



CELEBRATING MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY (JAN 17) SUPPORT LOCAL JOURNALISM >>> MICHIGANBANNER.ORG/SUPPORTUS

COMMUNITY



**SAGINAW
TEACHER AND
ACTIVIST HOLDS
MLK MEMORIES**

COMMUNITY, PG 16



PICTURED FROM L TO R: WAHEED AKBAR, M.D., DAROLD NEWTON, ERIN PATRICE

Three champions for diversity honored with Drum Major Award at MLK Regional Celebration

SAGINAW – Three champions for diversity, understanding and support of underserved people in the Great Lakes Bay Region have been selected to receive the Martin Luther King, Jr. Drum Major for Community Service Award. The award honors people in the Great Lakes Bay Region who perform everyday acts of service with reliability and commitment, but who seldom receive recognition and whose work exemplifies one or more of Dr. King’s values or beliefs.

The three leaders, representing Bay, Midland and Saginaw counties, will be recognized during the Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Celebration, which will be held virtually Wednesday, Jan. 19 at 7 p.m. Dr. Condoleezza Rice, 66th Secretary of State, will be the featured guest in a moderated fireside chat.

The 2022 Drum Major Award honorees are

Waheed Akbar, M.D. (Saginaw County), Darold Newton (Bay County) and Erin Patrice (Midland County). They will receive a \$1,000 award for a charitable organization of their choice.

Dr. Akbar is an orthopedic surgeon with Ascension Medical Group and has been a dedicated community volunteer, serving on boards of directors for a number of organizations, including Ascension St. Mary’s, the Saginaw Valley State University Foundation and the Saginaw Branch of the NAACP. He established the Dr. Raana Akbar Memorial Lecture on Islam and Culture at SVSU in memory of his wife, and he is active in Interfaith Saginaw.

**CONTINUES ON PG 3,
MLK CELEBRATION**



Another top hit for a Saginaw '96 Tears' legend, 55 years later

LATINO BANNER, COVER



Could 'yes' on petitions mean 'no' for civil rights?

COMMUNITY, PG 12



'Keep Saginaw High' backers face blowback

EDUCATION, PG 33

FEATURED STORY

'STEP UP,' SAGINAW'S MAYOR SAYS -- AGAIN!

COMMUNITY, PG 11



MESSAGE FROM THE PUBLISHER

Rising of the Phoenix

Joe Madison, famed morning talk radio host also known as The Black Eagle (Sirius XM Talk Radio) is on a hunger strike. He has refrained from consuming solid foods for almost 70 days in a silent, non-violent protest until two critical pieces of voting rights legislation are passed. Joe Madison was also the keynote speaker for the 'Rising of the Phoenix' virtual event held in Saginaw one week ago. The Michigan Banner, in conjunction with Delta College and with support from many other civic, faith, and community leaders and organizations sponsored the event which provided a framework for further developing and maintaining safe and engaged communities.

Mr. Madison began the week with Pastor Kareem Bowen, founder, and host of 'United Shades of Gray', WSGW radio. He explained to listeners the critical need to get involved, to do something. He further explained the need to be willing to sacrifice for change. His own sacrifice has been difficult because of his age and previous health challenges but it has also been effective. Tens of thousands of new and longtime followers of the Black Eagle broadcast are receiving his message of hope for lasting equality in voting.

And then came Friday! The Rising of the Phoenix was initially to have been a live event with Mr. Madison actually presenting to a live audience with a panel of local educators and elected officials. Due to the rising numbers of COVID-19 and the need to recognize and respect safety concerns, the virtual option was chosen. Still, his message came across loud and clear – everyone has a job to do, and most will require some level of sacrifice. The mythical bird, the phoenix, was burned to ashes (the ultimate sacrifice) but rose from those ashes to be victorious. This analogy speaks to the need for individuals and communities to rise from any adversity (ashes) to be victorious! Ashes will vary from one individual, home, or community to the next. Ashes for some may be the loss of loved ones, for others it may be divorce, perhaps one of an increasing number of natural disasters resulting in the loss of all of one's worldly possessions, a failed business or loss of a job, the list goes on and on. We learned from Mr. Madison that no matter what the cause, action and sacrifice are necessary.

Saginaw was a true illustration of the strong and committed community described in the presentation. Mr. Madison spoke of the power and responsibility of Community Colleges and business leaders to effect change. He described the need for the leaders such as the Community College President to be actively involved in community growth and development. He suggested that sending representatives in place of the President sends a much less powerful message and sometimes demonstrates a lack of commitment. Dr. Michael Gavin, Delta College President and staff served as speakers, panelists and guests helping to make this event a tremendous success. Civic leaders such as Representative Amos O'Neal and Mayor Brenda Moore along with other concerned citizens participated in the planning and implementation of the event. Faith leaders crossed all denominational boundaries to plan every minute of the program from its inception and served as needed from set up to clean up. Mr. Madison stressed the necessity of this level of collaboration stating, 'there are no permanent enemies or permanent friends – only permanent interests'.

The Black Eagle shared that he is over seventy years of age and has been on a hunger fast for over two months. He said that 'I won't take the chance of hearing my grandchildren ask, 'Pop Pop, what did you do to stop this'? and have nothing to say. So, in solidarity with others making sacrifice for change, I continue to imagine the tastes of my favorite foods while bringing attention to a worthy cause, a cause essential to the very core of the American democratic process – equality in and protection of voting rights. He left us with a formula for achieving success when fighting for this or any other worthwhile cause. Addressing the young, the old and everyone in between, he stressed that standing firm on your convictions will require giving of yourself. **WORK. WISDOM. WEALTH.** Always plan to bring two of the three to any cause you plan to support. Vote – never miss an opportunity to exercise your right to do so. Contact elected officials – let them know your passionate thoughts regarding the cause(s) you support. Use social media to enlist the assistance and resources of like-minded people (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) Network – everyone should be at the table. Community networking or crossing boundaries will be necessary to achieve positive outcomes. To do so effectively, one must develop the ability to rise above storms and see beyond any distractions or obstacles with the keen eyesight of an eagle.

Thank you to everyone who supported this venture. Your presence was greatly appreciated and your feedback, including offers of support moving forward has been overwhelming. There are other equally important events in the planning stages and the Phoenix committee fully intends to take you up on your offers to assist. Saginaw, like other communities nationwide is facing challenges. It is up to each of us to decide if we, like the Phoenix will overcome.



Jerome Buckley
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The Michigan Banner, Latino Banner and Youth Banner operates and serves as a print and online media venue committed to educating, informing and enlightening our readership regarding events and news that directly and indirectly affect the communities regionally and globally. Furthermore, to serve as a catalyst and a link for cultivating young adults as entrepreneurial and business leaders for the future.

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Cover Story, MLK Celebration

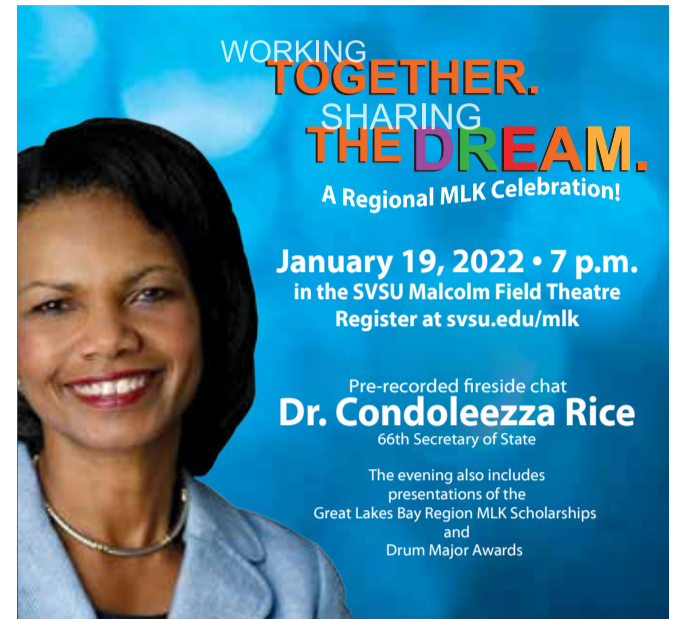
“I have strongly felt that it is important to bring diversity, to bring love, to bring understanding and to bring forgiveness in everything we do in our day-to-day life,” Akbar said. “I have worked relentlessly on interfaith dialogue and discussion and to bring understanding and diversity and to bring people representing minority groups together and on to the same platform.”

Newton is the TV host and producer for Delta College Public Media’s “Soul Issue: The African American Perspective.” He also serves as president of the NAACP Bay City Branch, a role he has filled since 2011. Newton has worked to address civil rights and social justice issues for all people in Bay County and the Great Lakes Bay Region, including working with community partners on projects such as the 2020 Census; Black Lives Matter policing issues; and diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies in the K-12 system.

Newton said his goal is to “encourage all of us to be prepared to answer the call to lead your own band when the baton is passed to you. Similar to our model, Dr. King, do it for the cause, not the applause!”

He continued, “I am deeply honored and humbled by the award and encourage everyone, especially the young MLK scholarship recipients, to get engaged and stay engaged in all things local, from the school board to local government positions, because all politics start local and have a direct impact on the community in which we live.”

Patrice is the creator and host of The Breaking Bread Village in Midland, a space where people can engage in conversations



aimed at creating positive change. She is an active community volunteer, serving on the Midland County Housing Commission and the Midland Area Cultural Awareness Coalition. She also sits on several boards that allow her to advocate for seniors and children.

Patrice said she was humbled to receive this award.

“I appreciate the nomination and recognition and promise to keep working to make dreams of unity a reality,” she said. “Often you do things just because it’s the right thing or you feel you are led to do it, and honestly, you don’t even think people notice.”

The Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Celebration will be presented virtually by SVSU. For more information, or to receive the link to the fully online program, visit: svsu.edu/mlk/.

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Latino Banner

LIDER EN LA
DIVERSIDAD

VAMOS ADELANTE



WARWICK LIVING CENTER (842 WARWICK DR, ALMA, MI)

Latino leaders embrace Alma pro-immigration result

LB PG 2



DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Dr. King's telegram to Cesar Chavez during his 1968 fast for nonviolence

LB PG 3

LE SONIC FEAT. ROBERT LEE

WITH SPECIAL GUESTS DENNIS COLLINS • JIM HYNES • FRANK RODRIGUEZ



ANY MOMENT

LE SONIC FEAT. ROBERT LEE "ANY MOMENT"

Another top hit for a Saginaw '96 Tears' legend, 55 years later

By MIKE THOMPSON

In 1966, when "96 Tears" was a huge hit for Saginaw's Question Mark and the Mysterians, fans of the rollicking anthem may have been surprised at the personal listening choices of lead guitarist Robert Lee Balderrama.

He wasn't focused on the licks of other pop rock players. Instead, his fave was Wes Montgomery, the jazz artist of national renown. Later came George Benson.

"I loved jazz, but I was only 16, and most of the songs were too difficult to learn to play," recalls the musician known in his youth as Bobby Balderrama and later as leader of the Robert Lee Revue, showing out at local venues that have ranged from Friday Night Live to Jazz on Jefferson.

CONTINUES ON LB PG 2,
96 TEARS

LATINO BANNER SPONSORED BY GREAT LAKES BAY HEALTH CENTERS & TEAM ONE CREDIT UNION



Continued from LB Cover, 96 Tears

"Lee" is his middle name.

And now, entering his seventh decade, he has achieved another notable national tune named "Any Moment," a single that has soared to No. 4 in the Billboard smooth jazz rankings.

One critic notes, "Robert Lee delivers a tasty, beautifully phrased guitar performance that stands tall but never overwhelms Le Sonic's soulful arrangement. His tone is sweet and full, and his licks tell the story,"

But as Balderrama long ago learned during more than a half-century of gig venues large and small, any musical moment may pass into the winds without established marketing. That's where Le Sonic Feat enters the picture.

Producer and radio promoter Gary Lefkewith, of the same generation as Bobby, is a longtime fan with the past props of promoting songs by artists going back to Elvis, and later Fleetwood Mac, and nowadays John Legend, among many notables. Lefkewith joined Balderrama and

his lifelong Mysterian/Revue teammate, keyboardist Frank Rodriguez, to mesh the arrangements for "Any Moment."

With proper promotion, critics come out of the woodwork, the same as in a TV promo ad for a popular movie. The words of praise are abundant:

- " 'Any Moment' offers one of the most eloquent and polished jazz songs of the year. Don't miss this one."
- "This is pure jazz through and through, but there are shades of progressive pop songcraft that one might not associate with the purist realm in this genre."
- "The piece has a grandeur to it, textures are wonderful, and there is a beauty to it all. 'Any Moment' is that spark of creativity in jazz improvisation or any true art form, that is spontaneous and naturally

intersects with the highest level of spirituality. "

In fact, Balderrama now may lay claim to a second No. 1 recording beyond "96 Tears," because "Any Moment" has attained the top spot on Mediabase, which is less prestigious than Billboard, of course. Still, it's another Number One, 55 years beyond the first.

Among many memories, one of his favorites was revived with the Jan. 12 passing of pop diva Ronnie Spector at age 78. In 2010, she walked on stage and joined a Mysterians reunion at New York City's Lincoln Center, supporting Question Mark (Rudy Martinez) on the "96 Tears" vocals.

Balderrama also is author of the self-published "Famous Guitarists I Have Met Who Influenced Me," available by contacting him via his Facebook page. He also has shared the NYC video.

Latino leaders embrace Alma pro-immigration result

By MIKE THOMPSON

Elected officials in Alma who challenged Donald Trump's anti-immigration politics will not face ill fates for the risks that they took.

An attempt to recall Roxann Herrington, Audra Stahl and Nick Piccolo has fallen short of the year-end deadline for signatures.

In a story that the Latino Banner reported through the summer, the three-sparked the petition drive when they prevailed in a September split vote to allow rezoning for Bethany Christian Services. This allows the Lansing-based social action agency to convert a vacant former nursing home into federal temporary shelter for male children and teens detained at the Mexico border. A typical stay is 30 to 45 days before they are reunited with family elders.

The Alma scenario was similar to clashes in border and southern states. Opponents raised fears of higher crime with related gang activity and dominated audiences of up to 400 residents, requiring



WARWICK LIVING CENTER (842 WARWICK DR, ALMA, MI)

meetings to be moved to the high school auditorium.

Representatives of LLEAD, the statewide Latino Leaders for the Enhancement of Advocacy and Development, and MAC, Saginaw's Mexican American Council, joined groups that viewed the scenario as a rising mid-Michigan civil rights issue. National news coverage was generated by PBS and the Associated Press.

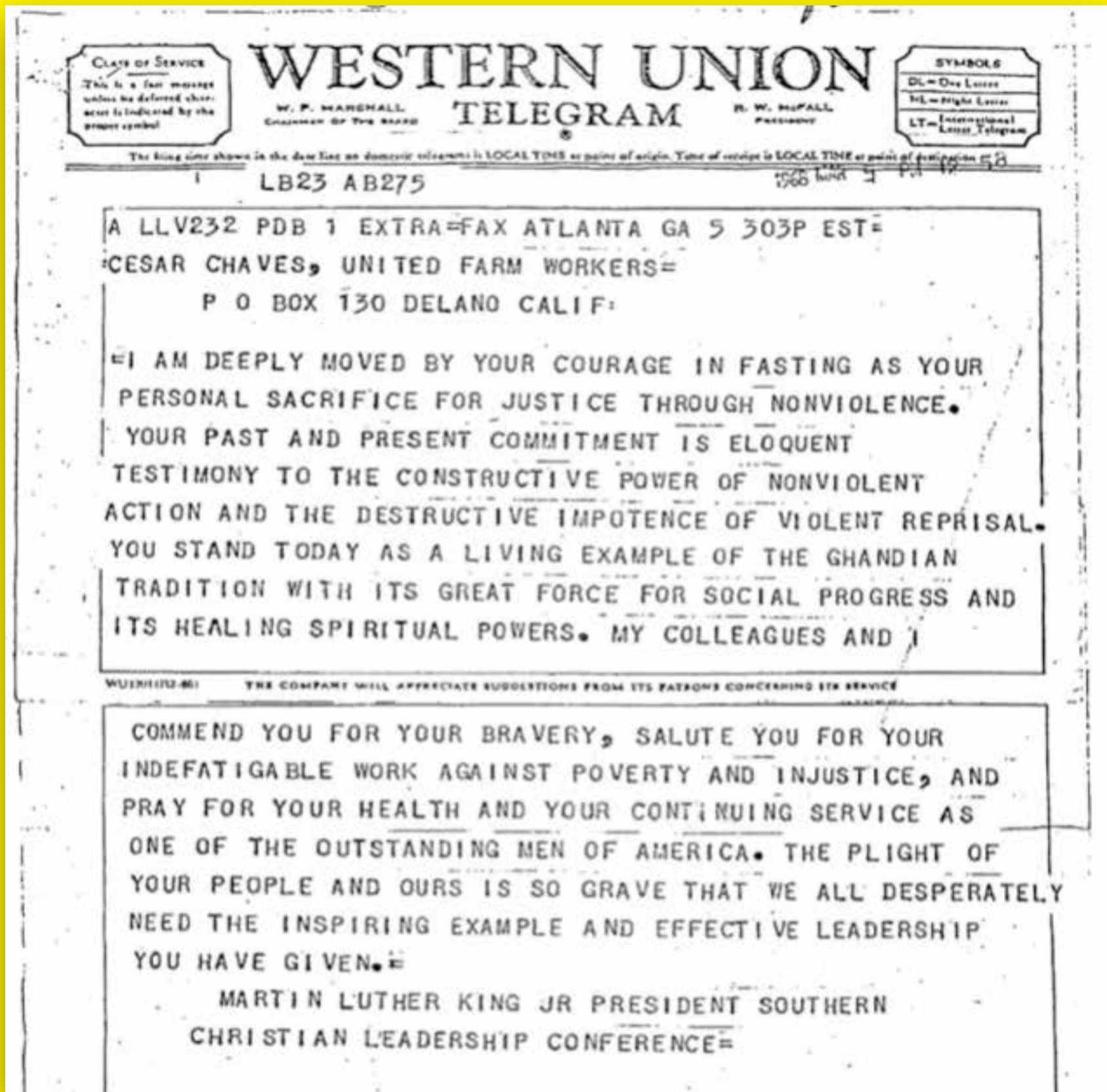
Alma's City Commission vote occurred

in spite of national sentiment that has stood in the way of even the most basic reforms, such as restoring the DREAM Act for teens and young adults who were taken across the border as babies and small children. The decision reversed a rejection by the city's advisory planning group.

Recall fever in Alma gradually has faded. A specific opening date, offering an opening for renewed debate, has not been set.

Dr. King's telegram to Cesar Chavez during his 1968 fast for nonviolence

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Cesar Chavez didn't meet, but they corresponded. Cesar carefully followed Dr. King's career beginning with the 1955-56 Montgomery Bus Boycott. He admired Dr. King over his stand for nonviolence, his use of the boycott and his personal commitment and sacrifice. Many of Dr. King's closest aides and successors became strong supporters of the United Farm Workers, including Andy Young, Jesse Jackson, Ralph Abernathy and Dr. King's widow, Coretta Scott King. Dr. King also respected Cesar, sending him two telegrams, including one during his 25-day fast for nonviolence in February-March 1968.



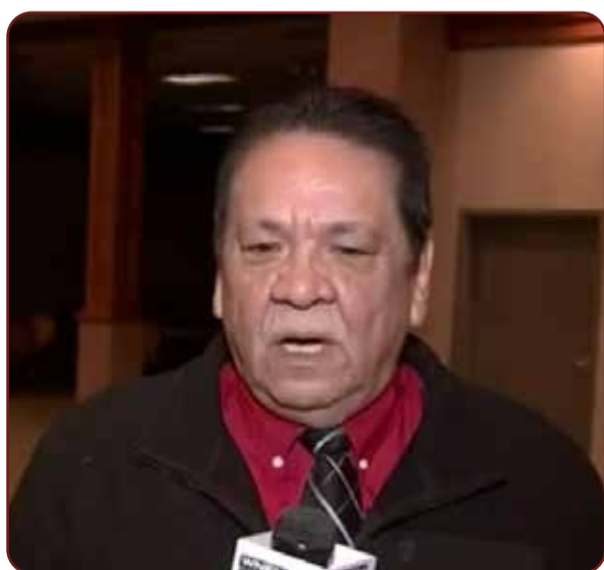
Seen on the Scene: Virtual Community Networking Event

On Friday, January 7, 2022, The Michigan Banner newspaper and the Rising of the Phoenix organization hosted a free virtual networking event featuring Sirius XM Talk Radio Host, Joe Madison.



Thank you to our sponsor Delta College, program participants and our audience for your support. We are inspired. More to come...

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The central graphic is a dark red rectangle containing a white text block with a thank-you message. Below the text is a small blue and white poster for a 'COMMUNITY NETWORKING EVENT' featuring Joe Madison on January 7, 2022. At the bottom of the red rectangle is the website address 'Www.michiganbanner.org'.

Coronavirus Case Rates and Death Rates for Latinos in the United States

The coronavirus COVID-19 can affect anyone, but reports show Latinos and other people of color are disproportionately affected, amid worsening historical inequities. What is the data really showing?

COVID-19 Case Rates for Latinos

The U.S. population recently rose to 18.5% Latino.

Coronavirus is disproportionately sickening Latinos. Variants like Delta and Omicron are rising.

Latinos currently comprise 24.2% of COVID-19 cases in the United States, second only to Whites (55.5%), according to CDC data on health equity and cases on Jan. 5, 2022. Race/ethnicity data is available for 66% of the nation's cases.

COVID-19-associated hospitalizations also have been higher among Latinos.

Several states are also experiencing Latino coronavirus case disparities:

- Utah is 14% Latino. But they make up 18.1% of COVID-19 cases on Jan. 1, 2022.
- Oregon is 13% Latino. But they make up 15.5% of COVID-19 cases on Jan. 4, 2022.
- Washington is 13% Latino. But they make up 21% of COVID-19

- cases on Jan. 3, 2022.
- California is 39.3% Latino. But they make up 51.4% of COVID-19 cases on Dec. 29, 2021.
- Texas has a similar disparity. Latinos make up 39.7% of the state's population. Latinos represent 37% of COVID-19 confirmed cases and 43.5% of COVID-19 confirmed deaths, according to state data as of Jan. 4, 2022.

"This is robbing the Hispanic community of a generation of mothers and fathers and brothers and sisters," Dr. Peter Hotez of Baylor College of Medicine told TPR.

COVID-19 Death Rates for Latinos

17.1% of U.S. COVID-19 deaths are among Latinos, according to a new CDC data web page, "Health Disparities: Race and Hispanic Origin."

However, the Latino COVID-19 death rate became a more out-sized 33.8% when CDC used weighted population distributions. This is higher than the 26.7% mark from data at the end of May 2020.

"The weighted population distributions ensure that the population estimates and percentages of COVID-19 deaths represent

comparable geographic areas," CDC wrote. "[This provides] information about whether certain racial and ethnic subgroups are experiencing a disproportionate burden of COVID-19 mortality."

CDC also warns this data may be incomplete. It doesn't include all deaths that occurred during a given time period, given a one-to-two-week lag.

COVID-19 Death Rates for Latinos by Age

CDC is also tracking coronavirus death rates by race/ethnicity and age.

As of Jan. 6, 2022 Total deaths by race/ethnicity:

- Latinos: 139,076 have died due to COVID-19
- Blacks: 118,852
- Whites: 513,877
- Asians: 26,715
- American Indian/Alaska Native: 9,207
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 1,791

Learn more at <https://salud-america.org/coronavirus-case-rates-and-death-rates-for-latinos-in-the-united-states>.

Inflation worries hurt consumer confidence among Hispanics

BOCA RATON, Fla. – U.S. Hispanics are displaying less consumer confidence heading into 2022 as inflation not seen in decades continues to erode their purchasing power.

The Hispanic Consumer Sentiment Index dropped to 86.7 in the fourth quarter of 2021 from 90.5 in the third quarter, but it remains well above the 79.3 during the fourth quarter of 2020, according to the Florida Atlantic University Business and Economics Polling Initiative (FAU BEPI) in FAU's College of Business.

Optimism declined in four of the five questions used to generate the index.

In the fourth quarter of 2021, 59 percent of Hispanics felt they are better off financially now than a year ago, down from 62 percent in the third quarter. When it comes to whether they expect to be better

off financially in the next year, 70 percent felt that way, compared with 78 percent in the third quarter.

Hispanics also are less confident in the short-term and long-run economic outlooks. In the fourth quarter, 51 percent of respondents said they expect the U.S. to experience good business conditions in the upcoming year, down from 53 percent in the prior quarter. Meanwhile, 53 percent of respondents said they expect good economic conditions in the next five years, compared with 58 percent who felt that way in the third quarter.

Buying big-ticket items such as a house or car is the only area in which Hispanics showed increasing optimism, with 53 percent saying it's a good time to make a major purchase, up from 48 percent in the third quarter.


"Inflation adds to the financial strain that the COVID-19 pandemic has already caused," said Monica Escaleras, Ph.D., director of FAU BEPI. "Inflation is hurting Americans' wallets as it hits a 40-year high in the United States, but certain demographic groups like Hispanics are feeling it the most."

She referenced a report from Bank of America that shows households without college degrees, African Americans, Hispanics and those living in rural areas have been hurt more by inflation than other groups because on average they spend a bigger share of their income on goods and services with the highest levels of price increases.


The poll is based on a sampling of 666 Hispanic adults from Oct. 1 to Dec. 31, 2021.

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+ COMMUNITY



COURTESY PHOTO

'Step up,' Saginaw's mayor says -- again!

By MIKE THOMPSON

In her quest to recruit residents for a federal funds advisory group, Saginaw Mayor Brenda Moore makes a comparison to last May's revived citywide cleanup.

Nearly 100 volunteers turned out, and she joined sister and fellow organizers who celebrated success on that spring Saturday morning.

But now the mayor is having trouble filling 15 seats on a temporary ARPA panel that is intended to help the City Council explore the best pathways for investing a windfall of \$52 million from the American Recovery Plan Act.

The funds are intended to help local communities cope with the impact of a 2-year-old pandemic that has refused to recede.

"It seems that more people were willing to pick up trash on the vacant lots, than the number who will sit at a table to help us reach these decisions," said Moore in a Michigan Banner interview. "In the cleanup, they were working in their own neighborhoods. We need more who will look at our concerns all across the community."

The mayor had hoped to seek council approval of her appointments at the Jan. 10 meeting, but now she says she will wait until the next session on Jan. 24. The City Clerk's Office, (989) 759-1480, still is accepting applications.

She recently told The Saginaw News that she suggested forming the group as a response to activists "who raised too much hell with us" last summer over a lack of public hearings, adding, "They said they were speaking for the people, so why aren't the people signing up?"

She now tells The Banner that she did not intend to sound "overly harsh," but that she will stand by the challenge she has issued.

"We need a diverse group of people," Moore said. "We have to find a better way of communicating."

Lack of participation is nothing new, even at the highest levels. As recently as the 2018 city election, there were not enough candidates to fill all nine seats until a last-minute recruiting drive helped Saginaw avoid an embarrassing spectacle.

"I never stop asking people, but mostly they say they just don't have the time," she notes.

At The Banner, our past reports have indicated that Saginaw's Human Planning Commission was formed in 1975 for the identical purpose of offering advice for how to invest federal monies, and that the mayor and council could have tapped the HPC instead of forming a new committee. Moore said she did not intend to bypass the HPC, but that members already are busy reviewing the regular block grant budget, which annually is in the \$3 million range, a mere fraction of the one-time ARPA infusion. Furthermore, she noted that HPC members may volunteer for the new ARPA group.

Other local communities also are in line for ARPA lump sums, based on their poverty rates. Support for schools comes from a different pot with the label of ESSER, for Elementary and Secondary Schools Emergency Relief. Both programs are firmly in place, not subject to current D.C. debates over so-called infrastructure.

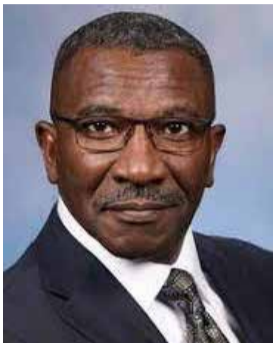
Saginaw city schools are in line for \$65 million and county government stands to reap \$37 million. In other communities, leaders are spending about half of their grant dollars to bolster their hard-pressed general budget while making the remaining half available for third-party nonprofit centers and agencies.

"We need to collaborate to make the most of these monies," Mayor Moore says, "and we need to get moving. Summer will be here soon."

+ COMMUNITY

Could 'yes' on petitions mean 'no' for civil rights?

By MIKE THOMPSON



AMOS O'NEAL, MICHIGAN
STATE REPRESENTATIVE 95TH
DISTRICT

State Rep. Amos O'Neal again is pushing to take action, but now is different.

In this case, it's by not taking action.

The Saginaw Democrat is urging residents NOT to sign petitions that parking-lot circulators from "Secure MI Votes" may say are in favor of "voter rights," but actually are the opposite. O'Neal and Dems assert that a hidden petition purpose is part of Republican state-by-state efforts for polling rollbacks fueled by Donald Trump's claims of 2020 election fraud.

Republicans respond that vote-access advocates have gone too far, especially with recent changes for expanded voter registration and participation.

The difference is that those 2018 reforms, unlike the 2022 proposed reversals, received 2-to-1 approval among 4 million registered voters who took part. The counts were 2.6 million in favor, 1.3 million opposed,

By contrast, this year's petitions could move power to the hands of a far smaller percentage.

Under the Michigan Constitution, only a minimum 340,000 signees are needed to send the provisions to Lansing's Republican-controlled House and Senate for lock-step enactment, with a newfound constitutional block on Democratic Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's veto vows. No longer would she hold power on voting rights to thwart the right-wingers, heading toward this fall's upcoming elections.

D.C. moves to Lansing

This Lansing scenario is among Michigan subplots in what has become a national Trump-based pro-con debate regarding fraud, filibusters and the proposed John Lewis Voting Right Advancement Act.

O'Neal says politically-aware constituents have contacted his office to advise that state petition canvassers had approached

them. These clipboard circulators sometimes are volunteers, and sometimes are compensated by signature counts they gather. Main locations are shopping centers, gas stations, and also barber and beauty shops. Online options also exist,

Leaders of Secure MI Votes respond on social media that early voting, absentee voting, and neighborhood ballot drop boxes may allow opportunities for fraud, leading to growing public mistrust in election integrity. They are displeased that more than half of the 160 million ballots nationwide in 2020 were cast by individuals who did not physically go to poll sites, saying fraud was a factor more than the pandemic.

Advocates of access respond that bipartisan studies have found no proof beyond incidental fraud cases, and that the underlying strategy is to restrict ethnic minority vote counts that in modern history have favored Democrats. For example, the Michigan ACLU has reported research to indicate that blacks are three times more likely than whites to encounter photo ID barriers.

Where to learn more

Last September, O'Neal invited Democratic Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson to a forum that drew nearly 100 activists to UAW Local 699 Bagley Hall. She offered a critical analysis of 39 Republican-pro-



DON'T SIGN NUTTIN!

DON'T SIGN AWAY YOUR VOTING RIGHTS TO FAIR AND ACCESSIBLE ELECTIONS!

A ballot petition is being circulated through the state of Michigan with individuals in our community asking you to sign a petition. They will claim that what you are signing will "secure your voting rights", when actually the opposite is true. What they will not divulge to you is that this petition drive is actually an attempt to gather enough signatures so that its backers can get voter suppression legislation enacted in Michigan. This process will allow its backers to bypass the Governor's veto of currently pending legislation. This is a cynical ploy, if successful, it will make voting harder for Michiganders, especially Black and Brown voters. HELP SPREAD THE WORD:

- Michigan has one of the most secure and accessible election systems in the nation.
- More than 250 audits proved that the 2020 general election had a historic voter turnout and was one of the most secure elections on record.
- If the anti-voter group collects enough signatures, the measure will go to the Michigan legislature where it can be enacted by majority vote without it being placed on the ballot for voters to consider and the Governor, by law, will not be able to exercise her veto power.
- If this measure becomes law, it will take Michigan's election system backward, making it harder for people of color, rural areas, seniors, and voters with disabilities to cast a ballot. This effort is in direct opposition to Proposal 3 approved by voters in 2018 to make voting easier in our state.

posed rollbacks, available in the Michigan Banner's Sept. 16 archive or via michigan.gov/documents/sos/Summary_of_Bills_to_Restrict_Voting_Rights_722845_7.pdf

Securemivote.org provides counter arguments, although not as specific.

Saginaw N.A.A.C.P. leaders also are urging people to turn down the petition pitches, and they joined O'Neal in Lansing for an April 2021 protest. Branch President Terry Pruitt compiled a summary, published in The Banner last April 16,

O'Neal says "more fair" voting access should be a basic that ideally would not face opposition. Even though they will be outvoted by the opposition, he has joined fellow Dems with seven bills aimed at least to slow down GOP momentum. They are H.B. 5513 to H.B. 5519.

+ COMMUNITY

Out with the old, in with the new

By MIKE THOMPSON

Starting in mid-December, The Michigan Banner requested local leaders to briefly summarize their thoughts on 2021 events, along with their outlooks for 2022. Following are the quartet of responses we received.

**State Rep. Amos O'Neal,
Saginaw Democrat**



"The year 2021 presented us with many challenges, but I'm proud of how we took them on in Lansing and in Saginaw. We passed a bipartisan budget that will rebuild nearly 100 bridges,

compensate our health care workers for going above and beyond, and ensure that every family receives affordable child care. Saginaw's own Youth Development Corp. received \$500,000 to help provide jobs training to those returning from incarceration. Carrollton Township received more than \$600,000 through the governor's MI Clean Water Plan to support clean water infrastructure. It was a tough year, but we still managed to accomplish a lot of good.

"It's hard to predict the future, but one thing I know for sure: I will continue to fight for the 95th District in 2022. Last November, we introduced a package of bills protecting your right to vote that we hope will pass the House this year. I sponsored a criminal justice reform bill I hope the Senate will take up. I will continue to fight to defend your right to vote, make sure you feel safe in your community, and provide our community members with the training and education they need to thrive."

**County Clerk Vanessa Guerra,
Saginaw Democrat**

"As we have done for decades, Saginaw County again ran three successful elections in 2021 in various parts of the county. We continue to live with the repercussions of the false (national voter fraud) allega-

tions made in 2020, nonetheless our local clerks remain dedicated to ensuring full transparency and security of our voting process. We also worked on reapportioning the County Commission districts, to ensure fair representation at the county level, as well as to begin educating folks about the expungement process with other community partners, Legal Services of Eastern Michigan and Michigan Works."

"As we look to 2022, the clerk's office will be laser-focused on elections. This year residents will vote for state, county and local leadership, and it is our job to assist in the recruitment and training of more than 500 election workers. Finally, we will continue to work on updating our technology so that more services may be offered online and across the county. I am also excited to begin my first full year serving on the SVSU Board of Control, as we are tasked with searching for a new university president. As always, thank you to the residents of this county for allowing me to serve you again in 2022!"

**Robert Ruth,
Saginaw city police chief**



"The year 2021 was a very challenging year for everyone in law enforcement dealing with the side effects of the pandemic and civil unrest, the same as the entire world experienced for the last two years. I'm proud of the hard work and dedication our officers and civilian staff at the Saginaw Police Department displayed to help reduce violent crime in the city last year. Saginaw experienced a significant



reduction in Shootings (-10%), Homicide (-27%), Criminal Sexual Conduct (-48%), Robbery (-14%), Burglary Non-forced Entry (-25%), Retail Fraud (-45%). This shows we all in the greater Great Lakes Bay Region can come together and work as a team to help our community to become a safer place to live, work and play.

"I am encouraged that 2022 will bring even higher reductions in crime and the end of this terrible pandemic that is adding extra strain and stress to all citizens. This will only happen if we all work together as a team to combat the issues at hand. We at the Saginaw Police Department will do everything we can to help reduce the incidents of crime in our community."

**Torrie Lee
Buena Vista Township superintendent**

"The year 2021, just like 2020, was a very challenging year, and once again we were all stretched to the limit. Dealing with a pandemic while trying to maneuver our way through



unchartered territory, was both scary and stressful, to say the least. How do we plan for the unknown? How do we remain calm through the storm? The sense of urgency to get it right, to have all the answers and to show leadership during a time of crisis, is best measured by providing the best possible solutions while trying to get a grasp on the needs for everyone that you serve, especially when it seems that misinformation was omnipresent.

"Looking ahead thank you to all of the front-line workers who continue to provide services to the community throughout this pandemic. You are both applauded and appreciated for your services. Change is constant and change is ongoing. I'm sure that we are truly looking forward to the days when we can return to some sense of normalcy. For now let's continue to wear our masks and stay safe and healthy. Looking forward to a better year!"

+ COMMUNITY



COURTESY PHOTO

Invest American Rescue Plan funds to meet Michigan's housing and economic needs

By **DR. SAMUEL SHAHEEN AND
VERONICA HORN, SAGINAW
CHAMBER CEO**

When people think of growing a community, often the first thing that comes to mind is jobs. You can't have a thriving economy without there being jobs, right? The truth is that is only part of the equation. Successful businesses have realized talent is attracted to places with amenities, arts and culture, and access to attainable housing options. A strong economy and a thriving community go hand in hand - both as key factors that propel economic and population growth.

Our state faced challenges well before the pandemic struck and those challenges still exist today. We lack access to enough attainable housing to support our workforce, we have struggled to attract and retain talent, and for decades our population has been stagnant while other states have grown exponentially.

The upside to these challenges is that we have a once-in-lifetime opportunity to change the trajectory of our prosperity for decades to come by purposefully investing the roughly \$6 billion in American Rescue Plan (ARP) dollars the state of Michigan currently has available. The Coalition for a Strong and Prosperous Michigan has

developed a bold vision to build Michigan's future and strategically invest in our residents, entrepreneurs, businesses, and communities.

The Coalition for a Strong and Prosperous Michigan includes business and labor leaders, statewide policy experts, and local officials who have come together and developed a comprehensive roadmap to invest, leverage, and amplify American Rescue Plan resources to lay a foundation for transformational recovery. The Coalition understands that our future success is inextricably linked to the strategic investment of the state's available resources. The plan we have developed is called the Michigan Prosperity Roadmap. It represents our bold vision to capitalize on the economic value of thriving communities, advance equity, build community wealth, support entrepreneurship, prioritize the need for talent, and spur business development.

The Michigan Prosperity Roadmap includes \$805 million toward supporting thriving communities and \$910 million towards building a strong economy. Projects that would be supported by these funds include grants to preserve, improve, and build new housing stock, including homeowner repair grants to address aging roofs and mechanicals; weatherization and energy efficiency grants; blight removal

programs; investments in local parks and recreation infrastructure; and grants to repurpose vacant office buildings and preserve historic structures.

The Michigan Prosperity Roadmap also calls for leveraging the state's ARP dollars for rebuilding our building and construction trades workforce and investing in job training to meet the demands of the current and evolving job market.

These investments will have a significant impact on education, health, employment, economic, and equity outcomes while providing better opportunities for wealth creation. With this opportunity, we can address the state's housing needs, invest in great places, and layer in wrap-around services to improve outcomes for all Michigan families.

Now is the time for lawmakers and Governor Whitmer to come together and coalesce around a comprehensive approach to investing in Michigan's future. If we miss this moment, we risk losing out on the upcoming construction season - and we already know other states are moving ahead while we sit still.

Ohio has approved \$500 million in funding for its brownfield redevelopment program. Iowa lawmakers adopted plans for spending \$100 million for its housing needs. Virginia invested \$22.5 million toward its housing rehabilitation and demolition program.

Recovering from the pandemic will require more than just a return to normal. To propel Michigan's future success it is critical to learn from the experiences of the last year and a half and capitalize on the changing environment to make the state a model for recovery, innovation, and growth. The American Rescue Plan can help streamline Michigan's recovery, better connect talent to the state's growing job market, accelerate entrepreneurship, and increase community wealth. But we must not delay any longer.

We urge our leaders to act with the urgency needed to leverage our ARP dollars so that Michigan emerges from this pandemic stronger and more prosperous than ever before. Our coalition has presented a framework, and we look forward to working with our leaders to move it forward.

Dr. Samuel Shaheen is the President and CEO of Shaheen Development. Veronica Horn is the President and CEO of the Saginaw Chamber of Commerce.



Saginaw Promise

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High School Seniors (and previous high school graduates who have used only one year of their Saginaw Promise scholarship) are asked to **complete the Saginaw Community Foundation (SCF) scholarship Application** (be sure to check off the Saginaw Promise Scholarship) and **FAFSA**, which enables students to be reviewed for additional scholarships and federal funding.

For Details: Visit www.saginawpromise.org or telephone the Saginaw Promise (989)-755-0545

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+ COMMUNITY



LULA WOODARD

Saginaw teacher and activist holds MLK memories

By MIKE THOMPSON

Lula Woodard will be an honoree in Saginaw's main Martin Luther King holiday event, and she feels a direct connection.

During her Alabama childhood, she observed home-state civil rights actions in Montgomery and Selma and Birmingham. Her home was in Tuscaloosa, and she recalls family members being employed at the University of Alabama and forced to remain overnight during riots when the governor, George Wallace, famously stood in the schoolhouse door to combat integration.

"This is such an honor, because I grew up with Dr. King as a little black girl, following all the social issues, seeing the rocks and tomatoes being thrown and all of those terrible events with my own eyes," reflects the retired Saginaw Public Schools teacher, still active in an array of worthy causes and as a Delta College adjunct professor of English.

Prior to coming to Saginaw in 1980, she completed her Master of Arts diploma

on that same University of Alabama campus, completing her personal circle of justice achieved.

Woodard's honor will take place as part of the annual Unity March on Jan. 17, beginning at 9:45 a.m. with a walk along Washington Avenue from the intersection of Hayden and Franklin to The Dow Event Center for an 11 a.m. lunch program, all arrangements pending on the latest news in the pandemic. See the Facebook page for Saginaw Alphas, representing the Iota Chi Lambda chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc.

Lula will receive the Spirit of MLK Award from the Delta College Black Faculty and Staff Association.

For more than 20 years, she has volunteered through her church, Victorious Believers Ministries, and with Women of Colors, a group that promotes diversity and civil rights. She's a certified substance abuse prevention and recovery coach. She also has enlisted with the newly formed Saginaw Citizens United for Justice, and wherever she sees a need for action.

"The civil rights progress of Dr. King's

time is being sabotaged today" by far-right demonstrators, Woodard says, "and so we all must shine our lights so that people can see, to be a voice for peace. As John Lewis always would say, we need to cause 'good trouble.'"

Iota Chi Lambda also will salute Marnie Thorns, Saginaw Valley State University's chief diversity officer, Unity Award; and Bob Johnson, news leader for The Saginaw News and The Bay City Times, Community Service Award. Dr. Thorns' civic leadership has included the Saginaw N.A.A.C.P., Saginaw Future and the Saginaw Community Foundation. Johnson is board president for First Ward Community Center and has served on the Saginaw Library Commission, among other local involvements.

The keynote speaker is Dawn Hinton, director of SVSU's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, who volunteers as president of the Saginaw Housing Commission and as a planning leader of the Saginaw African Cultural Festival.

Iota Chi Lambda was organizing MLK birthday celebrations even before the federal holiday became official in 1986, with strong advocacy from Saginaw-born Stevie Wonder.

Luncheon tickets, with a minimum \$40 donation, are available by calling Smallwood Holoman, 989-859-2602 or Eddie Foxx, 989-860-4146. Online viewers may send donations to APA International Educational Foundation Scholarship Fund, P.O. 1531, Saginaw, MI 48605.

- "Celebrate Saginaw's Cultures: Building Unity Through Diversity" will feature the artworks of Saginaw School District students on the holiday. Doors will open from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. Monday, Jan. 17, at Andersen Enrichment Center and continue on display through Aug. 28. An awards show is set for 5 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 27.
- Saginaw Valley State University's annual MLK holiday celebration is virtual at 7 p.m. Wednesday, with Condoleezza Rice, who was 66th U.S. Secretary of State. Visit www.etix.com/ticket/v/22568/svsu-mlk-regional-celebration to register.

+ COMMUNITY

Saginaw County Sports Hall of Fame Seeking Board Members



The Saginaw County Sports Hall of Fame is seeking individuals who would like to serve on its board of directors and be part of one of the leading non-profit organizations in the region. You do not have to live in Saginaw County to be a board member but are required to be a Lifetime Voting Member. Anyone interested should contact Mr. Bud Butler, Nomination Chairperson, at (989) 754-3389.



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Dr. Dawn Hinton,
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"A Unity March" at 10:00 A.M. will precede the luncheon. The March will gather 9:30 A.M. at the corner of Franklin Street and Hayden Street. We will march to the Dow Event Center. There will be remarks about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at the end of the March at the Dow Event Center.

For more information and ticket(s) contact Christopher Foxx (989-295-1271), Smallwood Holoman (989-859-2602) or Eddie Foxx (989-860-4146)

+ COMMUNITY



PICTURED FROM L TO R: KYLEE MONAHAN, JADEN O'BERRY, LEXIE SCHULTZ, LUCAS INMAN

SVSU thespians, musician shine at regional theatre festival

SAGINAW – Students from Saginaw Valley State University recently made their mark as some of the best collegiate performing artists, producers and designers in the Midwest.

Eight students virtually competed in the 2021 Kennedy Center American College Theatre Region 3 Festival (KCACTF) from Jan. 5-9.

Three SVSU students advanced into the final rounds:

- **Kylee Monahan**, a theatre major from Saginaw, won the KCACTF Stage Management Fellowship Award for her work on “Animal Farm.” She and five other finalists will be invited to attend the Kennedy Center National Conference in Washington, D.C. to participate at the national level.
- **Jaden O’Berry** was the runner-up for the KCACTF Award for Theatrical Design Excellence in Lighting Design. The theatre major from Flint received the award for her lighting design for “Joan: The Girl of Arc,” the first livestreamed SVSU show of the 2021 season.
- **Alexandra “Lexie” Schultz**, a music major from Saginaw, is a Musical Theatre Initiative finalist and was also the 2021 winner.

Additionally, Lucas Inman, a theatre major from Saginaw, and O’Berry were the

winners of The Games of the Technological Olympiad Game show. In Tech Olympics, five events such as lights, sound, knots, wardrobe, and scenery/carpentry are judged on time with reductions for errors and omissions.

To compete for the KCACTF Stage Management Fellowship Award, Monahan created a letter of intent and submitted materials in a PowerPoint presentation that showcased her process as a stage manager for “Animal Farm.” This included calendars, props tracking sheets, show duties, rehearsal/production reports and pictures from the show. She then went through two rounds: a presentation followed by a more casual conversation about her experience.

“As stage manager, I get to be a part of every moving piece of the show from blocking to costumes to the scenic design,” Monahan said. We have yet to put on a show where I am not amazed at seeing it all come together to create one cohesive story.”

Monahan said she is excited and nervous about the prospect of competing on the national level in Washington, D.C.

“It is daunting to think about, but I know that this is a great opportunity to learn, grow and meet people in my field.”

Monahan is expected to graduate from SVSU in May 2022.

Also competing at this year’s festival were:

- **Adam Coggins**, a theatre major

from Swartz Creek

- **Erica Close**, a theatre major from Essexville
- **Dani Durst**, a theatre major from Newaygo
- **Olivia Greanias**, a theatre major from Saginaw

Peggy Mead-Finizio, an SVSU assistant professor of theatre, serves as the co-chair of Design, Technology, and Management of Region 3.

KCACTF is a national theater program that aims to improve, advance and celebrate theatre programs in colleges and universities. The festival honors excellence of overall production and presents student artists individual recognition through awards and scholarships in the categories of playwriting, acting, criticism, directing, and design. The program annually involves 18,000 students from across the country.

Region 3 covers colleges and universities in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin and western Ohio. Eight regional festivals are held in January and February. This year, all regional festivals are virtual.

The national festival, which takes place in Washington, D.C. in April, involves about 125 regional nominees and award-winners who have the opportunity to learn from and connect with established theatre artists and their peers and to participate in master classes, conversations, presentations and staged readings.



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MICHIGAN BANNER
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Even my close friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me

(Psalms 41:9)



By **PASTOR RODRICK A. SMITH**
ZION MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

According to John MacArthur, "David's message in Psalm 41 speaks of God's tender loving care in the critical care unit of life." When one is betrayed by a close friend, critical care is just what the doctor orders. We are never surprised by the words and deeds of our enemies. We expect them to speak and strategize against us. But to experience the betrayal of a trusted companion is something that hurts deeply, and leaves one feeling angry and humiliated. Known enemies don't visit us when we're sick, but friends, acquaintances, and relatives do. Those who play the hypocrite will visit us when we're sick, only to speak false words of encouragement, and gather information to spread abroad and use against us. Close friends are the people we have invited into our homes, shared private meals with, sacrificed for, opened our hearts to, and engaged in confidential conversations with. Whenever we give ourselves to other people, we run the risk of being betrayed. This record of David's personal experience with betrayal is also a prophecy of our Lord's betrayal by Judas Iscariot. Much of what Christ experienced will be experienced by us. If we suffer with Him, we will reign with Him. First comes the humiliation, then comes the exaltation.

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REMEMBERING SIDNEY POITIER

Sidney Poitier, whose elegant bearing and principled onscreen characters made him Hollywood's first Black movie star and the first Black man to win the best actor Oscar, died on January 6, 2022. He was 94.

Poitier was born in Miami, Florida to Bahamian parents. He grew up in poverty on Cat Island in the Bahamas where his parents were poor tomato farmers. He was their seventh and last child. The family's struggles hammered home a lesson he has always live by: Survival requires everybody to carry a load. In fact, by the age of 13, he was working full-time to support the family. At 16, he arrived in New York City, totally alone, with three dollars in his pocket. In order to escape the cold, he lied about his age and joined the army. It was a short stint that lasted less than a year.

Back in New York he worked as a dishwasher and stumbled into acting while looking for a second job to make ends meet. Without any experience or training, and barely able to read, he auditioned for the American Negro Theatre. He was humiliated off the stage, but six months later, better prepared, he auditioned again. His first production, *Days of Our Youth*, led to nearly 10 more roles with the company, a national tour of *Anna Lucasta* in

1944 and, two years later at 22, came his first film *No Way Out*. It launched the career that, in the words of his good friend Harry Belafonte, "put the cinema and millions of people in the world in touch with a truth about who we are. A truth that could have for a longer time eluded us had it not been for him and the choices he made."

His breakout role took place in a classroom of incorrigible high school students in the 1955 film *Blackboard Jungle*. He acted in the first run of *A Raisin in the Sun* on Broadway in 1959, and in its Hollywood adaptation in 1961. He also won the Academy Award for Best Actor for his role in the 1963 film *Lilies of the Field* and was the first actor of African descent to win this award. He was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II (by right and recommendation of his Bahamian citizenship) in 1974. In 2000 he received the Life Achievement Award from the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) and in 2002 he received the prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Poitier served as non-resident Bahamian ambassador to Japan (since April 1997), and to the United Nations (UN) Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). In these diplomatic roles, the Bahamian Ministry of Foreign Affairs refers to him as "His Excellency Sir Sidney Poitier".

Sidney Poitier has been hailed as a breakthrough star whose acclaimed performances, which consciously defied previous racial stereotyping, gave a new dramatic credibility for Black actors to mainstream film audiences in the Western world.

“ **BE TRUE TO
WHO YOU ARE.** ”

TERRY DUPERON

 Duperon Education



Saginaw Art Museum opening three new exhibits for Black History Month

SAGINAW – The Saginaw Art Museum will celebrate Black History month by opening three new installations as well as hosting an exhibition open house on February 1, 2022 5:30-7:30pm.

EXHIBITIONS

From Africa to Eternity
February 1, 2022 – July 1, 2022



In the last two years, masks have dominated culture. Both literally and metaphorically, masks interpret our reality and help to construct who we are. They are typically for protection, disguise, performance, or entertainment. Masks have been used since antiquity for both ceremonial and practical purposes, as well as in the performing arts and for entertainment.

Lark Allen III has constructed a vision of masks made from discarded and found objects that tell a story incorporating a wide breadth of the history of modernity. From Africa to Eternity appears as if 2D images created by Basquiat or Picasso were given form and walked off into the distance. The use of found objects inspires hope and gratitude. Transformation is real. Change possible. That which was once old can be made new. Allen's work honors the cycles of change present in life.

INFORMATION LINK:
www.saginawartmuseum.org/exhibition/fromafricatoeternity

Blacktiquing® Presents:
The Black Hand Side
February 2, 2022 – April 8, 2022



The Black Hand Side is an interactive art installation that peeks through the prism of race to explore American history and experiences from American descendants of slavery. The reclaimed treasures acquired from antique shops range from the most celebratory dedications of Black people to the most vile and grotesque. To simply observe these historic testaments as whimsical or intriguing art, the viewer turns a blind eye to real and enduring atrocities. Yet, in choosing to look at its Black hand side, lessons of resiliency, triumph, joy, and determination—in spite of challenges and injustices—become clear. It's why poet Maya Angelou wrote, *And Still I Rise* (1978).

The Black Hand Side is an ode to Malik el-Shabazz's pilgrimage to Mecca, as depicted in Spike Lee's 1992 film *Malcolm X*. It's centered around a Kaaba-inspired, cubed-shaped structure that pays homage to Big Momma's House, a space where tired souls return for healing, community, remembrance, and reverence. The black-magic colored walls adorn imagery that depicts experiences with racism, but also Black tenacity and endurance. The inside

is curated with an Afro-futuristic flair showcasing Black culture, as imagined at Big Momma's house.

The Black Hand Side features items from the Blacktiquing® collection and art installations from Nyesha Clark-Young, DeV Vaughn Collins, Trel Frazier, Corrin Grooms, Kevin Jones, and other Michigan-based artists, creators, and collectors.

Learn more about this exhibition from collector Kevin Jones on February 12, 2022 1pm.

INFORMATION LINK:
www.saginawartmuseum.org/exhibition/theblackhandside

Advocacy Through Design
February 2, 2022-April 8, 2022



Established in 1919, the Saginaw Branch of the NAACP is a longtime advocate for civil rights in the region. During its more than 100 years of advocacy, the group has used a wide variety of materials to communicate messages associated with important causes. This exhibition explores the elements of design that have been used over time.

INFORMATION LINK:
www.saginawartmuseum.org/exhibition/advocaythroughdesign

+ COMMUNITY

IN MY HUMBLE OPINION



Beware of the Metaverse



By **KEN H. SIMMONS, II**
MANAGING DIRECTOR, KENZO
PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Technology is advancing faster and faster these days and it is driven by computing power. According to experts in the field, technology grows by 2x every 18 months in processing capacity, and nearly 90% of Big Data has been generated in the past two years. This exponential evolution of technology will affect us in many ways. Some changes will be positive and some more controversial, but either way we will need to learn how to deal with them.

The latest buzzword about technology in the media is metaverse, and while the term may be new to some, the concept has existed for 30 years. The simplest definition of a metaverse is “a virtual-reality space in which users can interact with a computer-generated environment and other users”, as per Oxford Languages Dictionary. This seems like it would be harmless fun, but in my humble opinion we should beware of the metaverse.

Communities have existed online since

the mid-1980s and grew in the ‘90s with chatrooms, AOL instant messenger, and the first social media sites. In a sense, social media itself began more than a century before this when a series of electronic dots and dashes tapped out by hand on a telegraph machine (the first electronic message) was sent from Baltimore to Washington D.C. on 24 May 1844. The message that Samuel F.B. Morse transmitted that day carried the historic ramifications of his scientific achievement when he wrote an excerpt from Numbers 23:23 in the Bible, “What Hath God Wrought?”.

The word, “metaverse”, sounds like something from a comic book, but it is a reality that many of us already engage in to some extent knowingly or unknowingly. The term was coined by Neal Stephenson in his 1992 science fiction novel *Snow Crash*, and inspired Ernest Cline’s 2011 novel *Ready Player One*, which has since been turned into a movie. Both storylines take place in grim dystopias.

Over the last three decades, the industry has laid the foundations for a non-fictional metaverse pixel by pixel, byte by byte, and block by block. Online multiplayer computer-based video games is where the bulk of this development has taken place with games like, *Second Life* (2003), *Call of Duty* (2003), *Roblox* (2006), *Minecraft* (2009), *Fortnite* (2017), and *Decentraland* (2017) to name some of the more popular ones that are still going strong. Millions of people are spending hours a day navigat-

ing in these virtual spaces or worlds using individual, customizable digital representations of themselves called avatars.

Most recently, metaverse became a media buzzword when Facebook changed its company name to “Meta” on 28 October 2021. In an earlier press release dated 27 September 2021, Facebook described the metaverse as, “a set of virtual spaces where you can create and explore with other people who aren’t in the same physical space as you. You’ll be able to hang out with friends, work, play, learn, shop, create and more.”

According to an article entitled, “Metaverse Meaning – What is this New World Everyone’s Talking About?” published by xrtoday.com, from the description above, “it would appear that most of us are familiar with the metaverse in a way and we interact with metaverse-ian elements when we spend prolonged amounts of time online.” Studies have shown that uncontrolled social media usage has mental health effects on users. Some experts have warned that unmonitored use of the metaverse, especially by minors, may make it difficult for the user to distinguish between the real and the virtual world.

In addition to the potential mental health risks, there are concerns around data privacy, security, diversity, and ethical behavior, which are real world prob-

**CONTINUES ON PG 25,
METAVERSE**

+ COMMUNITY

Continued from pg 24, Metaverse

lems that may take on a new dimension in a virtual one. The metaverse experience is designed to be enhanced by the use of virtual reality (VR) headsets, or augmented reality (AR) smart glasses and not just through desktop and mobile apps in a limited way so that users will have an immersive reality they can inhabit. The ultimate goal is blending the digital and the real world together, which is called mixed reality (MR), and this blend may be so good, and so pervasive, that the virtual and the real become indistinguishable. Whoever controls this market, will basically have control over the user's entire reality.

According to Dr. David Reid, Professor of AI and Spatial Computing at Liverpool Hope University in the UK, "Many current MR prototype systems have face, eye, body and hand tracking tech. Most have sophisticated cameras. Some even incorporate Electroencephalogram (EEG) technology in order to pick up brainwave patterns. In other words, everything you say, manipu-


late, look at, or even think about can be monitored in MR." These comments were published by the New York Post on 05 November 2021. Dr. Reid is concerned about the immense amount of data that could be collected from the metaverse and whoever controls it. He also fears that avatars could be hacked and a person could end up interacting with cybercriminals rather than the people they know and trust. He went on to say, "that's why we need a system in place to police it. No single company should ever exert control – it's simply too important for that to happen."

Like most things in life, the metaverse has negative and positive potential, and most experts agree that there are projected benefits and dangers. Even Dr. Reid thinks more job opportunities could be created because people could work from different cities around the world but all meet up virtually in the metaverse. Facebook is already hiring 10,000 people to work on it. A few other benefits are testing prod-

ucts and services in a virtual mall before purchasing, traveling to other countries, attending concerts, and having different entertaining and educational experiences.

If we want to continue to living happily in the world God created, we must consider the risk in handing over the reins of our daily experiences to big corporations like Facebook, Amazon, Google and others that seek to dominate the metaverse in the ways they have the internet. An enhanced, immersive super-internet could have the power to absorb entire lives into a world of distractions that people are not strong enough to pull away from.

We are still at the early stages of a fully immersive MR metaverse, which is likely one or two decades away, so now is the time to discuss and decide what we want this new technology to be like and do for us before we go down a path we can't back out of.



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+ COMMUNITY

In Saginaw, we can become "eagles" in our guest speaker's spirit

By MIKE THOMPSON



Joe Madison, civil rights leader and radio host, explained to a Saginaw teleconference why he is known as "The Black Eagle."

An eagle flies above the storm clouds in order to see clearly ahead, he said, and all of us should aim to do the same.

He was the keynoter on Jan. 7 in a "Rising from the Phoenix" event organized and sponsored by The Michigan Banner and by Delta College, speaking as he reached the two-month mark of a solid foods hunger strike he launched on Nov. 8 to place a spotlight on voting rights legislation that remains stalled in Congress.

Madison had intended a personal appearance, but a combination of his fasting and the latest pandemic outbreak required a switch to an online event. He announced that more than a dozen nationwide clergy joined the hunger strike on Jan. 6, the anniversary of the D.C. insurrection among Trump supporters who oppose civil rights and voting rights among their various issues.

In spite of his health sacrifices and a loss of 23 pounds so far, he was vibrant until confessing some fatigue at the close of the three-hour online proceedings, concluding with a quotation from Martin Luther King III as the MLK national holiday approaches: "No celebration without legislation."

The specific legislation, in this case, is named for John Lewis. It would block states, including Michigan as explained by Rep. Amos O'Neal and Saginaw NAACP President Terry Pruitt, from taking oppressive steps to limit voter participation. Democrats face obstacles of near-unanimous opposition among Republicans and also hesitancy from two Dem senators, Joe Manchin and Krysten Sinema.

Action would require removal of filibuster rules, which Madison explained are

not part of the U.S. Constitution and which actually were adopted to block civil rights action during the 20th Century.

For those not familiar with Joe Madison, he noted, "I channel Dick Gregory," also known for several visits to Saginaw. Madison has undertaken other hunger strikes in the past and once hosted a 52-hour radiothon on behalf of criminal justice.

In addition to voting rights, Madison spoke in his eloquent Sirius radio style on an array of concerns:

- He compared today's times to the end of post-slavery reconstruction in 1877, saying progress not only is frozen but that the threat of rollbacks is in full force. NAACP Vice-President Carl Williams echoed this challenge, stating simply, "If they get (totally) in power, they can do whatever they want to do."
- He noted that as recently as two decades ago, George W. Bush as president and other moderate conservatives supported civil rights progress, and that the push for rollbacks has taken root during the five years via Trump supporters since President Obama departed office.
- The hypocrisy of the naysayers, he asserted, shows when right-wing elected officials take credit for the overall funding of infrastructure projects that they opposed in Congress. Focus ideally should return to Build Back Better as soon as voting rights is settled, he said.
- President Biden on Jan. 6 "finally spoke truth to power," Madison said, by publicly holding Trump responsible for the current peak of civil rights opposition.
- He said, "All movements require sacrifice. That's the difference between a movement and a moment."
- From experience, he said that not only

should all groups be included at the table, but that all must be regarded equally.

- Speaking of the Jan. 6 telecast of an Emmett Till documentary on ABC, he pointed out that Congress through the years also has stalled anti-lynching legislation, the latest version bearing Emmett's name and blocked by Sen. Rand Paul.
- Regarding battles over teaching black history, or Critical Race Theory, he said: "(White critics) say they don't want to feel guilty. Is your child's sensitivity more important than my child's sensitivity?" Madison added a comparison to postwar Germany, where Hitler's atrocities are discussed openly in order to avoid a repeat of tragic history.
- Furthermore on education, Madison lamented some negatives in today's technology: "Most of the exposure they get is on that thing you hold in your hand. That's their exposure to the real world."
- He suggested out-of-town field trips for young people, for example to college campuses, noting, "When a young person drops out, this is where we should double down. You might have to take some of the bad kids with you (on a field trip)." Saginaw participants responded with some knowing mild laughter, the only time this took place.

Mayor Brenda Moore asked Madison how we can apply his principles on a local basis.

Madison answered that in spite of the event's "Phoenix" title, "Saginaw has not burned down, (and) there are a lot of Saginaws all over the country. Don't undervalue your community." He advocated "work, wisdom and love."

A video of the tele-convention remains available at michiganbanner.org.

Value's Value

By Doniqua Sovia

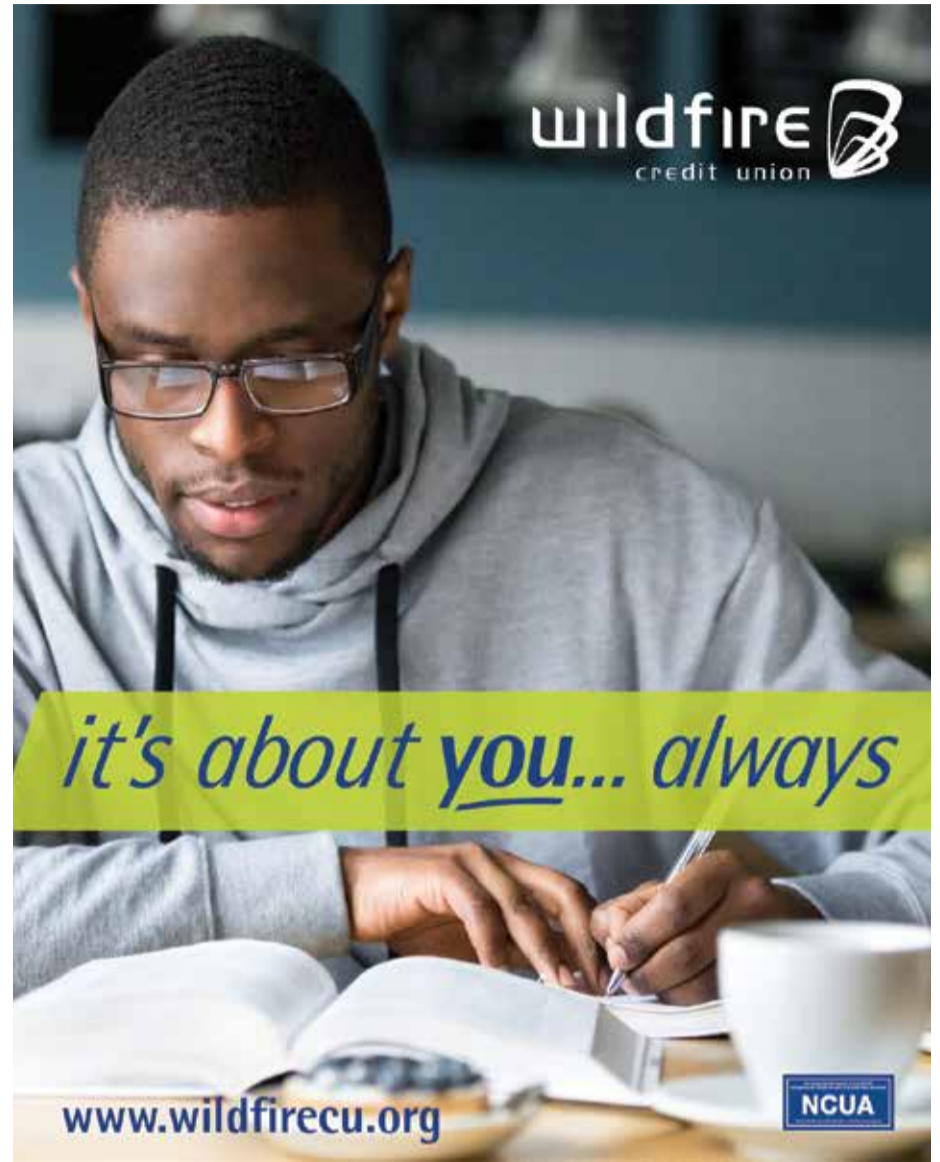


What is value? How is it perceived? Is it given with a charge? Or is it, instead free?

What's the value of value? How is it obtained? Does it come as a packaged deal with respect? Does it decrease based on one's own name?

Who's the giver of value? Does the knowledge come from within? Do you demand value? Does it come from friends? Where does value come from? Can it be taken away? Or does value remain strong as long as it is maintained?

Does value go off confidence? Does value have a twin? Well value can be held in many things, but first must come from within.



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+ HEALTH



COURTESY PHOTO

Governor Whitmer encourages Michiganders to obtain free at-home COVID-19 tests, saving families hundreds per month

Governor Gretchen Whitmer and Michigan Department of Insurance and Financial Services (DIFS) Director Anita Fox are encouraging Michiganders with health insurance to take advantage of a new federal rule that requires health insurers to cover the cost of eight over-the-counter COVID-19 home tests per month. As insurers work to implement this new coverage, Michiganders should save receipts and boxes for COVID-19 tests purchased beginning on Saturday, January 15 so they can submit them for future reimbursement, saving a family of four at least \$384 a month.

"We will continue working with our federal partners to ensure that COVID-19 testing is more accessible and less expensive for every Michigander," said Governor Whitmer. "Thanks to this new rule, a family of four, for example, can get 32 tests every month, saving them at least \$384 every month. This expanded access to tests will lower costs and help limit the spread of COVID-19."

"This new health insurance benefit will help reduce barriers to at-home COVID-19 testing for Michiganders," said

DIFS Director Fox. "Depending on the insurer, consumers may be able to get their covered tests for free at the store or pharmacy, or they may be required to keep receipts for later reimbursement. Following the guidance issued Monday by the federal government, insurers have begun developing their plans for offering this new benefit. DIFS will compile information from Michigan insurers as it becomes available, and more information will be posted in the coming weeks at Michigan.gov/DIFS."

Under the new rule, starting January 15, private insurers will be required to cover up to eight FDA-approved over-the-counter COVID-19 tests per month for each person covered by a health plan. Insurers may, but are not required to, cover tests purchased before January 15. Free COVID-19 testing is not limited to Michiganders with private health insurance. Consumers' out-of-pocket costs will vary depending on how the coverage is provided:

- Through a network of preferred pharmacies or retailers: If your insurer establishes a network of

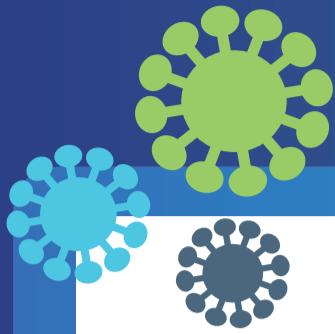
preferred pharmacies or retailers, you can get over-the-counter COVID-19 tests with no up-front costs at those locations. If you choose to purchase your tests elsewhere, your insurer is required to reimburse you up to \$12 for those tests.

- Through reimbursement: If your insurer does not establish a network of a preferred pharmacies or retailers, you will have to pay up front for your tests, and your insurer will be required to reimburse you for the full purchase price of the covered tests.
- Michigan Medicaid and MICHild: Participants of these programs have coverage for FDA-authorized at-home COVID-19 tests.
- If you do not have insurance: People without insurance can also get tested for free at some community health centers. More information about COVID-19 testing for people without insurance is available on the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services website.

Later this month, all Michiganders will also have access to free at-home tests that will be sent directly to them upon request in the mail by the federal government. More information on this new federal program, including a website for making test requests, is expected soon.

Consumers who have questions that cannot be resolved directly with their insurer can contact DIFS 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday at 877-999-6442.

The mission of the Michigan Department of Insurance and Financial Services is to ensure access to safe and secure insurance and financial services fundamental for the opportunity, security, and success of Michigan residents, while fostering economic growth and sustainability in both industries. In addition, the Department provides consumer protection, outreach, and financial literacy and education services to Michigan residents. For more information, visit Michigan.gov/DIFS or follow the Department on Facebook, Twitter, or LinkedIn.

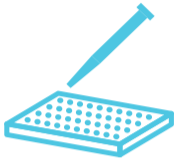




Great Lakes Bay Health Centers

www.GreatLakesBayHealthCenters.org

Great Lakes Bay Health Centers has touched more than **118,000 LIVES** during the COVID-19 crisis – in patient care and community outreach with testing and vaccines.



55,884
COVID-19 TESTS
ADMINISTERED
IN 2020-2021 (AS OF JUNE 3, 2021)

Great Lakes Bay Health Centers (GLBHC) began offering community COVID-19 testing in March 2020 outside centers in Saginaw, and expanded to Bay City and Bad Axe. During the summer and fall, we partnered with churches and other community partners to bring testing to neighborhoods with “popup” events. We shifted testing to drive-thru access and do not require a doctor’s note or symptoms. Staff supported this effort on every level, including making calls to share test results. GLBHC added free Influenza community clinics through the fall of 2020. Volunteers have supported testing and vaccines.



15,091
COVID-19 VACCINE DOSES*
ADMINISTERED
IN 2021 (AS OF JUNE 3, 2021)

The Moderna vaccine was first made available to GLBHC staff in January 2021. Through the winter, staff worked with local health departments to administer vaccines to school professionals. The centers started receiving direct shipments of vaccines in March 2021, and began offering appointments to patients. GLBHC also began planning pop-up events at churches and other locations to access hard-to-reach populations. By April, the vaccine team had set up drive-thru vaccine clinics in Saginaw and Bay City and weekly clinics at the UAW Hall in Saginaw. Soon the public could access the vaccines without an appointment. Outreach continues into the summer, with young adults and teens becoming a focus.
**individuals each receive two doses*

TOTAL GLBHC PATIENTS SERVED IN 2020:



50,270 PATIENTS

RECEIVING MEDICAL, DENTAL, BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE AND OTHER VISITS

The COVID-19 shutdowns required centers to limit in-person visits in March-May 2020, but we never closed. Within two weeks, GLBHC had telehealth visits operational to stay in touch with patients. Before 2020, there were no virtual visits offered.



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

COVID increased stress and demand for behavioral health services in 2020. Staff reached out to schools and saw increased referrals for children and teens.



DENTAL CARE

GLBHC dental centers were some of the only dental clinics open during quarantine to emergency care for patients experiencing pain or infection.



CHRONIC HEALTH MONITORING = BETTER OUTCOMES

During quarantine, GLBHC used grant funds to provide at-home monitoring kits to patients with COVID symptoms. The kits included blood pressure monitors and pulse oximeters to track oxygen levels. Telehealth visits were a lifeline for care management nurses to keep in touch with patients with chronic health conditions. Pharmacy staff made medication deliveries. A new Respiratory Clinic allowed staff to safely care for patients with COVID symptoms in person.



+ HEALTH



COURTESY PHOTO

Michigan Opioids Task Force announces RFP for racial equity consultant to lead new Racial Equity Workgroup

LANSING – The Michigan Opioids Task Force is requesting proposals for a racial equity consultant to guide the development of a Racial Equity Workgroup to target disparities in overdose fatalities among Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC).

In 2020, the economic and social disruption of the COVID-19 global pandemic exacerbated the already deadly drug overdose epidemic and brought to the forefront the deadly impact of health disparities on BIPOC communities. Provisional 2020 data illustrates increases in overdose fatalities among African American and Hispanic/Latinx populations. The age-adjusted opioid overdose death rate for Black residents, increased from 29.1 deaths per 100,000 residents in 2019 to 37.5 deaths per 100,000 residents in 2020. The age-adjusted opioid overdose death rate for Hispanic residents, increased from 15 deaths per 100,000 residents in 2019 to 22.3 deaths per 100,000 residents in 2020. Overdose deaths among Hispanic residents increased by 52% in 2020, from 91 in 2019 to 138.

In response, the Michigan Opioids Task Force will establish a statewide Racial Equity Workgroup committed to evi-

dence-based initiatives to combat growing racial disparities in overdose deaths. The racial equity consultant will support the development of a statewide Racial Equity Strategic Plan for reducing overdose disparities. Qualified applicants must have two years of experience as a racial equity consultant and/or experience facilitating community conversations about race and equity.

"The Michigan Opioids Task Force was created to quickly respond to growing disparities in our state," said MDHHS Director Elizabeth Hertel. "These deaths are tragic, and we want to encourage anyone struggling with substance abuse to seek help. I am proud that our organization is taking swift action to prevent overdose deaths - especially in minority groups who are experiencing higher death rates."

Overarching goals of the workgroup will include:

- Targeting the distribution of resources and opportunities to people and groups that have experienced structural and institutional discrimination and oppression.

- Eliminating harmful and unjust policies, practices and systemic barriers that produce historical and contemporary inequities based on race and ethnicity, with additional consideration given to gender identity, class, sexuality, geography, disability, and other forms of difference.
- Creation of new systems, policies, and practices that institutionalize equity and support sustainable, transformational change.

The Michigan Opioid Task Force is partnering with Vital Strategies, a global health nonprofit, will support the work of the Racial Equity Workgroup. Vital Strategies' work on this initiative is part of the Bloomberg Philanthropies investment in overdose prevention in Michigan announced in March 2019.

Interested applicants can view the Request for Proposal and proposals are due by 5 p.m. on Feb. 7. The anticipated start date of the project is March 1.

For more information and resources, visit Michigan.gov/Opioids.

Pfizer vaccine recommendations updated to fight COVID-19

LANSING – Following FDA and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) approval, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is urging all eligible Michiganders ages 12 and up to get the Pfizer booster vaccine if they have received their primary series of COVID-19 vaccines. Currently, Pfizer is the only authorized vaccine for anyone age 5 through 18.

In addition, the booster is recommended to be taken five months after the primary series instead of six months. This shortens the time for a booster from six months to five.

Children ages 5 to 11 who have moderately to severely weakened immune systems are encouraged to get an additional dose of the Pfizer vaccine 28 days after completion of their primary series.

As previously recommended, Michiganders with moderately to severely compromised immune systems should receive an additional dose of mRNA COVID-19 vaccine at least 28 days after a second dose

of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine. This additional dose is intended to improve the response of people who are immunocompromised to their initial vaccine series.

"Vaccines are the way out of the pandemic, and we can further protect children ages 12 and up from COVID-19, which continues to surge in our state," said Dr. Natasha Bagdasarian, MDHHS chief medical executive. "Keeping our children safe includes getting them vaccinated and boosted, and this in turn will help keep them out of the hospital and alleviate the stress on our health care system. Getting vaccinated is the safest way to face COVID-19 and prevent severe illness and death. As data evolves, new recommendations are expected and we are optimistic to have more information available fight COVID-19. We urge all Michiganders ages 5 and up to get vaccinated, and Michiganders ages 12 and up to receive their booster as soon as they're eligible."

The COVID-19 Pfizer booster dose may be given with other vaccines, including the

flu vaccine, at the same time.

Michiganders should bring their COVID-19 vaccine card or immunization record with them when getting their booster dose, which are available at any vaccine provider. Downloadable immunization records are accessible free of charge at the Michigan Immunization Portal. Visit Michigan.gov/MiImmsportal and upload a valid government issued photo ID such as a driver's license, state ID or passport. If you do not have records in the portal, contact your health care provider or local health department.

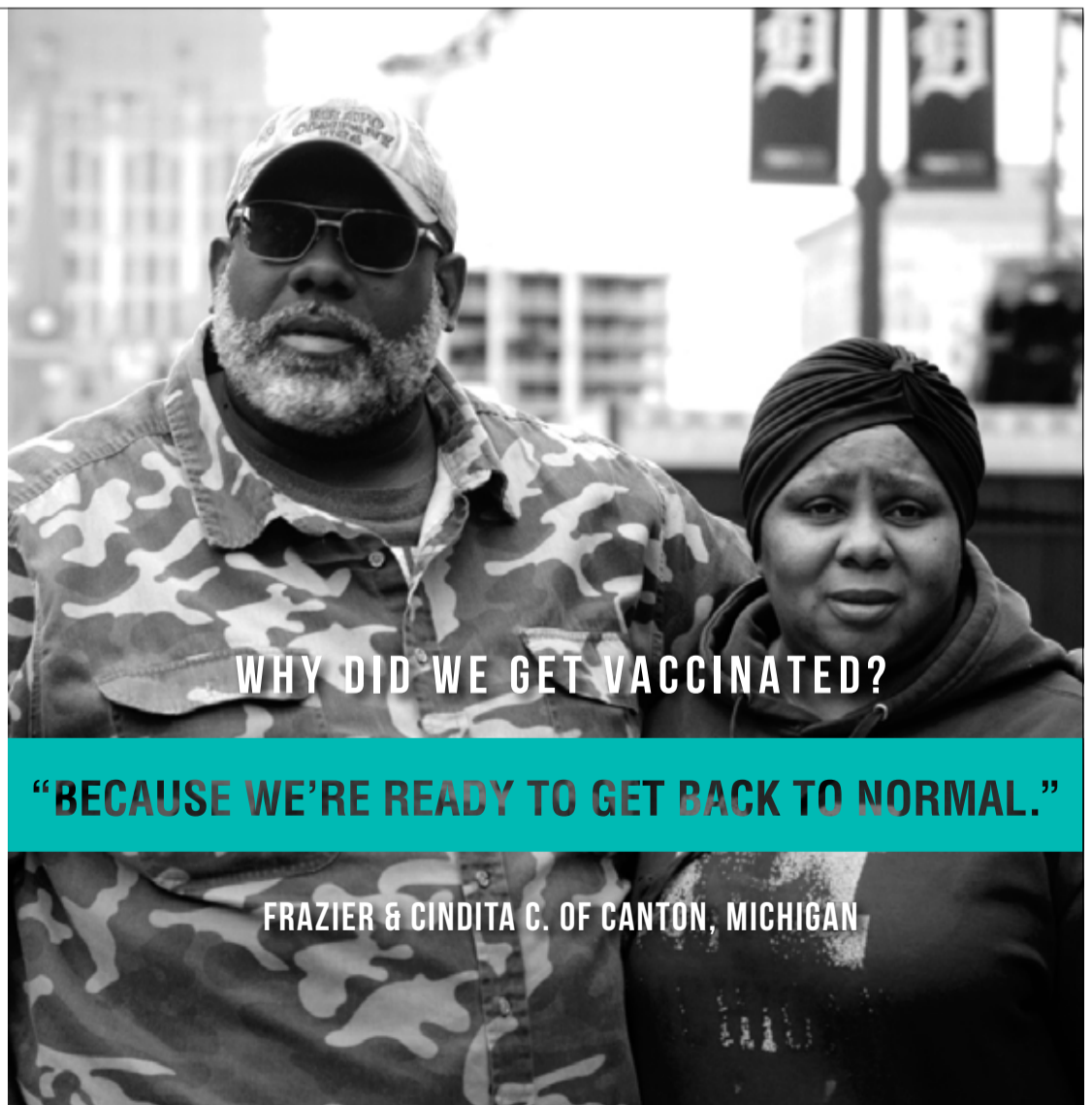
To date more than 6.3 million Michiganders aged 5 and up have gotten at least their first dose of one of the three safe, effective COVID-19 vaccines. Michiganders are still in need of the extra protection provided by booster doses, including residents of long-term care facilities where outbreaks can spread quickly and extra protection is strongly recommended.

The COVID-19 vaccine will help us get beyond this pandemic.

There are so many things Cindita and Frazier missed in the last year: celebrating big holidays, going to movies, being with friends and family. They hunkered down in the house, life just stopped. They saw firsthand how COVID took away strong, vibrant lives. Which is why they believed it was so important to get vaccinated to get back to normal.

The vaccines have been tested for safety and are trusted by doctors.

Find your vaccine at Michigan.gov/COVIDvaccine. Call **211**, or text your zip code to **438829**.



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+ EDUCATION

'Keep Saginaw High' backers face blowback

By MIKE THOMPSON

An online petition to retain the name of Saginaw High School when the city's merged structure opens is "inaccurate" and "divisive," says Superintendent Ramont Roberts, with support from the seven Board of Education members.



SUPERINTENDENT DR. RAMONT ROBERTS

Advocates of continuing Trojan tradition respond that some of the language may be unfair and extreme, but that their reasoning should not be dismissed out-of-hand.



ANDREAS PARSLEY WILLIAMS

The petition was launched by former Saginaw High pupil Andreas Parsley-Williams in late December and has drawn more than 800 thumbs up, exceeding the

721 responses to the district's own survey that produced three alternative monikers -- Saginaw United High School, Saginaw Central High School or Saginaw Valley High School -- when the new five-story showcase is slated to open, now pandemic-delayed for a year until September 2024.

The board and superintendent "refuse to hear the voices of the people," Parsley-Williams wrote, while seeking to "eradicate the over 125 year legacy." His petition calls for a compromise of renaming the Saginaw Arts and Sciences Academy for Arthur Hill, where a portion of SASA is planned to relocate.

The author now resides in North Carolina and is via social media. Saginawian Kevin Gregory, a student-support volunteer who backs keeping the Saginaw High name even as an Arthur Hill grad, told board members on Jan. 10 that the provocative wording should not distract from the merit of the concept.

"In the petition that went around, there is harsh language that we don't recognize

in our thought process," said Gregory, who first took his concerns to Kim "Toby" Hamilton, board vice-president and building/grounds chairman, who in turn counseled him to speak to the full board.



KEVIN GREGORY

Most of those who signed, Gregory asserted, were reacting to a shared desire to keep the Saginaw High name and did not intend ill will toward school leaders.

At this point, Board President Charles Coleman asked Roberts to respond. The superintendent inquired whether any board members wished to speak first, and then he moved ahead to express displeasure with the petition.

Serious planning began more than two years ago, he said, and the process has included the public all along the way, both before and after voter approval of a \$99.95 million bond issue as part of the November 2000 presidential election. The bond includes construction of the new high school at the SASA site, relocation of SASA to a portion of Arthur Hill, construction of a new Handley building on open Arthur Hill land, a middle school in a section of Saginaw High, and overall district wide upkeep.

In the big picture, Roberts said an overall goal has been "unity" after a decade of dissent that included budget debts, board friction, state takeover threats, and debates over closing either The High or The Hill.

Petitioners no doubt are sincere and well-intentioned, he asserted, but their

actions threaten to revive pitting the two longtime schools against one another at the start of a "50-year to 75-year" future, based on the life expectancy of the new school.

In response to a Michigan Banner inquiry, Parsley-Williams wrote that he viewed the Jan. 10 meeting online and is strongly in disagreement.

"I started to fill out the survey," he wrote, "but I kept seeing, no prior names will be considered, no prior mascots will be considered, no prior color combinations will be considered."

Said Roberts, "that's the point" in aiming to move ahead.

Williams countered, "The ask on the petition is not only about Saginaw High. It is also about Arthur Hill retaining its identity" as home to SASA.

He added, "The language in the petition in my opinion isn't harsh. It's the language of opposition to a callow and stubborn stance by the superintendent and the board.....apparently over 800 people agreed."

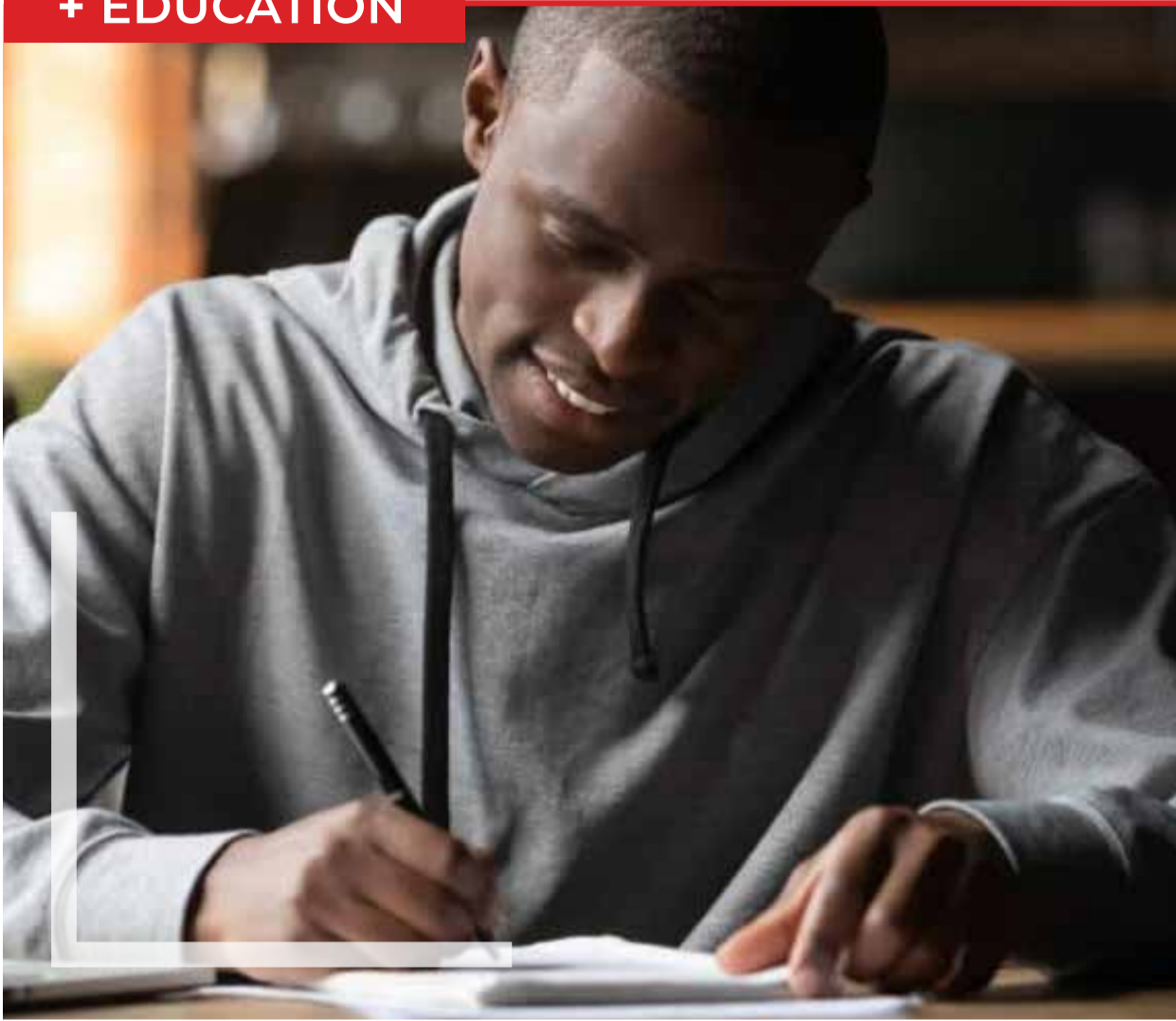
Board members will stick with a Phase Two condensed survey that now appears on spsd.net, with a target of mid-March action, but they respond that no final decisions are in place and that the online polling is not the only avenue for citizen input.

(Readers who wish to learn more may visit spsd.net and search for video of the hour long Jan. 10 buildings and grounds committee session. The full petition is online and was published in the Michigan Banner, Page 33, in the Jan. 1 archive.)



SAGINAW HIGH SCHOOL

+ EDUCATION



COURTESY PHOTO

Tips for writing a successful college essay



By **CRAIG DOUGLAS**
RETIRED EDUCATOR

Happy New Year! Now is a great time for students to understand the importance of “the essay” for college and scholarship applications.

What makes a “good essay?”

First, pay attention to guidelines and directions. What is the length expected? Typically, it is a word limitation. Is there a

certain font or style that is required? Does it address a question or prompt? If so, make sure the essay addresses the question and meets every criterion.

Most of the time, the purpose of the essay is to describe yourself. Your goals. Your interests. Students need to be sure to address what is being asked and follow every direction.

Second, be authentic. Use “your voice” to describe “you,” not someone you think evaluators want to hear from, but from “you.” Yale’s Dean of Admissions, Jeremiah Quinlan suggests that students show the essay to a trusted adult (counselor, teacher, parent, etc.) to read it first. “Does this sound like me?” Does it represent me, who I am, who I want to be? In other words, is it well-written, clear, and authentic?

Finally, start working on it early.

Avoid last minute rushing around. Work on early drafts, refining a finished product over several days of work, thinking, writing, and reflection...as opposed to a few hours or at the last minute. I have read and evaluated scholarship applications, and you can tell who has put in an effort over several days versus those who did the work at the deadline.

Here is a personal example of what I mean. My wife, Joan was Director of Guidance for Garber High School for 16 years, and many times she would be asked to write letters of recommendation for her students. I saw her, first hand, practice these important pieces of advice. She would write and re-write various drafts until they were refined into “her voice,” providing the authenticity needed for reviewers. These letters of recommendation were as important to her as college essays are for applicants. Joan’s recommendations successfully supported student applications to places like Harvard, Brown, and the University of Michigan. Occasionally she would share impressive student essays, including one I recall written by Jon Paul Morosi when he was applying to Harvard. Morosi’s essay described his passion for baseball and the wonderment of the final season for the old Tiger Stadium. His essay checked all the boxes and exceeded expectations; he was accepted into Harvard. And in his case, it was prophetic. Morosi is enjoying a successful career covering Major League Baseball for the Detroit Free Press, Fox Sports and the MLB network.

You see, one never knows where the college essay may lead..... what school will accept you.....what scholarship you may earn.....or what insight it may reveal.

Be encouraged; get to work on those essays now, well ahead of any deadline.

Resources:

<https://myfuture.com/college/writing-a-college-essay>

<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/get-in/essays/tips-for-writing-an-effective-application-essay-college-admissions#>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jon_Morosi

http://mybaycity.com/scripts/p3_v2/P3V3-0200.cfm?P3_ArticleID=11303

Online application opens Dec. 1, 2021

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TOTAL 2021 SCHOLARSHIP DOLLARS AWARDED

Since awarding our first \$500 scholarship in 1987, the Saginaw Community Foundation has awarded college scholarships to area students totaling more than \$7 million, thanks to our generous donors. Each year, over 300 college-bound or career and technical education students benefit from our scholarship awards.

Our single application process makes it easy to potentially qualify for one or more of our 235+ scholarships. **Applications will begin being accepted Dec. 1, 2021 and must be submitted by Feb. 15, 2022.** Visit saginawfoundation.org/site/scholarships/ for more information or call (989) 755-0545.



Saginaw

community foundation

1 Tuscola St. • Suite 100B
Saginaw, Michigan 48607
(989) 755-0545
saginawfoundation.org



+ EDUCATION



A Scholarship for Students who
live and graduate in Saginaw!



Saginaw Promise provides a college scholarship for students who live in and graduate in Saginaw

Scholarship application deadline is February 15, 2022

SAGINAW – Saginaw Promise is investing in the future of Saginaw and the lives of its students through postsecondary education information and a scholarship. The Saginaw Promise is an organization working to affect positive change in Saginaw through a “residence based” scholarship; a benefit for families who live in Saginaw. The Saginaw Promise is an economic initiative intended to affect Saginaw’s economy and quality of life by promoting and supporting a culture of postsecondary education for all of its graduating students through information, programming and a “last dollar” scholarship.

The Saginaw Promise scholarship benefits students who reside in and graduate

from a high school in the Saginaw Promise Zone (cities of Saginaw, Zilwaukee, Koshville and that area of Buena Vista designated to the Saginaw Public School District). While supporting higher education, the scholarship is also intended to stabilize and grow Saginaw’s population, support an educated workforce, attract new businesses and affect the overall economic environment in Saginaw, surrounding communities and the entire Great Lakes Bay Region.

Since 2012, the Saginaw Promise has awarded scholarships in excess of \$1,072,000 to 609 scholars. The Saginaw Promise scholarship may be used at community colleges, universities and techni-

cal/ trade schools in the State of Michigan for tuition and mandatory fees only and is renewable up to two years. How to apply: Students must complete the online Saginaw Community Foundation scholarship application at <https://goapply.akoyago.com/SAGINAW>. Deadline is February 15, 2022. The Saginaw Promise scholarship is renewable up to two years and must be applied for annually. Students must also complete FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) at <https://fafsa.ed.gov/>. For details, information about the Saginaw Promise and its scholarship, visit www.saginawpromise.org or telephone (989)755-0545.

State Board of Education supports plan to address Michigan's teacher shortage

LANSING – Michigan's State Board of Education today adopted a resolution strongly supporting the recruitment and retention recommendations that the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has put forth to the state legislature to help strengthen Michigan's teaching profession.

"The state legislature has the responsibility to help rebuild the teaching profession in Michigan," said State Board of Education President Dr. Casandra Ulbrich. "They have an opportunity to make a real difference for current and future educators."

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has provided the legislature with a menu of strategic investment options to respond to the teacher shortage—a major issue facing Michigan schools and school children and, in many cases, schools and school children across the country.

In addition, a group of executive directors from leading statewide education organizations co-signed a letter to the legislature with State Superintendent Dr. Michael Rice that urged the legislature to act quickly to appropriate necessary funds for strategies to reverse the teacher shortage and rebuild the profession.

"The state legislature needs to address this matter strongly, quickly, and straightforwardly in a budget supplemental by March 20 that would begin to put Michigan schools back on a firm foundation for years to come," Dr. Rice said. "There are 68 days until spring. The clock is ticking and we need to act."

"To begin to rebuild the profession, we need legislative action now so that we have the spring and summer to begin these efforts and to begin to reduce the teacher shortage," Dr. Rice added.

The investment strategies recommended by MDE to the state legislature include:

- Regulatory relief to permit more out-of-state teachers to apply for Michigan teacher certification.

- Grants to districts to provide stipends for mentors to support Grow Your Own programs and teachers in the first three years and a competitive grant to an intermediate school district to partner with MDE to develop broad mentoring parameters and virtual training and provide regional training/support to ensure mentor quality.
- Tuition reimbursement for current college students and support staff members who aspire to become teachers.
- Student loan repayment for recently certified college graduates who commit to careers in education and for current teachers who are working to pay off college.
- Grants to districts for Grow Your Own programs for support staff who aspire to be teachers.
- Grants to districts or directly to student teachers for paid teacher internships to offset potential loss in earnings by candidates.
- Stipends to student teachers to relocate and pay for housing in high-needs school districts for up to one year.
- Grants to educator preparation providers to expand Welcome Back Proud Michigan Educator campaign. The grants would offset costs to review transcripts and provide a mechanism to complete updated requirements for individuals who completed a program, or almost completed a program, and need a boost to reach certification.
- Reimbursement for teacher certificate transfer and testing fees for educators relocating to Michigan.
- Grants to districts to support Grow Your Own programs for students in grades 6-12 to inspire interest in teaching and scholarships for high school seniors who aspire to and commit to a career in teaching.
- Revive and strengthen the teacher preparation pipeline in the Upper Peninsula and Northern Lower Peninsula.
- Expand eligibility for child-care reimbursement to individuals enrolled in teacher preparation programs.

In its resolution, the State Board of Education affirmed that "an investment of \$300 million to \$500 million over five years is necessary to increase the recruitment and retention of high-quality educators from diverse backgrounds; revitalize the profession through support for thousands of teachers and teacher candidates; and provide a sustained investment in these initiatives to ensure that the demand for high quality educators to serve all of Michigan's children would be met more enduringly."

The statewide education organizations to co-sign the letter with MDE to the legislature on the urgency of these actions are: AFT Michigan; Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators; Michigan Association of School Boards; Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals; Michigan Association of Superintendents & Administrators; Michigan Education Association; Michigan Elementary & Middle School Principals Association; Michigan School Business Officials; and Middle Cities Education Association.



Sabrina Beeman-Jackson

Saginaw ISD Head Start/Early Head Start Program Director

About Saginaw ISD HE/EHS

Established in 1965, Head Start promotes school readiness for children, ages three to five, in low-income families by offering educational, nutritional, health, social and other services.

Head Start programs promote school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children through the provision of educational, health, nutritional, social and other services to enrolled children and families.

Early Head Start, launched in 1995, provides support to low-income infants, toddlers,

pregnant women and their families.

EHS programs enhance children's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development; assist pregnant women to access comprehensive prenatal and postpartum care; support parents' efforts to fulfill their parental roles; and help parents move toward self-sufficiency.

Together Head Start and Early Head Start have served tens of millions of children and their families.

At Saginaw ISD Head Start our attentive staff is available Monday through Friday to answer all your questions and make every effort to ensure you are 100 percent satisfied.

Saginaw ISD Head Start
Claytor Administrative Building
3200 Perkins Street
Saginaw, MI 48601
Phone 989.752.2193
Fax 989.921.7146

Office Hours
Monday: 8 AM - 4:30 PM
Tuesday: 8 AM - 4:30 PM
Wednesday: 8 AM - 4:30 PM
Thursday: 8 AM - 4:30 PM
Friday: 8 AM - 4:30 PM
Saturday: 8 AM - 4:30 PM
Sunday: 8 AM - 4:30 PM

For additional information concerning Saginaw ISD Head Start visit: www.saginawheadstart.org

Source: www.saginawheadstart.org

“Head Start graduates are more likely to graduate from high school and less likely to need special education, repeat a grade, or commit crimes in adolescence.”

Joe Baca, former Dem. California Congressman

“Our mission is to provide high quality services, developing school readiness and family empowerment for prenatal to age five children and families by working in partnership with parents and the community.”
-Saginaw ISD HE/EHS

+ BUSINESS



COURTESY PHOTO

Flint & Genesee Group trainings, webinars give employers, professionals competitive edge

FLINT – With a new year comes a new lineup of Flint & Genesee Group trainings and webinars designed to help professionals and employers alike. This includes launching the new Talent Matters webinar series, which challenges businesses and organizations to think creatively about the way they develop, attract and retain talent.

“The last several months have been particularly challenging for employers,

who have been facing an ongoing labor shortage,” said Brianna Mosier, director of organizational development at Flint & Genesee Group. “There is no one-size-fits-all solution. So, to get our area businesses and organizations thinking outside the box, we’re bringing together a variety of experts who can shed insight on the changing workforce landscape and its pressing issues.”

To begin, Flint & Genesee Group will stream its Talent Matters webinars via Facebook and YouTube on a monthly basis. The sessions, provided at no-cost, will cover topics such as recruitment strategies (Jan. 25), succession planning for business owners (Feb. 22) and internships and apprenticeship programs (March 22). Recordings of these webinars will also be available after their air dates on Flint & Genesee Group’s YouTube channel.

Additionally, Mosier recommends that employers take advantage of the many professional development opportunities provided through Flint & Genesee Group.

“One of the most important steps an employer can take is investing in their employees through professional development and preparing them for leadership roles,” Mosier said. “Flint & Genesee Group simplifies this process by offering a variety of trainings throughout the year. We also provide workshops that can be customized and offered exclusively at individual organizations.”

Trainings already on the books for this first quarter are open to all community members and include Networking Beyond the Business Card (Jan. 19), Storytime with Eric Hultgren (Feb. 10) and Customize the Customer Experience with DiSC (March 16).

Additionally, Flint & Genesee Group will again host Leading from Every Level, a leadership development series designed to help attendees find their influence and adopt daily leadership practices, regardless of role, title or seniority. Sessions – which may be bundled or purchased on an ala carte basis – include Transitioning from Peer to Supervisor (Feb. 16), Overcoming Professional Burnout (April 19), Managing the Generational Shift (June 21), Coaching for Peak Performance (Aug. 16) and Visioning for Success (Nov. 15).

“The New Year always generates a shared enthusiasm around learning and trying new things,” Mosier said. “Let’s harness that energy by committing to our personal and professional growth this year.”

+ BUSINESS

Dow named one of America's Most JUST Companies for the third year by JUST Capital

MIDLAND – Dow announced that for the third year it has been named to the JUST 100 list and this year has earned the top spot in the Chemicals sector overall as well as the number one position in the Workers and Stakeholders & Governance categories versus industry peers.

Published annually by JUST Capital, the JUST 100 showcases companies doing right by all their stakeholders which includes employees, customers, communities, the environment, and shareholders.

This marks the second consecutive year Dow has earned the top spot in its industry in the Workers category, highlighting the Company's commitment to pay a fair and livable wage; invest in workforce training; protect worker safety; cultivate a diverse and inclusive workplace; and provide benefits and work-life balance.

"The issues that matter most to our colleagues and to all our stakeholders are the issues that matter most to Dow," said

Jim Fitterling, Dow chairman and CEO. "With the release of our first-ever integrated ESG report last year, we reiterated Dow's commitment to reporting transparency as well as sustainability disclosures. We also reaffirmed both our bias for action and our corporate accountability, through bold goals and measurable results. We are proud to be recognized as a JUST company. It serves as a proof point that our values and ambition are not just words on paper but how we are living as a company."

For its annual rankings, JUST collects and analyzes corporate data to evaluate the 1,000 largest public U.S. companies across 20 stakeholder-focused issues. The issues are identified through the most comprehensive ongoing public opinion research on Americans' attitudes toward responsible corporate behavior, engaging more than 150,000 participants since 2015.

Through vigorous, objective analysis, JUST Capital, in partnership with CNBC,

evaluates and celebrates U.S. corporations that outperform on the issues that matter most to the American public – such as creating jobs in the U.S.; paying a fair, living wage; prioritizing accountability to all stakeholders; protecting worker health and safety; providing benefits and work-life balance; cultivating a diverse and inclusive workplace; producing sustainable products; and protecting customer privacy.

"We've entered a new era of accountability where employees, customers, and investors want to understand if companies are not just walking the talk, but walking the walk to drive change on the critical issues of our time," said Martin Whittaker, CEO of JUST Capital. "The companies featured in the 2022 JUST 100 are demonstrating that purpose and profits can go hand in hand by delivering value to all stakeholders, including shareholders."

Laura B. Yockey joins 1st State Bank

SAGINAW – 1st State Bank welcomes Laura B. Yockey as Senior Vice President, Business Lending Manager. Yockey has had a notable career as a business lender in the Saginaw area for many years. Most recently she was a Group Manager with Chemical Bank and then served as Market Manager and Great Lakes Bay Region Community President for Huntington Bank. Yockey began her banking career at Michigan National Bank.

Yockey graduated from Michigan State University with a Bachelor's degree in Finance. She also earned a Master's of Business Administration degree from Saginaw Valley State University.

Yockey is currently serving as Board Chair for the Saginaw Community Foundation. She also serves on the Board of Saginaw Promise and is a member of the Saginaw Valley State University Board of Fellows. She is a Past Board Chair of the Saginaw County Chamber of Commerce and of Junior Achievement of North Central Michigan.



LAURA YOCKEY

+ FUNDRAISING GOODTIMES

What's the middle ground: negotiable goal setting

By MEL AND PEARL SHAW

The new year's tradition of goal setting extends to fundraising, beginning with a retrospective assessment. This is the time to ask what went well; what were our challenges; and what we could have done differently. The role you play will impact your assessment. For example, an executive director or CEO may see things differently from fundraising staff, and board members may have yet another assessment. Before dissolving into a fight for who's right, we recommend taking time for a shared assessment so you can negotiate fundraising goals that can be met.

Executive director expectations. A nonprofit's leadership can set unrealistic goals that are not based on reality. This means they are not based on an analysis of prior giving; the organization's pool of prospective donors; board, volunteer and staff capacity and willingness to fundraise; local and national grantmaking and giving priorities; access to government funds; earned revenue potential; and more. We've met visionary leaders who believe a specific fundraising goal can be met without consulting their development staff, their board, nor their data. Some meet their goals, others cut costs mid-year in order to "make do" with funds available, and still others access reserve funds to make the numbers balance. This type of goal setting contributes towards a lack of trust and respect. It feeds a questioning of people's abilities and understanding of fundraising and encourages blaming of others. Examples include CEOs believing their development/fundraising staff don't want to fundraise or don't know how to. This can be detected via statements such as "I can do it, why can't they." Development staff question the sanity of their CEO, wondering how he or she could expect an increase in funds raised from a dwindling pool of do-

nors and prospects, especially when last year's goal wasn't met. This gets more confusing when one-time grants are included when calculating fundraising goals: if it's a one time gift, you shouldn't build it into your anticipated budget for the coming year; one-time grants or gifts are exactly that, one time.

Development staff expectations. Believe it or not, development staff expect to have a budget for marketing, a pool of prospects to work with, a data management system that provides meaningful data, and the full participation of board members and the CEO. They are often met with disbelief, as if asking for these basic requirements is a sign of their incompetence. A common cry from development directors working in small nonprofits is: how can you expect me to do six jobs? This individual is expected to market the organization including a powerful newsletter, growing a dynamic social media program,

building an online giving program, writing grants and submitting grant reports, and engaging individual major donors. Oh, they are also asked to maintain all data systems and provide board training. When they do successfully support board members who go out and raise money from their peers, they are criticized for not doing anything: after all the board members are doing all the work.



COURTESY PHOTO



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Mel and Pearl Shaw are authors of four books on fundraising available on Amazon.com. For help growing your fundraising visit www.saadandshaw.com or call (901) 522-8727.

+ CHURCH DIRECTORY

B



Bethel AME Church
Rev. Dennis Laffoon
535 Cathay St.
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-755-7011



Bethlehem Temple Church of the Apostolic Faith
District Elder Curtis E. Johnson, Pastor
3521 Webber St
Saginaw, Michigan 48601
989-755-8381



Bread of Life Harvest Center
Senior Pastor Rodney J. McTaggart
3726 Fortune Blvd.
Saginaw, MI 48603
989-790-7933

C

Christ Disciples Baptist Church
Founder Pastor Eddie Benson
Pastor Genevieve Benson
3317 Lapeer Street
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-754-2444

Christ Fellowship Baptist Church
Rev. Robert Davis, Jr.
818 N. Washington Ave.
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-754-4435
PastorD818@gmail.com



Christ Image Community Church
5501 Gratiot Rd
Saginaw, MI 48638
(989) 759-9161
christimage.us

F



Faith Harvest Church
Bishop Ronald E. Chipp
1734 N. Mason
Saginaw, MI 48602
989-799-4200
faithharvestministry.org
office@faithharvestministry.org



Faith Ministries Church
Dr. Anthony Revis
3420 E Ashman St.
Midland, MI 48642
989-837-7777
faithministrieschurch.org

G



Glimpse Of Hope Ministries
Pastor Leslie D Lewis
2211 S. Outer Dr.
Saginaw Michigan 48601
989-755-9237
g.ministries@aol.com

Grace Chapel Church
Pastor James Nelson
2202 Janes Ave.
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-755-3212

Greater Williams Temple
608 E Remington St
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-755-5291

J



Jacob's Ladder
Bishop Dempsey Allen
1926 Fairfield Street
Saginaw, MI 48602
989-799-6601

L

Life in Christ Ministries
Pastor Dennis Cotton, Sr.
2915 S. Washington Road
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-401-4465
LifeInChristMinistries07@gmail.com

M

Messiah Missionary Baptist Church
Pastor Otis Washington
2615 Williamson Road
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-777-2636
Fax: 989-777-2640
messiahmbc@att.net
messiahsag.org



Mt. Olive Baptist Church
Pastor Marvin T. Smith
1114 N. 6th Street
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-752-8064

N



New Beginnings Deliverance Ministry
Pastor Roy & Evelyn Baldwin
2609 E. Genesee
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-777-8272
Pastorbaldwin@charter.net

New Beginnings Life Changing Ministries
Pastor Otis Dickens
2312 S. Washington Ave.
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-755-3650



New Birth Missionary Baptist
Pastor Larry D. Camel
3121 Sheridan
Saginaw, Michigan
989-327-1755



New Covenant Christian Center
Pastor Ron Frierson
2395 S. Outer Drive
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-752-8485



New Hope Missionary Baptist Church
Rev. Dr. Willie F. Casey
1721 Tuscola Street
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-753-7600



New Life Baptist Ministries
Dr. Craig Tatum
1401 Janes Ave.
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-753-1151
newlifelcm.com

New Mt. Calvary Baptist Church
Pastor Alfred "AJ" Harris Jr.
3610 Russel St.
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-754-0801

New Way Ministries
Pastor Dwight & Princess Dobbins
29200 Shiawassee St.
Farmington Hills, MI 48336
(248) 987-2434
thenewwayministry.org

P

Prince of Peace Baptist Church
Pastor Robert C. Corley Jr.
825 North 24th Street
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-754-2841

R



Resurrection Life Ministries Full Gospel Baptist Church
Pastor Carolyn L. Wilkins
2320 Sheridan Avenue
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-395-3142

S



Saginaw Valley Community Church
Pastor Richard Sayad
3660 Hermansau
Saginaw, MI 48603
989-752-4769



Saint Paul Baptist Church
Rev. Dr., Vincent D. McMillon
120 North 15 St.
Saginaw, MI. 48601
stpaul2@yahoo.com
Facebook: St Paul MBC Family Connection



Second Baptist Church
Pastor-Elect Marcelle T. Smith
1770 W. Youngs Ditch Rd.
Bay City, MI 48708
989-893-8631

St. John Ev. Lutheran Church
Pastor Carl Ballard
915 Federal Avenue
Saginaw, MI 48607
989-754-0489
stjohnlutheranelcasaginaw.weebly.com

T



Transforming Life Ministries
Pastor William Brown
523 Hayden
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-754-9573



True Vine Baptist Church
Pastor Paul E. Broaddus
2930 Janes Street
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-752-0751

U



United Missionary Baptist Church
Rev. Cedric Nickson
4290 Lamson Street
Saginaw, MI 48601
Church: 989-759-9411
Pastor 810.223.2987

V



Victorious Belivers Ministries Church
Pastor Chris V. Pryor
624 S. Outer Dr.
Saginaw, MI
989-755-7692

W



World Outreach Campus of Greater Coleman Temple Ministries
Supt. H.J. Coleman Jr.
2405 Bay Rd.
Saginaw, MI 48602
989-752-7957

Z



Zion Missionary Baptist Church
Pastor Rodrick Smith
721 Johnson
Saginaw, MI 48607
989-754-9621

+ SPORTS



Super Bowl from the sofa

By MIKE THOMPSON

Couch potatoes may start to grow sprouts during the prolonged afternoons of NFL playoff football, but we aren't gonna just sit there and get baked or fried.

Our quest is to concoct some needed changes in advertising, in rules and in coaching strategies. Call me crazy, but what do YOU think? Write me at mwtsaginaw@yahoo.com, and The Michigan Banner will publish your own sideline sentiments (within reason) on February 1, in time for the Super Bowl.

Here are my missives, with a modest emphasis on MISS. First, the p.r.:

- Stop the Roman numerals, like this year is Super Bowl LVI. When did football become uppity and booshwah, like golf? It should be plain Super Bowl 56, scheduled for Sunday, February XIII.
- End all the stupid pre-week advance stories. It's not like we need to be reminded that there's a Super Bowl coming up. Those who consider the whole deal to be a Super Bore must get really sick of it all.
- Thanksgiving, turkey. Super Bowl, pizza. Make it official.

Next on the list, we offer rule changes:

- Quit calling pass interference, which happens so often that announcers have to say, "and there's no flag" when there isn't one. If a defensive back is skilled enough to stay close, allow him to push and grab. Maybe this will stop teams from throwing 60 passes per game, like flag football.
- Beyond this, quit calling penalties on long kick runbacks. Seems these are called back more often than not, usually on contrived illegal blocks that are half the field away from the runner.
- It really isn't "football" (that's the worldwide name for soccer!), so take the field goals and goal posts out of it. As Alex Karris used to say, we have a bunch of huge dudes knocking one another into kingdom come, and then a little jockey-size fellow is the one who settles things with his feet.

We continue on strategy questions:

- For years, we asked why conservative football coaches

always kicked on fourth-and-one. Go for it, we said, because the odds (analytics) are in your favor. And now, suddenly, they all are liberals who will go for fourth down almost all the time. The answer must be somewhere in the middle.

- But when you go for it, don't run straight into the stacked-up defense, for cripes sake.
- On third down and long, throw a 50-yard bomb down the field. We might get lucky, and even if the defense intercepts, it's as good as a punt.

In closing, my big wish is only once, to be the head referee on a TV game. All my calls would be in favor of the home team, spoken into the mini microphone pinned to my striped shirt, and the resulting thunder of applause would resonate as if I really had done something.

And when the Detroiters finally win one, maybe in 2050, don't have the headline say, "Lions are Super." That's not only stale, it's beyond the realm of the possible.

MICHIGAN YOUTH BANNER

VOLUME 4 • NUMBER 2

De'Niel Phipps to keynote FREE Youth Event



COURTESY PHOTO

On January 29, Women of Colors and Your Voice Your Choice will host a free Youth Event for middle and high school aged kids. The event will take place at Learn to Earn Academy (1000 Tuscola, Saginaw MI) from 12:00 pm - 3:00 pm. The event will feature workshops on a variety of topics, giveaways, entertainment, food and more. The keynote speaker for the event is six-time Emmy Award Winner and Saginaw native, De'Niel Phipps.

Born and raised in Saginaw, MI, De'Niel Phipps' story did not begin on the Red Carpet. Growing up in one of the most dangerous cities in America, in a home that was both Fatherless and Motherless, De'Niel lost many friends to Homicide and Incarceration. He would sit in his room late at night, daydreaming of a better life for himself and his family. Through his faith, the love of family, and mentors in the community, De'Niel changed his life. It is a story of determination and perseverance.

As a 2-time Telly Award Winner, 6-time Emmy Award Winner, 22-time Emmy

nominated Director, Cinematographer, and Content Creator, De'Niel has made a mark in the film and television industry for over 20 years. He was first introduced to the business at age 13, helping to produce his Church's weekly television program. An opportunity that paved the way to his dreams becoming a reality.

Professionally, De'Niel's film and television production credits include the 51st Dove Awards TBN's worldwide broadcast special "Carry The Change", in which he became the first African American Director of the biggest Christian and Gospel Music Award Show. His national commercial productions include McDonalds, Nationwide Insurance, Miami University, and Goodyear Tire. He has helped produce television programming for MTV, ESPN, ABC, NBC Universal, and a host of other television networks. His studio feature films include Lions Gate film "One for The Money," Paramount Pictures, "Fun Size," and the Independent film, "Tomorrow Your Gone. Adding to his list of credits are

numerous short films. "Fin Del Ano," is the most recognized, which was highlighted at the Sundance Film Festival. De'Niel also produces music videos for national recording artists from various genres.

His list of production credits, combined with years of experience led to him becoming an Adjunct Professor at Miami University. Teaching film production to aspiring filmmakers. He has also pioneered his own Film and Entertainment Camp, teaching youth and young adults, in underserved communities around the country, the ins and outs of the film industry.

De'Niel's passion to tell stories has continued to drive him to new heights. Always looking for a new challenge to create and market visually. De'Niel has recently published his first book that he is eager to share with the world. He believes that through the arts you can reach, teach, entertain, and inspire.

To learn more about the event contact Evelyn McGovern at 989-737-9286.

HOSTED BY WOMEN OF COLORS



YOUTH EXPLOSION

WHEN
JAN 29, 2022
12:00 PM - 3:00 PM

WHERE
LEARN TO EARN
ACADEMY
(1000 Tuscola Saginaw MI)

FREE
Event for
ages 12+

PAMELIA BRAZIL
CRA Mortgage Loan Originator

SHEILDA BRADDOCK
Isabella Bank

ZAY MARR
Rap Artist

RHONDA ALEXIA WEBB
Founder/Director of Kids Rule Now! Inc.

DE'NIEL PHIPPS
Award Winning
Director, Cinematographer,
and Content Creator

MASKS REQUIRED! FREE GIFT TO FIRST 50 REGISTERED ATTENDEES!

CONNECT WITH PEERS • LEARN ABOUT TEEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP
FINANCIAL TIPS FOR TEENAGERS • MENTAL HEALTH WORKSHOPS
PARENT WORKSHOPS • GIVEAWAYS • ENTERTAINMENT • FOOD

SPONSORS



FOR INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER, CALL WOMEN OF COLORS AT 989.737.9286 OR VISIT WWW.WOMENOFCOLORS.ORG



PICS OF THE WEEK

After 43 years of law enforcement service, with the last 18 being a Chief of Saginaw Charter Township Police, Donald F. Pussehl, Jr. retired from his career in law enforcement. On Monday, January 10, 2022, Scott A. Malace was officially sworn in as the new Chief of Police for Saginaw Charter Township.



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We

empower.

Brittany Saunders is ready to pay it forward. The Chicago native enrolled at SVSU with ambitions to pursue a teaching career. Brittany was encouraged and invigorated by other passionate educators who worked closely with her to ensure she would accomplish her goals. And she is. Even before she was set to graduate, Brittany could boast a résumé with a paid internship in a school district along with K-12 classroom experience. **Now she can't wait to begin a professional career, inspiring students with the same kind of one-on-one attention she received from her professors at SVSU.**



SAGINAW VALLEY
STATE UNIVERSITY

#WeCardinal

svsu.edu/opportunity

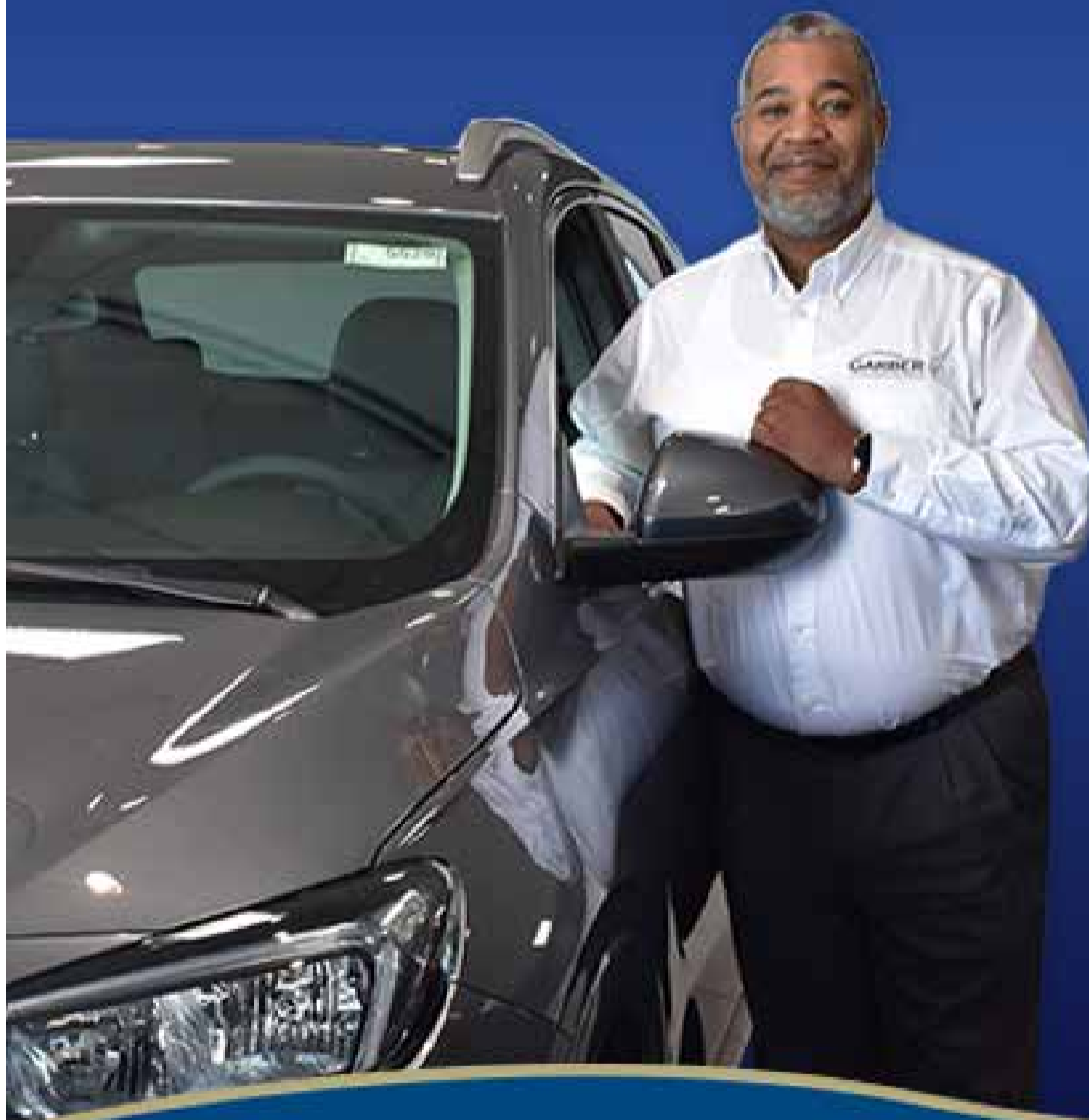


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