.

"I know it's tough, they're in a tough situation," Wallace stated. "They've been in a tough situation for a long time now, but I think this is the most crucial time and time is of the essence right now in the world that we're in and the nation that we're in to create change and create unity and come together and really try to be more inclusive."



F. Bensouda

# Trump team attempts to block world court from investigating possible US war crimes

(GIN) –

A world court designed to investigate allegations of human rights violations has found itself in the crosshairs of the President of the United States.

A new Trump executive order threatening the court's operations has been condemned by prominent global institutions and

individuals as it appears to give cover to human rights abuses committed in the course of U.S. foreign wars while demanding accountability from foreign countries in similar circumstances.

The International Criminal Court (ICC), for example, has the power to investigate war crimes

Continued on page 4



# Georgia's primary election was a national scandal

Philadelphiaobserver.com

Thousands of Georgia voters waited for up to seven hours in lines that stretched blocks during the state's primary election on Tuesday, and many left before voting.

The state's new voting machines did not work, because of either mechanical failure or poor training of poll workers. Many voters came to wait in line after failing to receive absentee ballots they requested to avoid the in-person threat of coronavirus. And many voters left the lines without having cast their ballots.

The worst problems were concentrated in counties and localities with higher Black populations.

Even for a state marred by a recent history of malice and incompetence in its administration of elections, Tuesday's election was a calamity. It was neither free nor fair, critics said.

The election drew national attention as former Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton tweeted that Georgia's failure

was "voter suppression."

"Many Republicans don't want certain people to vote," former Attorney General Eric Holder tweeted. And L.A. Lakers star LeBron James asked whether it revealed "structurally racist" barriers to voting.

"Yesterday was completely avoidable," said Nse Ufot, executive director for the New Georgia Project. "It was a direct attack on our democracy."

"Maybe the Carter Center should send monitors to monitor Georgia elections," said Jerry Gonzalez, executive director of Georgia Association of Latino Elected Officials, referencing the organization founded by former President Jimmy Carter that monitors foreign elections.

President Donald Trump and former Vice President Joe Biden are expected to be competitive in Georgia in the general election. The state is also in the rare position of holding races to fill two U.S. Senate seats, either one of which could decide which party holds the balance of power in that body.

## Trump team attempts to block world court from investigating possible US war crimes

From page 3

and crimes against humanity committed in north east Nigeria, and by so doing, offers the possibility of justice for Nigerians who suffered abuses by the military fighting Boko Haram in that region.

In March, the ICC ruled that it could also investigate allegations of war crimes in Afghanistan – including any committed by the U.S. – taking a step that outraged the Trump administration.

Param-Preet Singh of the U.S.-based Human Rights Watch, praised the decision of the ICC to greenlight an investigation of brutal crimes in Afghanistan, reaffirming the court's essential role for victims when all other doors to justice are closed.

After years of collecting information on the Afghanistan war, the court's chief prosecutor, Ms. Fatou Bensouda of The Gambia, said that enough information had been found to prove that U.S. forces "committed acts of torture, cruel treatment, outrages upon personal dignity, rape and sexual violence" in Afghanistan in 2003 and 2004, and later in clandestine C.I.A. facilities in Poland, Romania and Lithuania.

She requested permission to open an investigation into claims of war crimes and crimes against humanity attributed to the U.S. military and intelligence person-

nel, the Taliban and Afghan forces.

The United Nations' mission in Afghanistan has documented the killings of more than 17,000 civilians by the Taliban since 2009, including nearly 7,000 targeted killings. Yet, last April, a U.N. report found that U.S. and Afghan forces had killed more civilians in the first three months of 2019 than the Taliban did.

Objections by the U.S. to being examined for serious crimes in Afghanistan began with John R. Bolton, then the national security adviser, who denounced the court as "illegitimate." He said: "We won't cooperate with the I.C.C. We will provide no assistance to the I.C.C. And we certainly will not join the I.C.C. We will let the I.C.C. die on its own." He added, "If the court comes after us, we will not sit quietly."

Similar comments have been made by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

Shaharzar Akbar, the head of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, said the court had made the right decision to proceed over U.S. objections. "We will advocate for victims regardless of the group affiliation of the perpetrator — whether U.S. actors, Taliban or Afghan forces," Ms. Akbar said.

The ICC was established more than 15 years ago to seek justice for victims of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide

## Thomas Lane, former cop charged with killing George Floyd, makes bail



Philadelphiaobserver.com

One of the fired police officers who was charged in the death of George Floyd has made bail. TMZ reports that Thomas Lane, the officer who had just four days on the job has been able to post \$750K on a \$1M dollar bail.

Lane's lawyer, Earl Gray, told TMZ only that it was "pretty good news" when asked how Lane was able to post bond. His family did seek donations to help him get out of jail and for his defense, the site reports, but was unable to confirm if that's how he raised the money.

Lane is the one officer out of the four who asked if Floyd should be laid on his side while

he was lying prone on the street in handcuffs. He also, according to his family, was the one who accompanied Floyd in the ambulance and he performed CPR.

People visit a memorial at the site where George Floyd was killed on June 3, 2020 in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

However, Lane, along with the three other ex-officers including Derek Chauvin, who had his knee on Floyd's neck, was seen pinning Floyd down. He is the officer shown in the mask.

Despite Lane's request to turn Floyd over, Chauvin would not let up and Lane's family says that he was prohibited by the chain of command to intervene more. It appears that the family will cite his lack of experience as a factor

in why he didn't do more.

Chauvin, a 19-year veteran of the Minneapolis police force, had 18 citations on his record on May 25 when Floyd died after police were called to a forgery in progress call. Floyd was accused of passing a \$20 bill at a convenience store in North Minneapolis.

Lane and former Minneapolis police officers Tao Thao, J Alexander Kueng were all charged with aiding and abetting second-degree murder in a case that has generated worldwide protests for the last 16 days. Some protests have turned violent and looters destroyed and burned stores in several states.

Chauvin has been charged with second-degree murder.

## Wisconsin gym under fire for 'I can't breathe' workout

Philadelphiaobserver.com

The Anytime Fitness in Wauwatosa recently offered a 35-minute drill of burpees and row exercises that was meant to honor the memory of George Floyd, a Black man who died May 25 after a white Minneapolis police officer, Derek Chauvin, knelt on his neck for nearly nine minutes.

The "I Can't Breathe" routine was written on a dry-erase board and featured the image of a kneeling man and the words "And don't you dare lay down" at the

bottom, according to NBC News.

Although it's common for CrossFit to create workouts to honor those who died, some locals felt the "I Can't Breathe" set was in bad taste considering the brutal way Floyd died.

Among those in agreement were the corporate executives at Anytime Fitness, which has more than 4,000 franchised locations in 50 countries.

The execs quickly apologized for the workout and promised to bolster training efforts to prevent similar gaffes.



## For a day, scientists pause science to confront racism

By Dennis Overbye

Galvanized by the reaction to the killing of George Floyd and continued reports that minority researchers feel marginalized and disrespected, almost 6,000 scientists and academicians said they would participate in a one-day strike on Wednesday.

The event was organized by a loosely affiliated group of physicists and cosmologists operating under various hashtags, including #Strike4BlackLives, #ShutDownStem and #ShutDownAcademia.

Participants planned to cancel classes, lectures or committee meetings, hold off on reporting any breakthroughs, and forgo engaging with email and reading draft articles for peer review. Instead, they would devote the day to a close examination of how science does business.

"Racism in science is enmeshed with the larger scheme of white supremacy in society," said Brian Nord, a physicist at the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory in Illinois and one of the organizers of the strike, repeating a phrase he attributed to his co-organizer, Chanda Prescod-Weinstein, a cosmologist at the University of New Hampshire. "We need to rethink what scientific collaborations should look like. Black people need a seat at the table."



He added, "The idea is to disrupt the system, at least for a day." As of Wednesday morning, some 5,700 scientists had signed a pledge to strike, and registration was closed. The petition reads, in part: "We recognize that our academic institutions and research collaborations — despite big talk about diversity, equity and inclusion — have ultimately failed black people."

Demands for justice have been met with gradualism and tokenism, the organizers said, and black students still often feel unsupported and unwelcome at predominantly white college campuses and laboratories.

Many leading scientific journals, including Science, Physical Review Letters and arXiv, an online platform where physicists post their pre-prints, have all said that

they will be silent on Wednesday.

In a notice sent to reporters on Tuesday, the prominent journal Nature, which publishes new research papers every Wednesday, said that it would hold off on doing so until Thursday, with the exception of breaking news about the coronavirus.

"Nature condemns police prejudice and violence, we stand against all forms of racism, and we join others around the world in saying, unequivocally, Black Lives Matter," their statement read.

"We recognize that Nature is one of the white institutions that is responsible for bias in research and scholarship. The enterprise of science has been — and remains — complicit in systemic racism, and it must strive harder to correct those injustices and amplify marginalized voices."

# COVID-19 IS KILLING BLACK PEOPLE.

## PRESIDENT TRUMP, HELP US!

### Covid-19 is killing us. Racism is our pre-existing condition.

This is not hyperbole. We have a crisis within a crisis. This moment, our bodies carry the vestiges of America's hateful past. The intergenerational trauma of slavery, hate, murder and institutional injustice is carried in our DNA. Over 400 years of exploitation and violence have literally made us sick. Food deserts, expensive healthcare, pollution, and endless microaggressions are all traumas of the mind and body — and they are killing us. Nationally, Blacks are dying from Covid-19 at a rate 3 to 4 times higher than whites.

Today, Black people have higher incidences of hypertension, diabetes, heart disease, cancer, infant mortality, and strokes. Trauma after trauma, generation after generation, poverty, oppression, and violence sit in our bodies as disease.

### Mr. President, right now, this minute, we need you to LEAD.

I grew up in a family business. I'm no expert on pandemics, but I see desperation and pain spreading in our communities. We need decisive and urgent action.

There are federal actions that only you can take. Please form an urgent response team to target Black, Latinx, and Indigenous populations. This team must include the best and brightest from communities of color with expertise in: infectious disease and research; targeted marketing and communications; general expertise in hospital and institutional supply chains; retail supply chains and manufacturing operations; and, state and county healthcare coordinators. The team must give weekly updates on C-SPAN with FACTS from each discipline. Journalists from affected counties, neighborhoods, and reservations must have virtual access to these press conferences.

We need mass quantities of PPE and cleaning products. In some cases, we are paying \$4 EACH for disposable surgical face masks and \$9 for a 16-ounce bottle of hand sanitizer *if* we can find them. CDC-recommended masks, sanitizer, disinfectant cleaners, and wipes are scarce and expensive. Our communities already spend more on basic household items as a percentage of income. How can we get back to work *and* protect our families? Must we choose between our livelihoods and our lives? Once schools reopen, there will be even more demand for virus-related supplies. How can families afford to keep children safe? This is America?

Use the Defense Production Act (DPA) to get these products to our shelves urgently — within weeks, not months — at PRE-PANDEMIC PRICES. Flood the marketplace with products to save lives and end the price gouging.

People of color are primarily the ones disinfecting our public spaces, cleaning hospital rooms and common areas, providing daily personal care for the sick, driving the buses, working the cash registers, harvesting and cooking our food, delivering packages, and so much more. Businesses are already passing on their costs of pandemic-related overhead. Small businesses can't carry these additional expenses unless they increase prices. We are paying more for food and household basics. Higher prices pour salt in the wounds of disadvantaged communities.

PPE, syringes, swabs, vials, gloves, sterile wipes, and other critical items need to be produced under the DPA now! WE STILL DON'T have enough PPE. It is delusional to think demand has lessened. It's not lower; we are rationing our supplies because *we have to*. And we're compromising our healthcare workers and hospital staff in the process. Proper medical standards for PPE usage must be reinstated. Public and private healthcare systems are paying more for supplies and passing the costs on to us!

DPA must control prices on medical and household virus-related goods. PRE-PANDEMIC PRICES must be held in check at each stage of production, distribution, and point of sale. The DPA producers must proportionally include our communities for employment opportunities and as vendor partners.

### This is not the time for corporate America to be greedy.

We need MANY, MANY MORE TESTS for those disproportionately affected! Let me define what I mean by testing: ACCURATE with RAPID RESULTS (within hours, not days); adequate supplies to rapidly process tests; and, ACCESSIBLE and free weekly testing for frontline and essential workers to be tested in their zip code.

Please don't keep telling us that testing is not necessary for everyone; only those with symptoms. Don't tell us "we can't test 300 million people" and that you are tracking cases to identify hot spots. Cases are PEOPLE. We are not numbers to be "tracked" by some lag indicator. People who live in densely populated cities or work the front lines need frequent testing. PERIOD. Those with positive or undetermined results need temporary housing to self-isolate. Use federal or military housing. Allocate money to target states to pay for all test-related expenses.

We need a specific, detailed plan for every type of congregate housing, their residents, staff, and vendors. This includes prisons, jails, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, shelters, and other places. It is long overdue. We need a PLAN NOW . . . today! Families are at risk.

We need your leadership. If you allow this virus to hollow out essential workers and communities of color with more sickness and death, our economic recovery won't be a "V", it will be an "L" — and our morality will never recover.

MR. PRESIDENT, PLEASE  
FOR GOD'S SAKE . . . HELP US!

Prayerfully,



Terri Gardner, Elder, Wer1tribe.org

# Editorial

# Philadelphia Observer

## Too many African American children are born in shackles

By Jesse Jackson

**“I can’t breathe,”** pled George Floyd in Minneapolis and Erik Garner in New York City and Javier Ambler in Austin, Texas, before police killed them.

**A**mid the protests against brutality, Rayshard Brooks in Atlanta, whom police found asleep in his car, was shot twice in the back and killed.

In Austin, Justin Howell lies in critical condition in the hospital, shot during a protest by a policeman using a “less-lethal weapon.” His mistake? He stood next to the demonstrator the policeman was shooting at.

And now, two young African American men, Robert Fuller and Malcolm Harsch, are found dead, hanging by their necks 50 miles from one another in California. Although the police initially dismissed the cases as suicide, they are now under investigation after a public outcry.

In the midst of a national uprising on racial justice, the possible lynching of two black men should not be swept under the carpet.

For African Americans, poverty should not be a prison and skin color should not be a cage. White supremacists disguised as police officers should not use us as target practice. So-called “qualified immunity” must not shield killers from the law. Those with a shield and a badge must be held to the highest standards.

It is time to fulfill America’s promise of equal justice under the law.



As the demonstrations continue, the reality of the criminal injustice system that African Americans face every day keeps getting exposed. At the same time, the pandemic has exposed the systemic racial gaps that scar our society. Police serve as an occupying force in poor communities of color because those communities exist — often created by red-lining — worsened by savage inequality of schools and health care and job

opportunity.

CNN recently detailed “Black-White Inequality in Six Stark Charts.” African Americans have barely 1/10th the median wealth of white families, a wider gap than at the beginning of the century. The disparity is primarily due to the differences in home ownership, where African Americans suffer from being locked out of so many neighborhoods for so long, and inheritance, where African Amer-

icans suffer the legacy of years of slavery and segregation.

The median income of African American families, at \$41,000, is less than 60% of white families at \$71,000, another gap that has grown worse since 2000. It was only last year that African American incomes exceed those in 2000, and that “progress” was wiped out in the pandemic.

Unemployment among African Americans generally is twice that of whites. Today, official unemployment for blacks is at 16.7% and for whites, 14.2%. It’s that close because blacks are disproportionately employed in frontline essential jobs — the postal service, mass transit, warehouses, grocery and drug stores, hospitals and nursing homes.

Poverty among African Americans, before the pandemic recession, was at 20.8%; for whites, 8.1%. African Americans are 60% less likely to have health care at work than whites.

Poverty, unemployment, low income, low savings all lead to vulnerability. African Americans are less likely to have adequate health insurance and more likely to have chronic illnesses. So African Americans, about 13.2% of the population, have suffered 23% of COVID-19 deaths.

Consider the shackles we put on too many African American children born into impoverished neighborhoods. Their mothers are less likely to have prenatal care; they are more likely to suffer death or injury at birth. They are less likely to have adequate nutrition; more likely to grow up in apartments with lead in the walls and pipes; less likely to have day care or pre-K. They go to public schools inequitable to those in the

affluent suburbs. They walk dangerous streets, where police too often provide not protection but a separate threat. And if they rise above that and go to college, they graduate with far higher student debt, into a job market that will pay them less than their white peers.

All of this is well known. None of it is accidental. Solutions are known but not adopted.

Racism is used to divide working and poor people, to protect those with privilege. Often, poor white families suffer simply because of the unwillingness to see tax dollars go to lift people of color from their misery.

For example, 14 states have refused to accept the federal government’s offer to pay for the expansion of Medicaid to cover poor working people. Not surprisingly, they are mostly states from the south: Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Oklahoma.

Economic violence snuffs out dreams and takes lives. Even as the demonstrations demand a reimagining of criminal justice, we need to demand a basic economic justice. There is only one major reason why this rich country does not have the universal health care, good public schools, secure retirements, decent housing, adequate food — and that is racial injustice and the collateral damage it does to people of all races who are not affluent.

Now change is in the air and, more importantly, in the streets. New possibilities are open.

America is called once more, led by the passion of a young generation more diverse than ever, finally to begin to address the racism that increasingly endangers us all.

# #DadJokesRule

fatherhood.gov

# NFL continues strong social justice initiative with \$250M commitment

By Stacy M. Brown, NNPA Newswire Senior Correspondent  
@StacyBrownMedia

The National Football League's social justice initiative has continued to inspire change in underserved communities, including a \$250 million commitment to bring awareness, dialogue, and a renewed direction to the conversation of racial and social inequality.

On Thursday, June 11, officials revealed exclusively to Black Press USA, that the commitment includes dedicated financial resources from the league, clubs, and players to nonprofits.

The commitment is also a league-wide amplification of inspiring stories of players making differences in their communities and society and deploying public policy and government affairs resources at the local, state, and national levels.

In the 2019 season, NFL teams participated in or hosted more than 500 social justice events.

Since 2017, teams have contributed \$44 million from sources including social justice grants approved by the league's players and owner's workgroup; the NFL Foundation matching grants; an ongoing financial commitment to the Player's Coalition; and as part of 32 teams' social justice matching funds.

"What inspired (the NFL) is the players lending their voices, their work, to issues of social injustice and racial injustice," stated Anna Isaacson, the NFL's

senior vice president of social responsibility and community relations.

"This work didn't start yesterday. Around 2016 and 2017, Colin Kaepernick and other players raised their voices and protested and started a movement which then inspired the NFL and our ownership to launch our Social Justice Initiatives."

As a result of those efforts, continued discussions and dialogue, Isaacson said the NFL prioritized four key areas: education, economic advancement, criminal justice reform, and community and police relations.

Kaepernick, the former San Francisco 49ers star quarterback famously took a knee during the playing of the national anthem to protest social and racial injustice. However, the Super Bowl quarterback's protest was widely misconstrued and condemned by many, and teams have failed to sign the former star.

In the wake of continued police violence against African Americans and the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, the NFL recently issued an apology for failing to understand the scope of the injustice African Americans have faced.

"Over the last couple of weeks, we've been watching what's going on, and there have been tons of discussions about what else we can do, how can we make it clear that this is an authentic and long-term commitment from the NFL," Isaacson told Black Press USA.

"That commitment is a standard \$250 million over 10 years," she stated.

Isaacson noted that the league's 100-year history hasn't just been about football. "We'd be nowhere without our fans, and nowhere without our players and the communities that invest in us," she pronounced.

"We've always been about investing in our communities, and a lot of that investment has been in underserved communities, Black communities, and communities of color. Whether it be on cancer-related work, health and wellness, physical activities, or domestic violence. What the NFL players have brought to the forefront over the past couple of years have been the importance of bringing community and law enforcement together. We've put our resources, money, and time into education and awareness. The NFL has stood for communities and giving back to communities, and particularly under-resourced and underfunded communities."



National Football League (NFL) Commissioner Roger Goodell delivers remarks during an event at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., launching an initiative between the Army and the NFL to work to raise awareness about traumatic brain injury. (Photo: U.S. Defense website / SSG Teddy Wade / Wikimedia Common)

## NFL announces major steps to incentivize teams to hire minorities for top posts

By Stacy M. Brown, NNPA Newswire Senior Correspondent

National Football League teams must now interview at least two minority candidates for head coaching positions under new resolutions that the league hopes will improve diversity among its 32 teams.

In an expansion of its Rooney Rule, which had previously called on teams to interview minority candidates, the league said teams must also interview at least one minority candidate for coordinator openings and one external candidate for positions in teams' front offices.

"While we have seen positive strides in our coaching ranks over the years aided by the Rooney Rule, we recognize, after the last two seasons, that we can and must do more," Commissioner Roger Goodell said during a media conference call.

"The policy changes made today are bold and demonstrate the commitment of our ownership to increase diversity in leadership positions throughout the league."

Troy Vincent, the NFL's executive vice president of football operations and second-in-command to Goodell, said the league is now in a better position to not only hire minorities and women but to retain their services.

"What the chairman (Art Rooney II) and the commissioner did today and what the ownership voted on today has been a fight for decades to get mobility that has disproportionately affected people of color," Vincent stated.

"Just the ability to get an interview, you don't get hired unless you have an interview. The mobility resolution today was significant and historic, because it has been a fight for decades. That's the foundation. Frankly, we would call that the linchpin of these inequalities. With these initiatives, the enhancement of the Rooney

Rule, which is a tool; it just allows us to have a broader scope of how we look at things."

The new rules include a provision that begins in 2021, which states that teams will no longer restrict staff from interviewing with other clubs for "bona fide" coaching or front office positions. Goodell called the commitment to improving diversity throughout the league is "critical" for future success.

"While we have seen positive strides in our coaching ranks over the years aided by the Rooney Rule, we recognize, after the last two seasons, that we can and must do more," Goodell said.

"The policy changes made today are bold and demonstrate the commitment of our ownership to increase diversity in leadership positions throughout the league."

Clubs also will be required to "include minorities and, or, female applicants in the interview processes for senior-level front office positions such as club president and senior executives in communications, finance, human resources, legal, football operations, sales, marketing, sponsorship, information technology, and security positions," according to the expanded rule.

Also, league officials stated that they would use an advisory panel to further strategies aimed at fostering an inclusive culture of opportunity both on and off the field.

Goodell also promised to improve the league's pipeline for minority coaching and player personnel candidates with assistance from its Bill Walsh NFL Diversity Coaching Fellowship.

"This fight has been going on for a long time," said Vincent, who could one day become the league's first African American commissioner.

"The facts are we have a broken system, and we're looking to implement things to change the direction in where we're going, and it's been south. Not a gradual south but a direct south."



## Museums collect protest signs to preserve history in real time

By Graham Bowley

History — painful, at times angry, history — unfolded outside the White House in the past week and curators from the Smithsonian Institution toured the area on Wednesday to begin collecting the art, signs, photographs and other artifacts that multiplied there during the recent protests over George Floyd's death.

The nine curators from three Smithsonian museums spoke to protesters close to the security fence erected near Lafayette Square and later took away some of the signs that were being displayed.

"It is critical that we collect so this moment does not get lost," said Aaron Bryant, a curator at the National Museum of African American History and Culture. "We talk to people so we don't forget their stories. History is happening right before us."

Gone are the days when museums only sifted through the remnants of what survived from events that occurred generations ago. This effort was part of the new initiative, practiced by many museums, to collect historical artifacts in real time.



After the protests began, the fence erected to block protesters in front of the White House became a tableau calling out racism and honoring victims.

"I can't breathe." "Silence is not the answer." "Defund the Police," "Justice 4 George."

Mr. Bryant said he and other curators inspected signs and banners now on a construction wall near the fence, and protest signs beyond the immediate fence area as well, including boarded-up office windows that had been painted on. "I was captivated by the artwork that was on the boards," he said.

The curators noted the names of artists and photographers and identified objects that might be

important to preserve. "If we don't collect this stuff, who knows what happens to it," Mr. Bryant said.

The African American museum is working in coalition with the National Museum of American History and the Anacostia Community Museum which also had curators surveying the Lafayette Square area on Wednesday. The National Museum of American History said in a statement that it "recognizes that we are in a transformative time in the United States. We are listening to communities. We will document this important moment responsibly and respectfully through a variety of objects and stories from Washington, D.C. and across the nation."

# On the scene

By Audrey J. Bernard

## Nicole Beharie stuns in poignant 'Miss Juneteenth'

From Vertical Entertainment comes a poignant film — *Miss Juneteenth* — written and directed by Channing Godfrey Peoples, a Texas native, who grew up watching pageants. The Miss Juneteenth Scholarship Pageant is a long-running tradition in Fort Worth's Black community. For some mothers, it's a chance for their daughter to win a scholarship and attend college. This mother/daughter dynamic is caringly captured by Peoples in *Miss Juneteenth*, a captivating story about Black Americana. It's Peoples' first feature film and her depiction of Black pageants is spot-on! She captures the essence of the film rightly so as she was raised celebrating Juneteenth and attending Miss Juneteenth pageants. "I grew up with Juneteenth so it was just second nature to me," said Peoples. "We continue to celebrate that the same way every year. There's a parade, there's blues music, there's barbecues. And in the centerpiece of it is the Miss Juneteenth Pageant. It's a Scholastic beauty pageant for young African American women to gain college scholarship."

DEETS: In her film debut Peoples wanted to share her unique perspective through the eyes of former *Miss Juneteenth* beauty queen Turquoise Jones (Nicole Beharie) turned hard-working single mom and her rebellious teenage daughter, Kai Jones (Alexis Chikaeze) hoping to keep her from repeating the same mistakes in life that she made. Beharie is powerful as Turquoise Jones and her performance is buoyed



"Miss Juneteenth" poster art

by an exemplary cast: Kendrick Sampson as Ronnie; Liz Mikel as Betty Ray, and Lori Hayes, Akron Watson, Lisha Hackney, Jaime Matthis, Margaret Sanchez, and Marcus M. Mauldin. Every mother should take her beautiful Black daughter to see this magnificent film about humility, nobility and sense of worth.

"As a girl growing up in Texas, I marveled at the annual Miss Juneteenth winner gliding across the stage with hope on her face," Peoples said. "Before I understood the significance of the pageant and its purpose of instilling pride and self-worth in the ladies who were crowned its winner, I was fascinated by the pageantry: its contestants were young, hopeful African American women."

"Miss Juneteenth is a movie about dreams deferred," she

explains. "I am so honored to be able to make this film about a woman who is the legacy of those ancestors, desperately looking for a way to make a better future for her daughter."

SYNOPSIS: "Turquoise Jones is a single mom who holds down a household, a rebellious teenager, and pretty much everything that goes down at Wayman's BBQ & Lounge. Turquoise is also a bona fide beauty queen—she was once crowned Miss Juneteenth, a title commemorating the day slaves in Texas were freed—two years after the Emancipation Proclamation. Life didn't turn out as beautifully as the title promised, but Turquoise, determined to right her wrongs, is cultivating her daughter, Kai, to become Miss Juneteenth, even if Kai wants something else."



Turquoise at Wayman's BBQ & Lounge



Kai, Turquoise and Lori Hayes



"Miss Juneteenth" Premiere at 2020 Sundance Film Festival (L-R) Lori Hayes, Kendrick Sampson, Producer Jeanie Igoe, James M. Johnston, Producer Neil Creque Williams, Director Channing Godfrey Peoples, Zora, Alexis Chikaeze, Producer Theresa Steele Page, Executive Producer Nate Kamiya, and Nicole Beharie attend the "Miss Juneteenth" premiere during the 2020 Sundance Film Festival at Library Center Theater on January 24, 2020 in Park City, Utah. (Photo by Ernesto DiStefano/Getty Images-North America)

ASSETS: Directed by Channing Godfrey Peoples. Produced by Toby Halbrooks, Tim Headington, Jeanie Igoe, James M. Johnston, Theresa Page, and Neil Creque Williams. Written by Channing Godfrey Peoples. Music by Emily Rice. Cinematography by Daniel Patterson. Edited by Courtney Ware. Costumes by Rachel Dainer-Best. Production designer Olivia Peebles. Production Companies Sailor Bear, Ley Line Entertainment. Distributed by Vertical Entertainment. This film first premiered at the Sundance Film Festival earlier this year, and it also played at the SXSW Film Festival. Vertical Entertainment will release *Miss Juneteenth* in select US theaters + on VOD starting June 19, 2020.

Juneteenth is a mostly American holiday (it is also celebrated in Mexico by Mescogos, Afro-Mexican peoples) that commemorates June 19, 1865, the day that the last remaining enslaved African Americans in the Confederacy were freed in Texas. It is a time of



2020 "Miss Juneteenth"

celebration, of celebrating African American history, and includes Miss Juneteenth contests. (Photos courtesy Vertical Entertainment)



Turquoise helps Kai prepare for pageant



Contestants in "Miss Juneteenth" pageant



Kai and Turquoise share touching moment

# Celebrate Juneteenth!

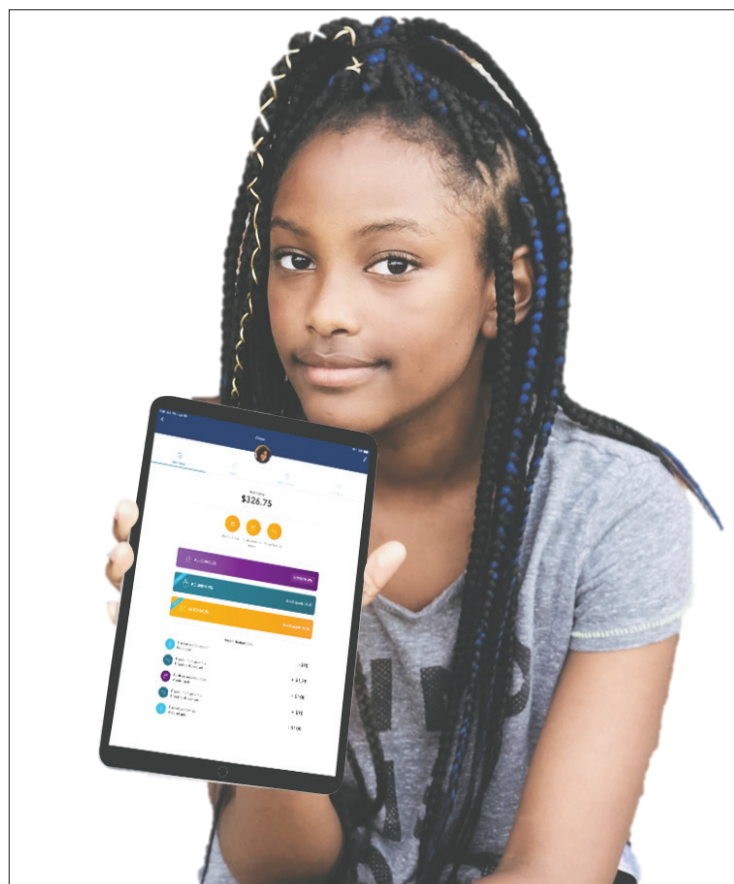


## Tanya Van Court's practical Juneteenth initiative promotes financial liberation



role in helping our young people to achieve financial freedom and build a better tomorrow for themselves and their families."

This financial initiative designed to help break the cycle of generational poverty in the Black community is supported by tech investor Smith. "Juneteenth is a celebration of our freedom from slavery, but African-Americans can't truly celebrate freedom until we are financially liberated and the wealth gap is closed," says Smith. "By giving Black youth a Goalsetter savings account and financial literacy app to engage with, created by a Black entrepreneur, we can change the way a whole generation learns about money and thinks about building wealth. Early savings can have a profound, long-term impact on our entire community." In 2019, Smith gifted Morehouse College, a Historically Black College and University (HBCU), with \$34 million dollars freeing nearly 400 graduates and their families of crippling student loan debt so graduates could begin their lives debt free.



Tanya Van Court

**Tanya Van Court** is the Founder and CEO of **Goalsetter**, a goal-based savings and financial literacy app which has teamed up with Robert F. Smith, chairman of Vista Equity Partners, BlackTikTok Influencers, and Sean Ali-Waddell, Jr., activist and cousin of Muhammad Ali, in a Juneteenth movement to sign one million Black youth up for Goalsetter savings accounts. The #SavingOurSelves initiative, designed to help break the cycle of generational poverty in the African American community by teaching financial literacy and

championing family savings, is the brainchild of Van Court. Juneteenth (June 19) is the day that marks the end of slavery in America in 1865.

"After enduring generations of inequality, disenfranchisement and marginalization, the African American community as a whole continues to struggle to achieve financial independence," says Van Court. "Goalsetter provides a gateway to overcome financial hardship by educating youth at the earliest ages and demystifying savings and wealth creation. We are excited to play a leadership

In 2020, Black Americans are still feeling the economic burden of centuries of racism. "Studies have shown that White Americans have 10 times the net worth of Black Americans, and Black Americans are projected to have a negative net worth by 2053," adds Van Court. "Young people who have savings accounts in their names—no matter how much is in them—are six times more likely to go to college and four times more likely to own stocks as young adults. Our job as a community is to show young people the way forward and support them."

In addition to partnering with leading community orga-

App image

nizations, Goalsetter is partnering with Black TikTok Influencers during their "Blackout" on Juneteenth to spread the word about the #SavingOurSelves campaign, and encourage their followers to sign up for savings accounts through the Goalsetter app. Skai Beauty, TikTok Creator and student at the HBCU Florida A&M University (FAMU) says "Black Lives Matter is the top trending hashtag on TikTok. That means that Black creators are fueling the economy of TikTok yet are not able

to participate in that wealth creation. We are spreading the word about this movement because financial freedom can only be achieved if Black people learn to build wealth as early as possible and are able to participate equally in the wealth that we create."

Sean Ali-Waddell, Jr., activist, cousin of Muhammad Ali, and HBCU student at Howard University adds "Getting one million Black kids to save is like teaching a million slaves to read. It's putting them on the path to freedom."

## The Michael Jackson estate donates \$300,000 towards COVID-19 relief

By Audrey J. Bernard

The Michael Jackson estate will donate \$300,000 towards COVID-19 relief efforts through three different charities. The estate will be giving \$100,000 each to Broadway Cares, the Three Square Food Bank in Nevada and MusiCares. "This virus strikes at the heart of the communities we are close to," co-executors of the Michael Jackson estate **John Branca** and **John McClain** said in a statement. "We learned today that the legendary **Manu Dibango** passed away from the

virus. Other performers and support staff in music and on Broadway are sick or have been left without work and are facing an uncertain future. And in Las Vegas, which has been so welcoming to Michael Jackson, the entire city has been shut down leaving thousands of workers and their families devastated and without an income," they continued. The donation towards Broadway Cares will help support entertainment and performing arts professionals. A Broadway play based on the singer's life titled *MJ the Musical*, is set to open July 6 at the Neil Simon Theater

in New York. The Three Square Food Bank will be able to provide 300,000 meals to those in need using the donation. *Michael Jackson ONE*, produced by Cirque du Soleil, is a popular show that runs in Las Vegas. MusiCares was started by the Recording Academy. The charity's COVID-19 relief fund will help those in the music industry affected by the virus and the cancellation of multiple music events. Dibango, a jazz great, died at the age of 86. He was best known for his 1972 hit song "Soul Makossa" which was famously sampled in Jackson's 1982 song "Wanna Be Startin' Something."



The late Michael Jackson in Detroit on July 7, 1998. The Michael Jackson estate is donating money towards COVID-19 relief efforts. (File Photo by Bill Pugliano/UPI)

# Celebrate Juneteenth!



Our  
*Shero*

“I want my daughter to see how strong women create their own future in retirement.”

Visit **[AceYourRetirement.org/Shero](https://AceYourRetirement.org/Shero)** for:

- 3-minute online chat with a digital retirement coach
- Free personalized roadmap based on your retirement goals
- Free tips to start boosting your retirement savings now



## Ethiopian gold mine leaves deadly toxic waste trail in prime minister's hometown

(GIN) –

**A** gold mine in Ethiopia's Oromia state has been anything but a blessing.

Residents claim that contamination from the mine, owned by an Ethiopia-born Saudi tycoon, has led to disastrous health problems.

Locals say chemicals used to process gold at the open pit mine near Shakiso, 222 miles south of the capital, Addis Ababa, have polluted water streams and the air, causing humans and animals respiratory illnesses, miscarriages, birth defects and disabilities.

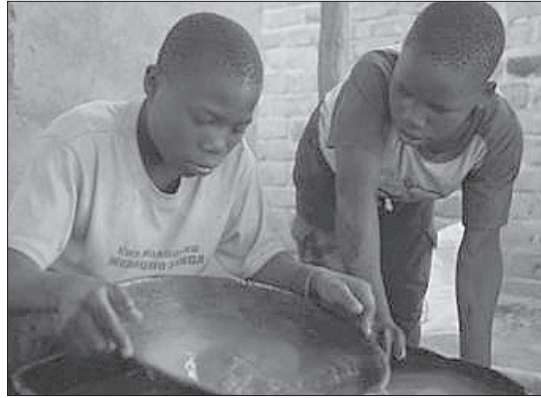
The issue worsens prospects for the re-election of the once-popular prime minister, Abiy Ahmed, whose stronghold among the Oromo people has weakened considerably. Last fall, political protests in Oromia evolved into clashes fueled by ethnicity and religion. Fatalities reportedly topped 100.

In the current toxic health crisis linked to the residues of gold mining, children have been born with deformities, and women have had so many miscarriages they believe they are cursed; the bones of cattle have snapped like twigs, and men's bodies have crumpled and collapsed without warning.

Unreleased studies commissioned by the government and a gold mining company obtained by The New Humanitarian news service reveal, among other things, that the area around the mine has the highest number of birth defects recorded in Ethiopia. Serious environmental concerns about the operations were raised back in 2018.

"We are the walking dead," Dembela Megersa told reporter Tom Gardner, describing chronic back pains that have afflicted him for years.

Residents say there were no warnings about potential toxins in the water nor were environmental audits showing cyanide in the water and high levels



of mercury in the water and soil shared with them.

A 100-kilo vat of mercury that had been stored at the mine site could not be accounted for by auditors who said they were refused access to the storage area.

Responsibility for the toxic residue has been linked to Midroc Gold, a private company belonging to Ethiopia-born Saudi billionaire Mohammed Hussein Al-Amoudi.

Despite the alleged poisoning of waters in the Lega Dembi region, an operating license for Midroc appears set for renewal.

Midroc reportedly called the renewal a "win-win" that would require an unspecified amount of compensation to be paid. The proposal is awaiting a final decision from the government.

Meanwhile, government has cancelled polls scheduled for May due to COVID-19 and no new date has been announced. Ethiopia has 194 confirmed cases of coronavirus, with four deaths.

The government's mandate expires at the end of September. w/pix of MIDROC gold mine

## UK economy likely to suffer worst Covid-19 damage, says OECD

Philadelphiaobserver.com

**A** slump in the UK's national income of 11.5% during 2020 will outstrip the falls in France, Italy, Spain, Germany and the US, the Paris-based thinktank said.

Germany's decline in national income (GDP) is forecast to be 6.6% this year while Spain's GDP will fall by 11.1%, Italy's by 11.3 and France's by 11.4%. The US, the world's largest economy, is expected to take a hit of 7.3%.

Highlighting the task awaiting the UK government as it seeks to ease the lockdown, the OECD warned that countries forced to impose the most draconian restrictions faced a long haul back to previous levels of activity.

Anneliese Dodds, Labour's shadow chancellor, blamed the "deeply worrying" OECD forecast on the government's "failure to get on top of the health crisis, delay going into lockdown and chaotic mismanagement of the exit from lockdown", which she argued made the economic impact of the crisis worse.

Responding to the report, the



chancellor, Rishi Sunak, said the UK was suffering "in common with many other economies around the world" and the priority was to "support people, jobs and businesses through this crisis – and this is what we've done".

Britain, which is forecast to post an increase in unemployment to around 9%, could make its situation more difficult if it failed to secure a lasting agreement with the EU on trade and access to the single market, the OECD said.

"The failure to conclude a trade deal with the European Union by the end of 2020 or put in place alternative arrangements would have a strongly negative effect on trade and jobs," it said.

## President of Burundi, veteran of ethnic violence, passes at 55

(GIN) –

**T**he outgoing president of Burundi was felled by a sudden illness, officially described in a government release as cardiac arrest.

The 55-year-old was due to step down in August at the end of his third term which he won amidst unrest and violence, particularly blamed on the authorities and the Imbonerakure — the youth wing of the CNDD-FDD. His victory triggered donor sanctions against the country.

Analysts say Nkurunziza left a divided nation. Burundi's last civil war, which ended in 2006, left roughly 300,000 people dead.

Born in Bujumbura, the largest city in Burundi, Nkurunziza grew up in the northern province of Ngozi to a Tutsi mother and Hutu father. A former teacher and former leader of a Hutu rebel group, he was a born-again Christian and football fanatic.

His father served as governor of two provinces before he was murdered in 1972 during ethnic violence that resulted in the killing of more than 100,000 people of the Hutu ethnic group and more than 10,000 Tutsis.

Nkurunziza studied at the University of Burundi in Bujumbura in 1990, where he graduated with a degree in physical education. He served as a high school teacher and assistant lecturer at the university.

When a civil war broke out in 1993 between Hutu rebel groups and the Tutsi-dominated army, Nkurunziza escaped death during a 1995 army attack on the university campus that left some 200



people dead.

In 1998, he was sentenced to death in absentia by a Burundian court over his rebel activities but was later granted immunity from prosecution for war crimes.

In March 2018, Nkurunziza was granted the title of "eternal supreme guide" by the CNDD-FDD.

In January this year, Burundi's parliament voted to pay \$530,000 to Nkurunziza and provide him with a luxury villa when he left office.

Besides awarding him a lifetime salary, the legislation called for elevating Nkurunziza to the title of "supreme leader" upon leaving office.

Health experts have warned that Burundi remains the only country in Africa which has not enacted any policy to curb the spread of COVID-19 — based on the claim "God is protecting the country".

Official reports indicate Burundi has so far recorded 83 cases and one death.

## South African leader condemns latest surge of violence against women

(GIN) –

**C**alling it a "dark and shameful week," South African president Cyril Ramaphosa denounced the latest surge in violence against women, including the murder of a woman eight months pregnant.

"Gender-based violence thrives in a climate of silence," he said. "By looking the other way because we believe it is a personal or family matter, we become complicit in this most insidious of crimes," the President said.

Ramaphosa's remarks come after some coronavirus restrictions were lifted, including a ban on the sale of alcohol.

Mr Ramaphosa condemned the brutality of recent killings, naming three of the victims, two of whom have become the subject of Twitter campaigns. They

are: Tshegofatso Pule—#JusticeForTshego, and Naledi Phangindawo—#JusticeforNaledi. The president said another young woman had been dumped under a tree in Johannesburg's Soweto township on Friday.

But his remarks ring hollow when a "new government report" released in September also declared gender-based violence a national crisis.

According to the 10 month old report, a woman is murdered every three hours in South Africa, and many are assaulted and raped before their death.

Nomakhosazana Xaba, in her late 20s, says this violence now resembles a country at war against its women.

After the September report, President Ramaphosa announced a five-point plan to tackle violence against women, including

media campaigns, strengthening the criminal justice system, and providing training for healthcare workers and counsellors.

But Xaba was fed up. "Enough is enough! A lot has been said, but there is still no change. We are brutally victimized each and every day, every second. Am I next? It's fearing to live."

Yesterday, the Federation of Unions of South Africa issued a strong statement urging steps to end the violence. "Fedusa is horrified by the ongoing scourge and the slow response and general inaction of our government," they said. "Yet the government still has not ratified the ILO convention on Ending Violence and Harassment in the World of Work."

For its efforts, 1.1 billion rand gifted by the government were deposited in the Federation's bank.

Meanwhile, police minister Bheki Cele continues to maintain that law enforcement is doing its job when it comes to arresting perpetrators of gender-based violence. "Police are responding," he said defensively. Commenting on the recent surge of violence, he blamed the sale of alcohol during lockdown level 3.

Mpume replied on Twitter: "Bheki Cele is gonna need to do more than just confiscate alcohol and pose in front of shebeens (bars). Women are dying every single day."



# Culture

## Dave Chappelle discusses police brutality, Candace Owens and more in Netflix Special 8:46

Newyorkbeacon.com

In a new (and surprise) Netflix comedy special, Dave Chappelle is back and as usual, has his finger on the pulse of America. In the special 8:46, which was uploaded to YouTube for free on Thursday evening, the iconic comedian discusses the national protests stemming from George Floyd's death and a slew of other pressing topics. The special was filmed on June 6 in Yellow Springs, Ohio, and the attendees adhered to social distancing guidelines, wearing facemasks throughout the set. (He has performed similar gigs around Dayton, Ohio since then.)

The comedian told the audience that he truly doesn't have words to describe his feelings about Floyd's murder at the hands of police this past Memorial Day. But he doesn't mince words about the cops involved in his death and



shares that not only does the special's title reference the amount of time it took for Derek Michael Chauvin to kill Floyd, but that it's also the time Chappelle was born.

"For some reason that I still don't understand, all these fucking police had their hands in their pockets," he says. "Who are you talking to? What are you signifying? That you can kneel on a man's neck for eight minutes and 46 seconds and feel like you wouldn't get the wrath of God?... That's what is happening right now. It's not for a single cop, it's for all of it."

## How to feed crowds in a protest or pandemic? The Sikhs know

By Priya Krishna

Inside a low, brick-red building in Queens Village, a group of about 30 cooks has made and served more than 145,000 free meals in just 10 weeks. They arrive at 4 a.m. three days a week to methodically assemble vast quantities of basmati rice, dal, beans and vibrantly flavored sabzis for New York City hospital workers, people in poverty and anyone else in search of a hot meal.

This isn't a soup kitchen or a food bank. It's a gurdwara, the place of worship for Sikhs, members of the fifth-largest organized religion in the world, with about 25 million adherents. Providing for people in need is built into their faith.

An essential part of Sikhism is langar, the practice of preparing and serving a free meal to promote the Sikh tenet of seva, or selfless service. Anyone, Sikh or not, can visit a gurdwara and partake in langar, with the biggest ones — like the Golden Temple in Amritsar, India — serving more than 100,000 people every day.

Since the coronavirus pandemic has halted religious gatherings in most of the country, including langar, gurdwaras like the Sikh Center of New York, in Queens Village, are mobilizing their large-scale cooking resources to meet the skyrocketing need for food aid outside their places of worship.

Some are feeding the protesters marching in outrage over the killings of George Floyd and other black Americans by the police. Last week, a dozen or so volunteers from the Queens center served 500 portions of matar paneer, rice and rajma, a creamy, comforting dish of red beans stewed with tomatoes, and 1,000 bottles of water and cans of soda to demonstrators in Sunnyside. They also offered dessert: kheer, a sweetened rice pudding.

"Where we see peaceful protest, we are going," said Himmat Singh, a coordinator at the World Sikh Parliament, an advocacy group providing volunteers for the Queens Village efforts. "We are looking for justice. We support this."



People look at a young Black kid and think, 'What can he really do for me?' I still get that to this day, to be honest with you, and I've been in the business for a while. I think you have a lot of players now who feel they don't have to go with the status quo

## Majority of NFL first round picks have Black agents

By Stacy M. Brown,  
NNPA Newswire Senior  
Correspondent

Three years ago, The UndeFeated featured Adisa Bakari, a former Division I-AA football player and founder of The Sports & Entertainment Group, a Washington, D.C.-based sports agency that represents some of the top athletes in the NFL and professional boxing.

After three seasons and realizing that a playing career wasn't in the cards, Bakari mapped out a successful plan to represent athletes.

For African American sports agents like Bakari, the NFL represents a unique opportunity to represent athletes of color.

The most recent demographics show that 70 percent of the NFL's approximately 1,700 players are black.

Over three days, beginning Thursday, April 23, about 256 young men were selected by NFL teams in the 2020 draft. What's more, the Washington Post reported that for the first time in NFL history, more than half of the players selected in the first round of the draft were represented by Black agents.

It is the first round that guar-

antees the new college graduates million-dollar contracts and generation-altering wealth.

Seventeen of the 32 selections Thursday night counted African Americans among their representatives. (More than one agent represents some players.) The scattered remote locations did nothing to diminish the significance of the milestone for a group of elite, mostly under-40, African American agents.

They all say they've dealt with what they describe as implicit bias when making their pitches to families of all colors.

"I don't think families entertained having an African American agent for a long time," agent David Mulugheta, who led the list with four first-rounders, told the Post.

"People look at a young Black kid and think, 'What can he really do for me?' I still get that to this day, to be honest with you, and I've been in the business for a while. I think you have a lot of players now who feel they don't have to go with the status quo."

The newspaper broke down the agents in their selections (agents and the players):

David Mulugeta – Isaiah Simmons, Jordan Love, A.J. Terrell, K'Lavon Chaisson

Demarius Bilbo – Chase Young, Jeff Okudah, Mekhi Becton, Tory Dandy – CeeDee Lamb, Cesar Ruiz

Nicole Lynn – Jedrick Wills, Rocky Arceneaux – Clyde Edwards

Brian Overstreet – Jeff Gladney, Stanley Wiltz – Patrick Queen, Tracy Latrigue – Damon Arnette

Jovan Barnes – Henry Ruggs III, Charles Fisher – C.J. Henderson, John Thornton – Andrew Thomas

All the contacted agents pointed to the late Eugene Parker as the "godfather" of Black agents who inspired many to pursue careers in the field, the Post noted. Parker, who died in 2016 at age 60, represented Hines Ward, Emmitt Smith, and Walter Jones, among others, and is often described as the first Black "super agent."

"Eugene set the tone for all Black agents," Lynn said.

Mulugheta added that "seeing him told a lot of people that you don't need to be an athlete to stay involved in sports. Growing up, I never saw a Black agent, so that wasn't something I saw as possible, but once I was leaving college, that's when I found out about Eugene Parker."

## Subscribe Philadelphia Observer

405 Lexington Avenue,  
26th Floor, New York, NY 10174

212-213-8585.

philadelphiaobserver.com

## The knee needs a new anthem



By Hazel Rosetta Smith  
Contributing Scribe

**O**n September 5, 1918 during the first game of the World Series between the Boston Red Sox and the Chicago Cubs, the U.S. Navy Band played the Star-Spangled Banner. It was a song needed to uplift a country fighting a World War and it needed something to encourage the boys over there to stay the course. The flag as glorified in the song, became the symbol of victories to be won.

Fans had flocked to the stadium because of the featured top two teams in competition, though there was a sadness in the hearts of the countrymen. News was out that since entering the war, 100,000 U.S. soldiers had died in a year and a half. A bomb had exploded in Chicago, the city the game was held, killing four, injuring a dozen more. And the government had announced it would begin drafting national major league players.

As the Star-Spangled Banner echoed across the field, Red Sox infielder, Fred Thomas, on furlough from the Navy, saluted the American flag. Other players joined Thomas placing their hands across their heart, as the crowd stood to their feet and began to sing.

The song was played at all the remaining Series games to great response, becoming a regular at all home games. Other baseball parks began to play the song on special occasions. Quickly spreading to other sports, the song became their official national anthem.

The song, however, was not without its measure of disrespect. It was written in 1954, that Arthur Ehlers, Baltimore Orioles General Manager, ordered the anthem be cancelled due to blatant disrespect of talking during its playing by the fans. He soon relented and gave it another try.

To this day, known artists are invited to sing the song in stadiums at the start of games and national events. Fans choose to show their respect or disrespect to the song in their own fashion. Some stand and remove their hats, some salute, some place their hand on their heart, others choose to

**Lift every voice and sing, till earth and Heaven ring,  
Ring with the harmonies of liberty;  
Let our rejoicing rise, high as the listening skies,  
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.  
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,  
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;  
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,  
Let us march on till victory is won.**

**Stony the road we trod, bitter the chastening rod,  
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;  
Yet with a steady beat, have not our weary feet,  
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?  
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered,  
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered;  
Out from the gloomy past, till now we stand at last  
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.**

**God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,  
Thou Who hast brought us thus far on the way;  
Thou Who hast by Thy might, led us into the light,  
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.  
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee.  
Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee.  
Shadowed beneath Thy hand, may we forever stand,  
True to our God, true to our native land.**

take a knee as others sit it out much to the chagrin of fans close by who deem it disrespectful to the flag.

I argue that it is the words of the song that conjure a divided image of the country.

The red, white, and blue flag is beautiful, with its stripes and state stars numerically placed. However, it is hurtful for Black people to be forced to stand erect listening to words that are conflicting in content. How do we honor our ancestors and the lie that the words imply? The final line sung with creative crescendo "the land of the free and the home of the brave" does not fit the bill truthfully to

a race of people who are still expected to literally shed their blood,

sweat and tears fighting racism. Black people have always been

brave, but this has not been the land of the free. And why must we continue to sing a song of war, when our hearts should desire peace.

The knee needs a new anthem. It is an old poem, written by James Weldon Johnson, first performed on February 12, 1900 in Jacksonville, Florida, later put to music by his brother, A. Rosamond Johnson. No-one can deny the words remain fitting for such a time as this.

I suggest "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing" should be the new anthem to hail as a reckoning of reality; a mindset wrought with determination of unity for all. A song that will rise above its already respected plateau as the Negro National Anthem.

Let its words fill the air in stadiums for all people to rise upon their feet in the hope of one nation to be better than it has ever been before. Together, we can "Lift every voice and sing, til earth and heaven ring, ring with the harmonies of liberty. Let our rejoicing rise, loud as the list'ning skies, let it resound loud as the rolling seas."

Sing a song full of the faith that the dark pass had taught us, sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us. Facing the rising sun of our new day begun, let us march on til victory is won..." [Hazel Rosetta Smith is a journalist, playwright and director for Help Somebody Theatrical Ministries, retired former Managing Editor and Women's Editor of the New York Beacon News and current columnist for Harlem Community News, Inc. Contact: [misshazel@twc.com](mailto:misshazel@twc.com)]



# #Hotoffthepress

By Dedra N. Tate

## Just what *The Good Doctor* Ordered... A Wellness Warriors Weekend



Dedra N. Tate

To know **LaJoyce Hunter-Brookshire** is to know a woman of God, whose personal and professional life is fueled with passion and purpose. Amidst a thriving career as a powerhouse music industry publicist, Brookshire changed lanes and became an ordained pastor, doctor of naturopathy, a master herbalist, author, college professor and the host of *Ask The Good Doctor* on Sirius XM's **UrbanView** channel.

Known as **The Good Doctor**, Brookshire set out on a mission to share her knowledge, and the expertise of her peers, by creating her annual **Wellness Warriors Weekend (WWW)**. Originally set to take place at **The Essex-Vermont's Culinary Resort & Spa** from June 25-28, WWW has now been transformed into a FREE weekend of webinars that will be offered during the same time period. According to Dr. Brookshire "although our annual Wellness Warriors Weekend in Vermont was canceled, I felt it was important to hold the event virtually to disseminate this vital, life-saving information because our nation needs a balm for healing of the mind, body and spirit...and we



Dr. LaJoyce Hunter-Brookshire

need it now."

Dr. Brookshire is thankful to God that she was able to transition this special event with all of her speakers in tact. "What they are discussing is SOOOO timely and vital to our life-force. Our people need to heal physically from both COVID-19 and the trauma of repeatedly seeing un-armed Black people killed."

WWW features a powerful lineup of speakers including **Debra Fraser-Howze**, principal at **D. Fraser Consulting** and founder of the **National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS**. As a public health pioneer, Fraser-Howze's presentation, *Dancing Through the Storm*, will explore next steps on surviving COVID-19 and racism. **Karen Taylor-Bass** -aka- **The PR Yogi**, will energize attendees with a

*Soulful Yoga* session and podiatrist **Dr. Wilma Hunts-Watts** will host *Feet Don't Fail Me Now*. Sirius XM's *Next Nation* host, **Sylvia K. Alston**, a risk management and insurance specialist, will educate WWW attendees about *Risky Business*.

Other experts that will be featured throughout the weekend are **Dr. Vikki Johnson** on *Soul Wealth*, scientist **Dr. Sam Shepherd**, **Dr. Tracey Diner** on *Wellness*, eugenics expert **Dr. Shantella Sherman**, **Dr. Tammara Combs-Williams** on *Toxin Elimination*, **August Brice** on *Tech Wellness* and story coach **Debra Montgomery-Esposito**. The weekend will also be filled with daily giveaways, including healthy supplement and product samples, books, non-toxic make-up, free consultations, virtual vendors and



Kitchen Warriors 101 Cookbook Cover

an interactive cooking lesson with a recipe from Dr. Brookshire's latest book, **Kitchen Warriors 101: Homemade Healthy**. For more information visit [askthegooddoctor.org](http://askthegooddoctor.org). (Photos Courtesy of Dr. Lajoyce Hunter-Brookshire)

### About LaJoyce Hunter-Brookshire

Ask LaJoyce Hunter-Brookshire who she is and quickly she will tell you she's *God's Girl*, a full-time wife and mother and a part-time everything else. She is a six-time bestselling author and a **New York Times** bestselling author of the novel based on the smash hit movie *Soul Food*. With *Soul Food*, Brookshire became the first African American woman to novelize a major motion picture. Her memoir, *Faith Under Fire*, about her first

husband who married her knowing he had AIDS, sold over 250,000 copies and became an Off-Broadway smash hit stage play.

Brookshire travels the world, sharing her testimony, as an HIV/AIDS educator and advocate for Abstinence and Health Literacy. In her former career, Brookshire was a high-powered entertainment publicist to the stars. As director of publicity at **Arista Records** in the mid-90s, she represented music legends, multi-platinum and diamond certified artists including *The Queen of Soul Aretha Franklin*, **Whitney Houston**, **Sean "Puffy" Combs**, **Toni Braxton**, **Usher**, **OutKast**, **Deborah Cox**, **Faith Evans**, **TLC** and **The Notorious B.I.G.** -aka- **Biggie Smalls**, until his death.



Debra Fraser-Howze



Karen Taylor Bass



Dr. Wilma Hunt-Watts

# Classified

## ATTORNEY

Lung Cancer? And Age 60+? You And Your Family May Be Entitled To Significant Cash Award. No Risk. No Money Out Of Pocket. For Information Call 877-225-4813

## AUCTIONS

NYS SURPLUS REAL PROPERTY PUBLIC AUCTION: 11/8/19, 335 Nashopa Road, Mamakating, NY, 3,767sf colonial, 3.26acs, 5BR, 3.5baths, fin-bsmt, MINBID \$249,000; Open House: 11:00am-1:00pm, 10/15,10/23,11/1; ogs.ny.gov/NYSStore 518-474-2195

## AUTO DONATIONS

Donate your car to Wheels For Wishes, benefiting Make-A-Wish. We offer free towing and your donation is 100% tax deductible. Call (917) 336-1254

## FINANCE

Denied Social Security Disability? Appeal! If you're 50+, filed SSD and denied, our attorneys can help! Win or Pay Nothing! Strong, recent work history needed. 866-

979-0096 [Steppacher Law Offices LLC Principal Office: 224 Adams Ave Scranton PA 18503]

## HEALTH

A PLACE FOR MOM has helped over a million families find senior living. Our trusted, local advisors help find solutions to your unique needs at no cost to you. Call 855-977-3677

SAVE ON YOUR NEXT PRESCRIPTION! World Health Link. Price Match Guarantee! Prescriptions Required. CIPA Certified. Over 1500 medications available. CALL Today For A Free Price Quote. 1-866-569-7986 Call Now!

VIAGRA & CIALIS! 60 pills for \$99. 100 pills for \$150. FREE shipping. Money back guaranteed! 1-855-579-8907

## HOME IMPROVEMENT

BATHROOM RENOVATIONS. EASY, ONE DAY updates! We specialize in safe bathing. Grab bars, no slip flooring & seated showers. Call for a free in-home consultation: 888-657-9488.

## MISCELLANEOUS

COMPUTER ISSUES? FREE DIAGNOSIS by GEEKS ON SITE! Virus Removal, Data Recovery! 24/7 EMERGENCY SERVICE, In-home repair/On-line solutions . \$20 OFF ANY SERVICE! 844-892-3990

## TV INTERNET PHONE

DISH TV \$59.99 For 190 Channels + \$14.95 High Speed Internet. Free Installation, Smart HD DVR Included, Free Voice Remote. Some restrictions apply. 1-888-609-9405

Get DIRECTV! ONLY \$35/month! 155 Channels & 1000s of Shows/Movies On Demand (w/ SELECT All Included Package.) PLUS Stream on Up to FIVE Screens Simultaneously at No Additional Cost. Call DIRECTV 1-888-534-6918

Spectrum Triple Play! TV, Internet & Voice for \$99.97/mo. Fastest Internet. 100 MB per second speed. Free Primetime on Demand. Unlimited Voice. NO CONTRACTS. Call 1-855-977-7198 or visit <http://tripleplaytoday.com/press>



Discover the world's best walk-in bathtub from *American Standard*

5 Reasons American Standard Walk-In Tubs are Your Best Choice

- 1 Backed by American Standard's 140 years of experience
- 2 Ultra low entry for easy entering and exiting
- 3 Patented Quick Drain® fast water removal system
- 4 Lifetime Warranty on the bath AND installation, INCLUDING labor backed by American Standard
- 5 44 Hydrotherapy jets for an invigorating massage

**\$1,500 SAVINGS**

Includes FREE American Standard Right Height Toilet Limited Time Offer! Call Today!

**888-609-0248**

Receive a free American Standard Cadet toilet with full installation of a Liberation Walk-In Bath, Liberation Shower, or Deluxe Shower. Offer valid only while supplies last. Limit one per household. Must be first time purchaser. See [www.walkintubs.americanstandard-us.com](http://www.walkintubs.americanstandard-us.com) for other restrictions and for licensing, warranty, and company information. ©2019 American Standard, a subsidiary of American Standard, LLC. Safety Tubs Co. LLC does not sell in Nassau NY, Westchester NY, Putnam NY, Rockland NY.



**Donate A Boat or Car Today!**

Boat Angel

"2-Night Free Vacation!"

**800-700-BOAT** (2628)

[www.boatangel.com](http://www.boatangel.com)

Sponsored by boat angel outreach centers STOP CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN



**Saving a Life EVERY 11 MINUTES**

*I'm never alone*

Life Alert® is always here for me even when away from home.

One touch of a button sends help fast, 24/7.

Help at Home

Life Alert®

Batteries Never Need Charging.

Help On-the-Go

**FREE! FIRST AID KIT WHEN YOU ORDER!**

For a FREE brochure call:

**1-800-404-9776**



UNCF  
A mind is a terrible thing to waste®

**IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY TO INVEST IN A GOOD THING.**

Introducing Better Futures™—a whole new kind of investment with a greater return than money. When you invest, it helps kids go to college. Because a mind is a terrible thing to waste but a wonderful thing to invest in.™ Invest in Better Futures at [UNCF.ORG/INVEST](http://UNCF.ORG/INVEST)



**DENTAL Insurance**

Physicians Mutual Insurance Company

A less expensive way to help get the dental care you deserve!

CALL NOW! **1-855-225-1434**

Get help paying dental bills and keep more money in your pocket

This is real dental insurance – NOT just a discount plan

You can get coverage before your next checkup

Don't wait! Call now and we'll rush you a FREE Information Kit with all the details.

FREE Information Kit

Here's the information you requested on Dental Insurance.

Your Name Here

**1-855-225-1434**

Visit us online at [www.dental50plus.com/nypress](http://www.dental50plus.com/nypress)

Insurance Policy P150NY 6129 MB17-NM003Ec

## Subscribe Philadelphia Observer

405 Lexington Avenue, 26th Floor, New York, NY 10174.

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

# Sports

## Clock is ticking on MLB and NBA season

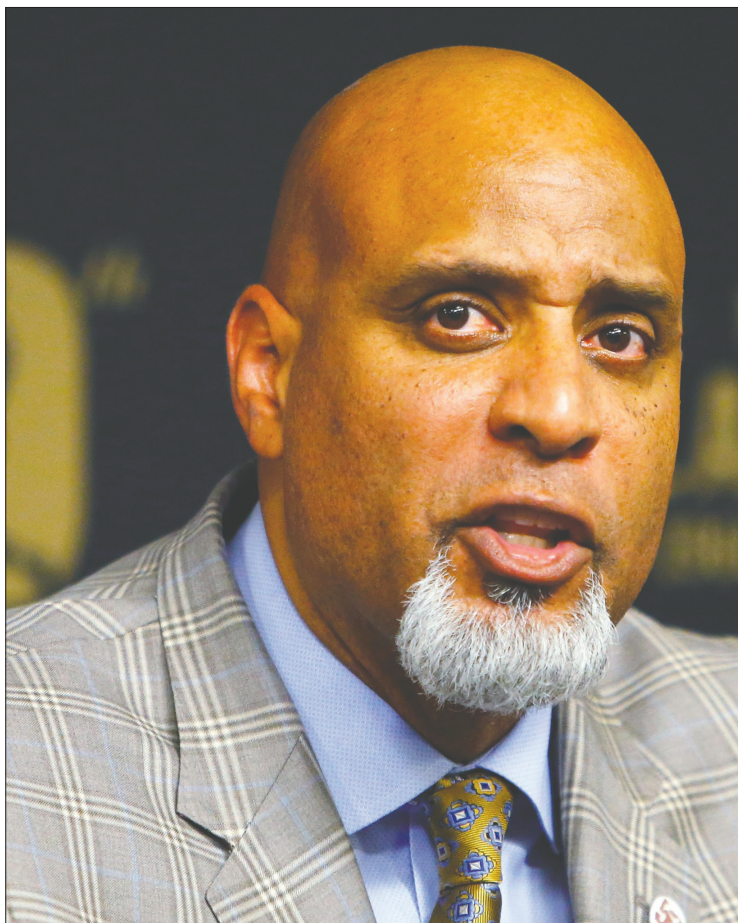


**Irving Voices His Concerns**  
Photo: Special to Philadelphia Observer

By Andrew Rosario

**M**ajor League Baseball never made it out of spring training. The National Basketball Association shut down all games on March 12 when it found out

one player tested positive for the Coronavirus. The NCAA cancelled all tournaments including March Madness. The National Hockey league also cancelled their season but unlike MLB and the NBA have announced plans to resume playing



**Clark Rejects MLB Offer**  
Photo: Special to Philadelphia Observer

that will include 24 teams who will compete for the Stanley Cup.

There is a very good chance that there will be no baseball this year. The same could be said for basketball although talks between the owners and players have been more productive than the baseball owners and players. It was less than a week ago when MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred said he was "100% there would be baseball this summer." Manfred even went as far as saying that the schedule could include as many as 89 games. The MLB players union, headed by Tony Clark, was not impressed rejecting the offer. Said Clark in a statement released this past Saturday, "It appears further dialogue with the league will be futile." So where does this leave both sides? Back in March, an agreement was made between MLB and the Players Association that gave Manfred the authority to schedule a season of any length as long as the players get full prorated salaries. If Manfred chooses to go that route, it doesn't mean the players will show up. "It is unfair to leave the players and fans hanging at this point," concluded Clark.

Back on May 23rd, the NBA released a statement saying the league would resume with games taking place at the ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex in Orlando, Florida. Games would begin July 30 ending October 13th. Only 22 teams would play 8 regular season games before the playoffs would start. Players expressed support initially. More recently however, there have been backlash in light of the murder of George Floyd and protest that have been taking place country wide. Brooklyn Nets Kyrie Irving and Los Angeles Lakers Dwight Howard organized a conference call with as many as 100 players to express their reservations. Both felt that by playing, it would take focus away from the social injustice that have been taking place for years. Said Howard in a CNN interview, "basketball or entertainment period, isn't needed at this moment and will only be a distraction." Irving had shoulder surgery before the pandemic and would not have played the rest of the season if not for cancellation of the season. Howard, who was having a rebirth with the Lakers, has his best chance to win a title. "I would love nothing more than to win my first championship. But the unity of my people would be a bigger championship," he said.

In the light of Dallas Cowboys Ezekiel Elliott and other players contracting the virus, all leagues are faced with the issue of how they will keep players safe. Testing will be done on a daily basis. Even though fans will not be allowed to attend games. Team staff will also be limited including assistant coaches and training personnel. Still, in the case of the NBA, all teams will be in the same hotel and play their games in the same arena.

The WNBA announced they will begin their season July 24th playing 22 regular season games before the playoffs. All games will be played at the IMG Academy in Bradenton, Florida. Commissioner Cathy Englebert Said, there's a lot to do between now and the tip of the season. We want to have the appropriate number of

days for training camp."

Many states recently are allowing the reopening of businesses as some states are seeing a rise in the number of people testing positive. The pleasant weather have been giving people more of an excuse to gather in big groups. Some wearing masks, some not. Some practicing social distancing, some not. New York Governor Mario Cuomo threatening to shut down some bars and restaurants, even revoking their liquor license for not complying to the correct social distancing measures. "Enforce the law or there will be state action," said Cuomo.

This has been the perfect storm between the pandemic and recent

social protest as police continue to kill unarmed people of color. Sports has always been the bridge between strife and disasters. Nascar, Golf, MMA, UFC, Soccer and Baseball in Asia have begun albeit very slowly. The NFL is on schedule to open camps at the end of July while the USTA (despite some of the top players voicing their concern) looks to kick off on schedule August 31st.

Major League Baseball and the National Basketball Association are perilously close to not playing at all. As usual, it will be the fans that will be the biggest losers. Owners and players may not be able to rebound for years if the season is scrapped.



**Elliott Test Positive For Covid19**  
Photo: Special to Philadelphia Observer