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**PICS OF THE WEEK**  
Annual Saginaw Juneteenth Festivities


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# HAPPY FATHER'S DAY!

**FEATURED**


## FATHER'S DAY FEATURES



**Papa Roy... the definition of a father**  
COMMUNITY, PG 22



**A father to two, a father figure to many**  
COMMUNITY, PG 27



**A father's Hand**  
FAITH BASED, PG 32

## Dr. Waheed Akbar's unwavering dedication to Saginaw and beyond



DR. WAHEED AKBAR

By ERIC GILBERTSON

Saginaw is a very diverse and very American place. Think, for example, about all the houses of worship here that trace their roots and their faith traditions to the many different places from which our ancestors arrived. Each ethnic group that arrived here declared this their home by building their own spiritual sanctuary.

And so it is with our Muslim friends and neighbors who, a few short years ago, built the beautiful Islamic Center in Saginaw Township. What they did is a very American thing to do – declaring for all to see that they too are “Saginawians.” Those who first

CONTINUES ON PG 2,  
DR. WAHEED AKBAR

THE MICHIGAN BANNER IS A PROUD MEMBER OF:



## Cover Story, Dr. Waheed Akbar

imagined this and led the efforts to create this sacred place were Dr. Waheed Akbar and his late wife, the beloved Dr. Raana.

A dictionary definition of “humanitarian” is someone who “is connected with improving people’s lives and reducing suffering.” Waheed Akbar is, by any definition, a true humanitarian.

He is, perhaps, best known to us as a dedicated surgeon who has repaired the ravages of time and injury to the bones and joints of so many of us. (Including my knee and my wife Cindy’s hip.) But perhaps less well known is his kindness and charity in numerous other ways.

He is motivated by a deeply held religious faith. And daily he lives out teachings of the Quran: “The servants of the Lord of Mercy are those who walk humbly on the Earth.”

He serves on many charitable organizations – the Community Foundation, the SVSU Foundation and too many others to list here. But beyond all that consider just a few current examples of his humanitarian work.

Two or three times each year he returns to his native Pakistan for weeks at

a time to provide medical care for the indigent and unfortunate in the land of his birth. His work there began in 2005, after a horrific 7.6 earthquake in Kashmir killed some 86,000 people. This tragedy brought an international outpouring of sympathy and support. But even long after the international spotlight had long since turned away from that place and those people, Waheed Akbar continued to come back again and again.

Recently he and a close friend initiated a program to rehabilitate and refit unused prosthetic devices for those in need. Waheed observed that aspiring job applicants walking upright might be better able to improve their lives and those of their families.

All this is done, of course, at his own expense and without any expectation of reward or recognition.

So why does this highly successful and widely respected American surgeon do this? Simply because he saw brothers and sisters in need – and he couldn’t just look away.

Here, at home in Saginaw, he is one of the passionate and tireless founders of

“The Well,” a nonprofit that provides shelter and hope to homeless men who might otherwise have nowhere to sleep and scant reason for hope.

So why does this gifted and admired physician care so deeply and do such things?

Simply because he saw brothers in need – and he couldn’t just look away. That’s all.

The beating “heart” of our City is comprised of Saginawians who care more and try harder - those who truly “have heart.” Waheed Akbar surely has heart.

There are, I am told, faith communities that believe we are all saints – or perhaps, at least, saints in the making. It’s just that some among us may be a little further along than others.

I think Waheed Akbar may be a good bit further along than I am. Maybe more than some of you too.

This “Heart of the City” Humanitarian Award was presented to Saginawian with heart – a true humanitarian and a dear friend: Dr. Waheed Akbar.

**“MY LEGACY IS ABOUT GREAT PATIENT CARE.”**

**Regina Chenevert**  
*Respiratory Therapist*



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**MISSION**

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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**DEADLINES**

2 weeks before each publication date of the 1st and 16th of each month

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Preferred format: Jpeg or PDF

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- FROM THE MICHIGAN BANNER -

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# MICHIGAN YOUTH BANNER

VOLUME 6 • NUMBER 12



## DON'T DESPAIR



By DONIQUA SOVIA

Many things have happened, where I wasn't sure if I was going to make it through. Night time used to be my favorite part of the day, but now I absolutely hate it. Sleepless nights make for a restless person, and I sure was restless. I was restless in mind, body and soul.

I had nightmare after nightmare. I was tormented mentally. It was on one such night, that the intensity of the torment was so high that I couldn't even think straight. My mind was in great turmoil. My body was tired from the stress that my mental state was causing. I was close to taking my exit when a bright light filled the room.

It overtook the darkness in every sense of the word. The darkness in my room was gone. The darkness in my mind was gone. The darkness that was causing such stress on my body was gone. Light dispels the darkness. Where there is light; all things are shown.

Cling to the light that is Jesus. Cling to the hope that is his word. Cling the promises that he has given you. Hold fast to his commandments. The devil comes to steal, kill and destroy, but God comes to bring life. Light is life, and when the light engulfed my room, my body and my mind, all of Satan's tactics were undone.

Why? Well, the Bible states plainly that when you resist the devil, he MUST flee. So, don't despair, don't fear, don't worry, but instead focus on the light that is Jesus.



# Join the 2024 Charles L. McNair Freedom School summer program and make a difference!

By MB STAFF

The Charles L. McNair Freedom School of Saginaw is excited to announce its 2024 CDF Freedom School Summer Program, running from June 17 to July 26, 2024. The program promises an enriching experience for children and an incredible opportunity for community members to get involved as Read Aloud guests.

The theme for this year's summer program is "EVERYBODY SAY 'READ ALOUD,'" emphasizing the importance of literacy and community engagement. The program is designed to foster a love for reading among scholars and to empower them with knowledge and confidence. It offers a supportive and nurturing environment where children can thrive academically and socially.

## How You Can Get Involved

We invite you to sign up as a Read Aloud guest and make a significant impact on the lives of young scholars in Saginaw County. As a Read Aloud guest, you will:

- Participate in Morning Cheers and Chants: Start the day with energetic and uplifting activities that set a positive tone for the scholars.
- Read a Short Book to Scholars: Share your love for reading by reading aloud a short book to the children, fostering their curiosity and enthusiasm for learning.
- Make a Positive Impact in Saginaw County: Your involvement will contribute to the growth and development of the community's future leaders.

To join this wonderful initiative, sign up today at <https://forms.gle/MonGJqc21SPUtXfZ6>. Your participation can help create a lasting impact on the children's educational journey and inspire them to reach their full potential.



Charles L. McNair  
**freedom school**  
of Saginaw

**2024 CDF FREEDOM SCHOOL  
SUMMER PROGRAM - June 17 – July 26, 2024**  
**EVERYBODY SAY "READ ALOUD"**

**SIGN-UP TODAY**  
<https://forms.gle/MonGJqc21SPUtXfZ6>

**READ ALOUD GUESTS  
HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO ...**

- Participate in morning cheers and chants
- Read a short book to scholars
- Make a positive impact in the Saginaw County

COURTESY PHOTO

# Seen on the Scene: 2024 Bay County STEM FEST

This past Saturday, Saginaw STEM engaged over 300+ K-12 students, professionals, college students, parents, and community partners at the 2024 Bay County STEM Fest at Delta College with 30+ different STEM activities!!! Some of the activities included drones, chemistry, coding, circuits, lung dissection, virtual reality, heart dissection, sound design, aviation, robots, renewable energy, and many more!



PHOTOS BY PHIL EICH

# My Guiding Light: A Father's Day Tribute

In the gentle morning light, your voice, so strong and kind,  
Echoes through the memories, with love it is entwined.  
From the first steps I took, guided by your hand,  
To dreams I dared to dream, you helped me understand.

Your laughter is a melody, a tune of pure delight,  
A beacon through the darkest days, turning them to light.  
With all your loving guidance, with every heartfelt cheer,  
You've crafted wings for me, dispelling every fear.

Through life's ups and downs, you've been my guiding star,  
No matter where I've wandered, you've never been too far.  
In your arms, I found solace, a haven from the storm,  
In your words, I found wisdom, a fire to keep me warm.

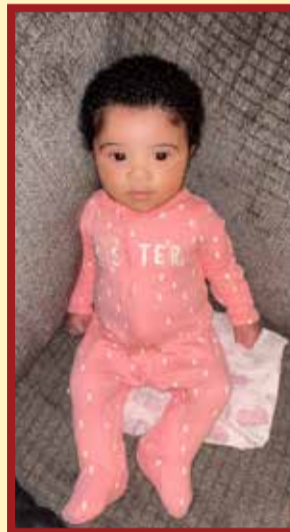
You've taught me to be fearless, to stand with pride and grace,  
To cherish every moment, and live life face to face.  
With patience, you have shown me how to mend a broken heart,  
And with your endless courage, you've given me a start.

Your love is like a river, flowing steady, deep, and true,  
A testament to the bond we share, between me and you.  
On this special day, dear Dad, I want the world to see,  
How much you mean to me, how much you'll always be.

So here's to you, my hero, on this Father's Day,  
For all the love you've given, in each and every way.  
I am blessed beyond measure, with a father like you,  
My heart sings with gratitude for all that you do.

Thank you for the laughter, for the lessons, for the tears,  
For being there beside me, through all the changing years.  
Your love, a precious treasure, my life's enduring theme,  
With you, dear Dad, beside me, I can chase the wildest dream.

Today we celebrate you, with joy and hearts so bright,  
For being my protector, my anchor, my guiding light.  
Happy Father's Day, dear Dad, with love that's ever true,  
From all of your sons & grandkids, who's forever proud of you.





# Latino Banner

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**PROGRAM/ORGANIZATION HIGHLIGHT**

## GREAT LAKES BAY HISPANIC LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Established in 2009, the Great Lakes Bay Hispanic Leadership Institute is a non-profit organization and a community leadership organization in the Great Lakes Bay Region. The program is highly regarded throughout the region for our training and leadership development. GLBHLI program directors and graduates represent all sectors of our community and are dedicated to providing leadership that is dynamic, meaningful, and relevant. The Great Lakes Bay Hispanic Leadership Institute promotes the individual development of Great Lakes Bay Region Hispanics for increased participation in leadership roles in both public and private sectors. Each year members log hundreds of volunteer hours in the community and inspire young leaders to become involved and be part of the solution.

**MISSION STATEMENT**

The GREAT LAKES BAY HISPANIC LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE provides individuals the opportunity to develop the skills and relationships to become effective leaders and provides a program that prepares and supports highly skillful visionary leaders who improve their lives and the community.

**VISION STATEMENT**

The GREAT LAKES BAY HISPANIC LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE will advance ethical, diverse, and collaborative leadership for the future of our community. We will develop a comprehensive program that supports participant learning. We value student development, collaboration, and professionalism.



- Enhance leadership, involvement, and social responsibility.
- Generate future leaders to represent the Hispanic Community
- Expose the participants to businesses, Corporations, and Opportunities throughout the Great Lakes Bay Region.
- Promote Higher Education, Career Planning and Personal Development
- Build community spirit with participants.
- Facilitate opportunities for participants to experience and practice collaborative leadership, with an emphasis on developing communication skills and an appreciation for diversity.
- To develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- To help participants identify their personal strengths and for them to become leaders.
- To develop a group of leaders that will become members of this committee for longevity and mentors to others in the community.

**Learn more at [www.glbhispanicleadership.org](http://www.glbhispanicleadership.org)**

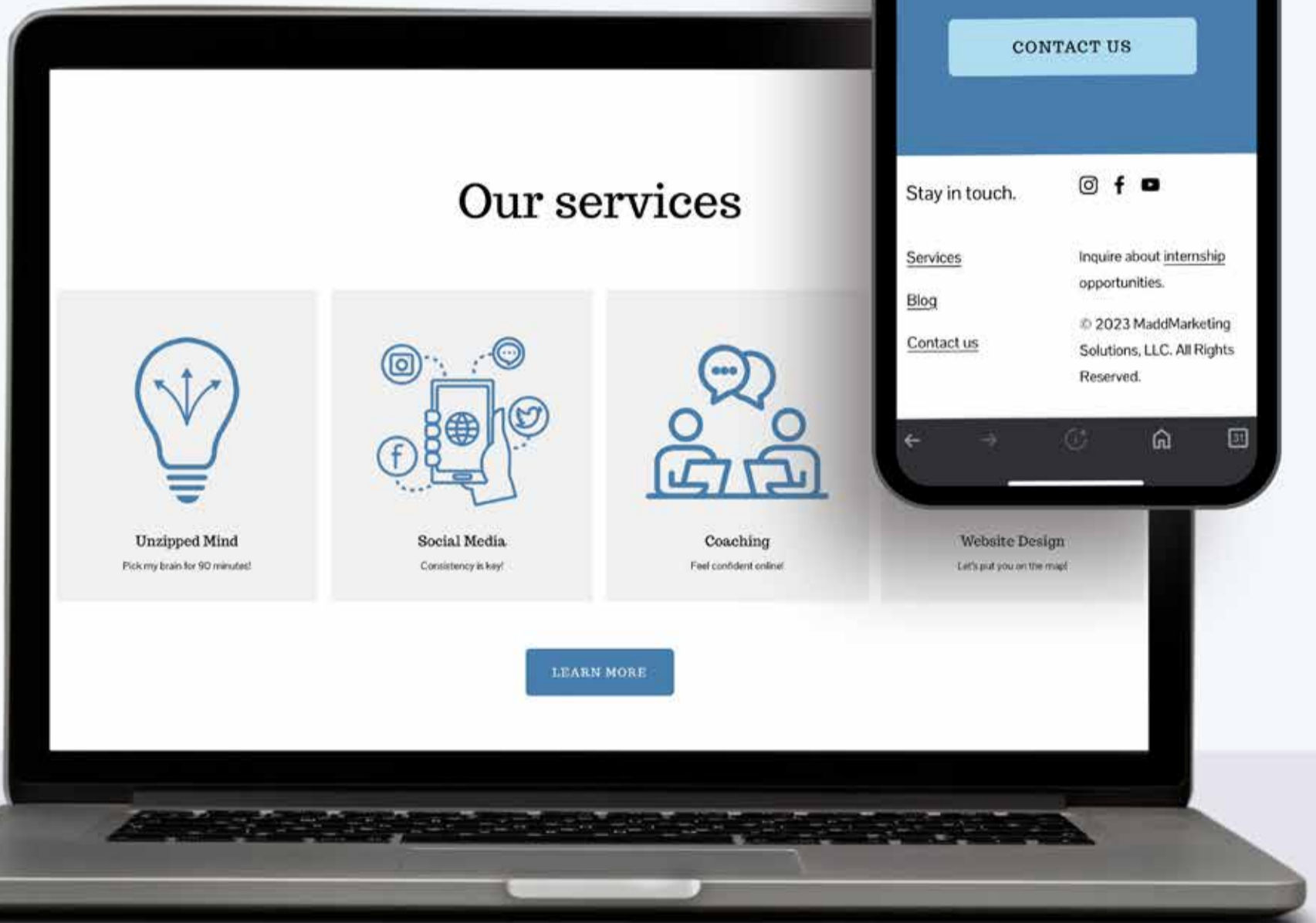
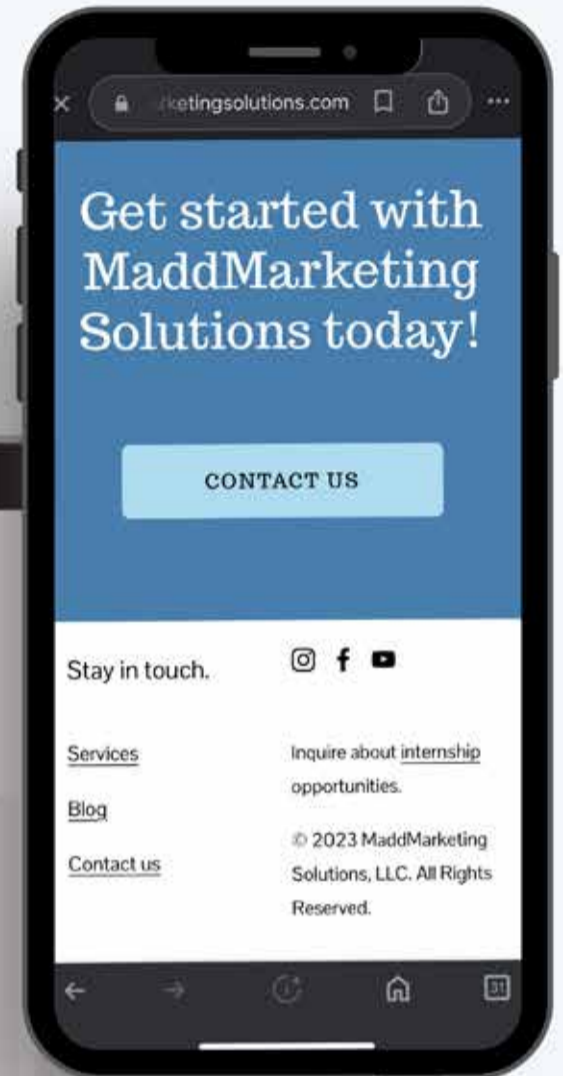






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**Hassan Elsayed**

Small Business Community Officer at Bank of America

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- Budgeting
- Saving
- Borrowing money
- Managing debt
- Discuss common reasons why small businesses fail
- How to set yourself up for success!

## Tuesday, June 25th

MHCC Office  
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**5:30 pm to 7:00 pm**

**MHCC MEMBERS: No cost**

**NON-MEMBERS: \$10 per person**

You must register to attend



**Seats are limited!**

More information: [lgeftos@mhcc.org](mailto:lgeftos@mhcc.org)



Great Lakes Bay Health Centers

# National HIV Testing & Community Resource Day!

June 27, 2024

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# + COMMUNITY

**Seen on the scene:** The Michigan Banner newspaper marked its 22<sup>nd</sup> anniversary by hosting the 6<sup>th</sup> annual Heart of the City Awards ceremony on Thursday, June 6, at the Horizons Conference Center. JoAnn Crary, President of Saginaw Future, delivered the keynote address, highlighting the exciting projects set to transform Saginaw in the coming years. The evening celebrated 36 community members and organizations for their significant contributions and impactful work within the city of Saginaw.



+ COMMUNITY

# Seen on the Scene: 2024 Heart of the City Award Recipients

## HEART OF GOLD AWARD



**Former Bishop Marvin C. Pryor & Mrs. Ruth C. Pryor**

## HEART OF GOLD AWARD



**Apostle James Glenn and Prophetess Leona Glenn**

## VISIONARY AWARD



**Craig Goslin**  
President and Managing Partner, Saginaw Spirit

## LIFETIME LEADERSHIP AWARD



**Pastor Charles H. Coleman, Sr.**  
Pastor, New Faith Temple Church of God & SPSD Board President  
*Award accepted by Pastor Hurley J. Coleman Jr.*

## LIFETIME LEADERSHIP AWARD



**Undersheriff Miguel (Mike) Gomez**

## LIFETIME LEADERSHIP AWARD



**Ruth Ann Knapp**  
SPSD & SISD Board Member

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+ COMMUNITY

# Seen on the Scene: 2024 Heart of the City Award Recipients

## IMPACT TURNAROUND AWARD



**Veronica Horn**  
President & CEO, Saginaw County Chamber of Commerce  
*Award accepted by JoAnn Crary*

## HUMANITARIAN AWARD



**Dr. Waheed Akbar**

## HUMANITARIAN AWARD



**Pharrington Douglas**  
Co-founder, Urban Racquet Sports Foundation

## HUMANITARIAN AWARD



**Ken LeCureux**  
Co-founder, Urban Racquet Sports Foundation

## OUTSTANDING JOURNALISM/PR AWARD



**Yvonne Daniels**  
Content Director, Kiss 107.1 WTLZ-FM - Saginaw

## OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP AWARD



**Dr. David Lewis**  
Director of the School & University Partnerships School & University Partnerships, SVSU

XDH PHOTOGRAPHY / PHIL EICH

+ COMMUNITY

# Seen on the Scene: 2024 Heart of the City Award Recipients

## OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP AWARD



**Tiffany L. Pruitt**  
Executive Director of Human Resources & Labor Relations, SPSD

## OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP AWARD



**Cindy Seitz**  
President, Duperon Education

## MOTIVATION AWARD



**Monica Hernandez-Alaniz**  
Assistant Director of Downtown Saginaw, Delta College

## MOTIVATION AWARD



**Carmen Stricker**  
Director of 4S KCP Program, SVSU

## OUTSTANDING BUSINESS AWARD



**Brian Eggers**  
Owner, AKT Peerless Environmental Services

## OUTSTANDING BUSINESS AWARD



**Silvia Garcia**  
Founder, Shapers Aveda Lifestyle

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# Seen on the Scene: 2024 Heart of the City Award Recipients

## OUTSTANDING BUSINESS AWARD



**Sal Hamd**  
Owner, Saginaw  
Alterations and Suits

## OUTSTANDING BUSINESS AWARD



**Louise McKinnie**  
Owner Reflection of U Too  
Salon and Barbershop

## RISING BUSINESS AWARD



**Kaylynn Martin**  
Owner, Kakes the Great

## MINISTRY OF THE YEAR AWARD



**Rev. Dr. Dennis Laffoon**  
Bethel A.M.E. Church

## MINISTRY OF THE YEAR AWARD



**Rev. Dr. Vincent McMillon**  
St. Paul Missionary Baptist  
Church

## MINISTRY OF THE YEAR AWARD



**Imam Robert Beverly  
Shaheed**  
Islamic Center of Saginaw

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+ COMMUNITY

# Seen on the Scene: 2024 Heart of the City Award Recipients

### COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD



**Dan Dralle**  
Executive Director of U.S.  
Government Affairs & Global  
CIP, Nexteer

### COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD



**Charles "Chuckie"  
Lawrence**

### COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD



**Terry and Valerie Reed**  
Community Auto and Tire

### COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD



**Miguel Torres and Kristina  
Salcedo**  
K?Onda!

### DIVERSITY AWARD



**Pamela Ross McClain, Ph.D.**  
Chief Officer of Culture, Belonging,  
and Community Building,  
Delta College

### DIVERSITY AWARD



**Andrea Sanchez**  
Executive Director, TLD  
Holdings

XDH PHOTOGRAPHY

+ COMMUNITY

# Seen on the Scene: 2024 Heart of the City Award Recipients

**OUTSTANDING NON-PROFIT AWARD**



**Dante' D. Davis**  
Saginaw S.T.E.M.

**OUTSTANDING NON-PROFIT AWARD**



**Bishop T.D. Holden**  
T.D. Holden Jail and Prison  
Ministries, Inc.

**OUTSTANDING NON-PROFIT AWARD**



**Cherie Long**  
Heart of the City  
Development Center

**PIONEER/LEGACY AWARD**



**Faye Presley**  
House of Style

**PIONEER/LEGACY AWARD**



**Anita Richardson**  
MI Department of Transportation  
*Award accepted by Adam Richardson*

**PIONEER/LEGACY AWARD**



**Greg Turner**  
Turner Printing  
*Award accepted by Scott Turner*

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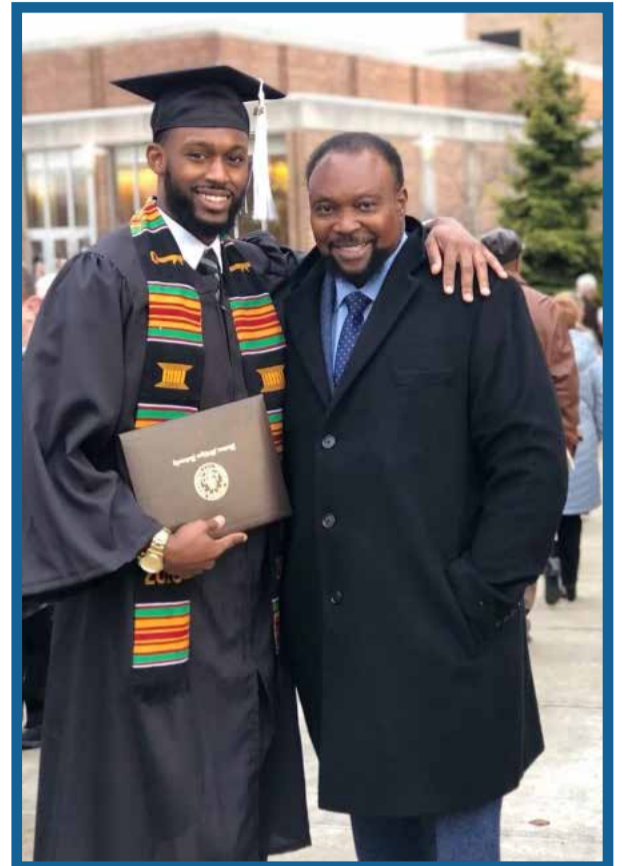
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## + COMMUNITY

## Papa Roy... the definition of a father



COURTESY PHOTO

## By ROY BALDWIN'S GRANDSON

The definition of father is “A man in relation to his children”. But for many others, that definition becomes a lot more complex and detailed when it comes to Roy Baldwin. As Roy’s grandson, I was able to interview all five of his children and it all came down to one question. “When you hear the word father, what aspects about Roy automatically come to mind and why?”

His first born, and only daughter, Tifaney, had this to say; “The first aspect that comes to mind when I think of my dad is work ethic. Even though he was fully capable of giving us everything, he made us work for what we wanted. I remember learning how to run a hair store when I was in the fifth grade. He instilled the importance of ownership in us at a very young age. Those principles helped shape our lives as adults”.

His second oldest, Roy Jr., was the first of 4 sons to experience Roy’s fatherhood as well as his father to son mentorship. Roy’s protectiveness as a father strongly influenced Roy Jr.’s behavior when it comes to his children. Here’s what he had to say about fatherhood. “The first thing that comes to mind about myself is Protection. I never understood how it felt to be willing to lay down one’s life for a person until I be-

came a father. Then there would be sacrifice. I’ve altered my life and the things I’ve wanted per se for the things that my children needed and it is more rewarding than the things that I simply ‘wanted’.

As stated, Roy has 4 sons. His second oldest (my father), Lionel admires Roy in every way possible and strives to replicate his love and leadership. “Legacy and leadership. He put this family in position to leave our mark on this earth. He leads fearlessly regardless of how others may view his ideas. I love that!”

His second youngest, Demarcus, is comedically more like his father than his father is. Whenever the family is together it almost seems scripted how much their mannerisms and personality are alike. Here is Demarcus’ answer to my question. “Words I think of when I hear the word father are benevolent, courageous and mentor. My father is a giver. He will give his last to help someone in need. My father is a hero, and he stands up for people and is a voice for those who aren’t heard. My father is a father not only to me, but anyone that needs a role model in their life.”

Lastly but certainly not least. His youngest son, Dominique. Dominique is a kind of a gentle giant of a man. A quiet person, who mostly steps back and examines people.

Knowing this, when I asked him the question, I was sure to get a detailed response. “I think the first word that came to mind surprisingly is wise. Given how much he jokes, he’s not someone that you’d be able to guess all the things he’s been through and the life he’s lived from basic interactions with him. And thankfully for his children, biological or not, he’s someone that is always willing to impart this wisdom”.

Personally, I’m his grandson. My entire life I’ve looked up to my grandfather more than just a man. As a husband, a pastor, and community leader, as well as a sibling and businessman. At some point you must step back, take a look at his huge family that admires him so much, and realize that Roy embodies what it means to be a father.



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## + COMMUNITY

# Shine Bright Mural Project: Turning blight into beauty



SHINE BRIGHT MURAL PROJECT

**By ABBIE PEDROTTE**

A crowd gathered along the Saginaw River in the early evening on Sunday, June 2nd, 2024. They were welcomed by the sun finally emerging after a threat of rain had hung in the air earlier in the day. As gray clouds parted, people flocked to the Shine Bright Mural Project's Dedication Ceremony. An eclectic crowd buzzed under the shadow of the newest addition to Saginaw's skyline: a row of brightly colored silos.

While world-renowned Spanish artist Okuda San Miguel officially started work on the project in late May, the initial organization and planning began long before Okuda's team started painting their super-sized canvases. Behind the initial idea are Mark Flegenheimer, President/CEO of Michigan Sugar (retired), and Larry Preston, President/CEO of Tri-Star Trust (retired). On a trip to Mark's alma mater in Indiana, he was inspired by a mural painted on silos in the small town of Greencastle, IN. The mural sparked a crazy idea that he shared with Preston.

In Flegenheimer's own words, he decided, "We should do this mural thing." Preston agreed, and the two began planning what has now become the second-largest mural in the United States. A bulk of the initial work involved finding an artist to do something so large. Enter: Okuda San Miguel, most known for painting the interior of a skatepark built out of an old church in Llanera, Asturias, Spain. He completed the project in 2015, and it was later renamed the Kaos Temple. He has completed numerous murals during his career as well as work in other mediums, including sculpture.

The Shine Bright Mural will be Okuda's largest mural to date.

When I asked Okuda why he was excited to do the mural in Saginaw, he explained that he was drawn to the challenge of creating his larg-

est work, and he is grateful that Saginaw was willing to give him the opportunity. Okuda primarily works on murals in bustling capital cities. In Saginaw, he has been able to work in a quieter environment with a close view of the river, which has been a highlight of his time so far. He says his team, including several local artists, have been very focused on the project. Because he usually paints in large capital cities, he feels that "creating this mural in a place like Saginaw is important."

The mural itself is painted in Okuda's pop-surrealist style, which draws influence from graffiti art. It features vibrant colors broken up by smaller sections of grayscale, and the whole work is geometric and interesting, giving the viewer something new to discover each time they look at it.

Okuda told me that his inspiration for the mural comes from the meaning and freedom of life and the celebration of diversity. He also explained that he is using patterns from his artwork to create a collage of color and culture in this mural.

As Mark Flegenheimer said during the dedication ceremony, "this project would not be possible without money." The Shine Bright Mural Project was made possible through crowdfunding and private donations. A crowdfunding campaign was started through Patron City on December 1, 2023.

The project is privately funded, with no funds coming from the city. According to their Patron City webpage, the Shine Bright Mural Project has raised over \$50,000 through crowdfunding. Contributions from large corporations and local companies including HSC, Garber, Glastender, Huntington Bank, and many more, also helped in funding the project. Funds were needed for preparation and priming, demolition, paint (and lots of it), artist fees, and an endowment for future preservation and maintenance,

among other expenses.

Maintenance will be necessary for the mural itself as well as the grounds. According to the same webpage, "the property will become a place for artists to gather and create visual and performing arts for the Great Lakes Bay community." The grounds will feature a green space, staging space, and trash receptacles to keep the area clean. Benches will be erected to allow visitors to enjoy the murals and the view of the river.

Founders hope to use the space for art and cultural festivals, community theater, concerts, open-air painting, public art exhibitions, and more. It is also their hope that the mural becomes a focal point along the Saginaw River.

"Over the years we've started to see more and more sculptures and murals that just really add to Saginaw," explains Saginaw City Councilman Bill Ostash, who was in attendance at the ceremony. "It creates something wonderful to look at when you're moving through the city and for our visitors." He says he enjoys the art around Saginaw and recognizes the local artists who create it. Many of these local artists are assisting in the work on the Shine Bright Mural, including: John Vasquez, Jimmy Hughes, DeV Vaughn Collins, Jim Perkins, Susie McColgan, Nyesha Clark-Young, and Stephen Hargash.

The mural has already started drawing people to the city, and this will undoubtedly continue as Saginaw positions itself as an art destination. The benefits will reach throughout the area as a whole. "They get a chance to see what a wonderful city we have!" Councilman Ostash says. "Hopefully when they visit to see the mural, they take in some of the local businesses too."

"I know how it makes me feel when I look at art in our city," Councilman Ostash continues. "It makes me happy and feel good."

After seeing the mural in person, I have to echo the Councilman's sentiment that local art makes me feel happy. The bright pop of color where a dilapidated eyesore used to sit brought an immediate smile to my face, and to the faces of those in attendance. "Transforming industrial blight into community beautification" is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to this mural's future impact.

For more information about the project, visit their Facebook page.



OKUDA SAN MIGUEL

+ COMMUNITY

# Saginaw Promise hosts “Swinging for the Promise” golf event at the Saginaw Country Club!

Enjoy a great day of golf on a beautiful course this summer! The Saginaw Promise hosts its annual “Swinging for the Promise” golf event, on Thursday, August 15, 2024 at the Saginaw Country Club; shotgun start 10 AM. “Swinging for the Promise provides a wonderful opportunity to enjoy 18 holes of golf, a fun-filled day, while supporting a great cause!”, stated Mark Johnston, Golf Event Chairman.

Individual registration is \$165, Team registration is \$660, which includes Four Person Scramble, Driving Range, 18 Holes with Cart, grilled “Lunch at the Turn”, Barbecue Buffet Dinner, Door Prizes, Putting Contest, Awards and Trophy Presentation; with other activities to be announced.

Sponsorships and promotional opportunities are available! To learn more about Swinging for the Promise” Golf Event and sponsorships, visit [www.saginawpromise.org](http://www.saginawpromise.org). For questions, contact Deborah Sanchez at (989)755-0545 or email [dsanchez@saginawpromise.org](mailto:dsanchez@saginawpromise.org).

“Swinging for the Promise” proceeds will benefit Saginaw Promise programming and scholarships. Since 2012, the Saginaw Promise has awarded \$1,317,714 in scholarships to 728 scholars. The Saginaw Promise believes in the power of postsecondary education to be a change agent and is working to provide opportunities for and eliminate barriers to postsecondary education to benefit Saginaw’s future and the lives of its students.

## Saginaw Promise Golf Outing

### Swinging for the Promise

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 15, 2024**

**SAGINAW COUNTRY CLUB**  
(4465 Gratiot Rd, Saginaw MI 48638)




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<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>DINNER SPONSOR</b> <span style="float: right; background-color: #f4a460; color: white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold;">\$1,500</span></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foursome with carts</li> <li>Sponsor name displayed &amp; recognized at dinner</li> <li>Opportunity to welcome and address golfers at dinner</li> <li>Opportunity to host a display table at dinner</li> <li>Name listed on Saginaw Promise Website</li> </ul>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>DRIVING RANGE SPONSOR</b> <span style="float: right; background-color: #f4a460; color: white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold;">\$400</span></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Name displayed at event and announced at dinner</li> </ul>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>LUNCH AT TURN SPONSOR</b> <span style="float: right; background-color: #f4a460; color: white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold;">\$1,000</span></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foursome with carts</li> <li>Sponsor name displayed at “Lunch at the Turn” and recognized at dinner</li> <li>Opportunity to host golf activity or display table</li> <li>Name listed on Saginaw Promise website</li> </ul>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>HOLE SPONSORS</b> <span style="float: right; background-color: #f4a460; color: white; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold;">\$250</span></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sponsor name and or/company logo on hole and listed on the Saginaw Promise website</li> <li>Recognized at dinner</li> </ul>

**PRIZE DONATIONS WELCOME**

All prize donations will be recognized at the event and listed on the Saginaw Promise website.

Sponsors: Please email your company logo to [DSanchez@SaginawPromise.org](mailto:DSanchez@SaginawPromise.org).  
EPS or hi-res JPG preferred.

**REGISTRATION 8:45 - 9:45 AM • SHOTGUN START 10:00 AM**

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**GOLF PER PERSON - \$165**

**GOLF FOURSOME TEAM - \$660**

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Business: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Amount for <b>Golfing</b>	\$ _____
Total Amount for <b>Sponsorship</b>	\$ _____
I would like to make a <b>Donation</b>	\$ _____
I would like to <b>Donate a Prize</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Total Amount <b>ENCLOSED</b>	\$ _____

Team Name	_____
Player #1	_____
Player #2	_____
Player #3	_____
Player #4	_____

**Make Check Payable:**  
Saginaw Community Foundation, 1 Tuscola St. Suite 100, Saginaw, MI 48607  
and write Saginaw Promise on the Memo Line

\*Saginaw Community Foundation is the fiscal agent for Saginaw Promise

**For Questions:**  
Please contact Deborah Sanchez at (989) 755-0545 or email [DSanchez@SaginawPromise.org](mailto:DSanchez@SaginawPromise.org)

**To pay using your charge card,** complete this section or telephone Deborah Sanchez (988-755-0545) to process payment.

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Card #: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Paying: \_\_\_\_\_

**Deadlines** ▶ **Sponsors:** Respond by August 7, 2024 **Golfers:** Sign up before August 9, 2024

## + COMMUNITY



COURTESY PHOTO

## A father to two, a father figure to many

By HASANI ALI

As a man who did not grow up with a father in his life, Michael Balls took it personally and vowed to be a father figure to as many young men that he possibly could.

Balls serves as an active member on the Board of Directors for the Big Brother Big Sister program, and he's had his hands full for the past 33 years.

Turning to the Nation of Islam was a way for Balls to gain access to many father figures while his friends turned to the streets.

His closest father figure was his grandfather, who tragically passed away during a car accident in which Balls survived.

With the pain of losing a pivotal char-

acter in his life, the retired pipefitter from Nexteer made it his mission to being that pivotal figure to other young men.

He's had the pleasure of mentoring six little brothers during his tenure with the program – the youngest 17 years old and the oldest is 40 years old.

Balls instilled discipline into the young men that graced his presence, teaching him the importance of creating healthy and loving families.

"None of my little brothers has had children out of wedlock," Balls said. "I explained to them that if you're not going to be with that woman, then there's no reason for you two to create life."

One of Balls' little brothers is married

and has children.

Balls did more than take his little brothers to the playground or to a ball game, he taught them the essence of manhood by simply operating business as usual.

"When I was cutting grass, they were cutting grass," he said. "I've even installed ponds and taught my brothers how to do it. I gave all my little brothers a toolbox. They were all excited, running home trying to fix things for their mothers. You just have to give them the tools to empower themselves."

Not having any children of his own, Balls inherited two stepsons when he got married to Lois. Terrance Sherman, now 54, is a father of his own children and was able to take what he learned from Balls and implement it into his own family life.

"My stepdad taught me a lot of patience," he said. "He gave me good direction and just provided genuine love and nurturing. He always made it easy for me to talk to him, no matter what I was going through."

Terrance admitted that he was hard-headed growing up as he was growing into his teenage years and Balls considered that his marriage with his mother could potentially be traumatizing for him and his brother, Rondell, 50.

"Every child wants their mother and father to be together," he said. "When I first came around, I'm sure they were skeptical about how long I was going to be around. In some other family situations, the children may see a new man every few months, every other weekend. So I can understand why they may not have been receptive to me at first. But I am proud of those boys and what they become."

Balls expresses the importance of leadership and interacting with children that don't have fathers.

"If your kids have friends, talk to them," he said. "Engage them, ask about their grades, see what they like to do. All it takes is showing that you care about them."

## + COMMUNITY

# Lula Briggs Galloway: Champion of Juneteenth and advocate for African American heritage

By MB STAFF

Lula Briggs Galloway's name is synonymous with leadership, resilience, and a deep commitment to the celebration and preservation of African American heritage, particularly through her work in promoting Juneteenth. As an advocate and community leader, Galloway played a pivotal role in ensuring that Juneteenth, the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States, gained the recognition and reverence it deserved. Her efforts have left an enduring legacy that continues to educate and inspire people about the importance of this historical event.

Juneteenth, celebrated on June 19th, marks the day in 1865 when Union General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, and declared that all enslaved people were free, effectively enforcing the Emancipation Proclamation that had been issued more than two years earlier. For Lula Briggs Galloway, Juneteenth was not just a day of celebration, but a profound symbol of freedom, resilience, and the ongoing struggle for equality and justice for African Americans.

Galloway's involvement with Juneteenth began as part of her broader commitment to African American history and cultural preservation. She recognized that for many African Americans, Juneteenth was a time of jubilation and reflection, a day to honor the resilience and strength of their ancestors. She saw the celebration as a critical moment for community building, education, and a reaffirmation of the struggles and triumphs of African Americans throughout history.

One of Galloway's significant contributions to Juneteenth was her relentless advocacy for its recognition as a state and national holiday. She tirelessly campaigned for official acknowledgment of the day, understanding that such recognition would not only honor the past but also serve as an important educational tool for future generations. Her advocacy was instrumental in raising awareness about the significance of Juneteenth, leading to its increasing observance across the country. Thanks to efforts by Galloway and others, Juneteenth



LULA BRIGGS GALLOWAY

has now become a federal holiday, ensuring that its importance is recognized and celebrated by all Americans.

Galloway's work with various community organizations was another crucial aspect of her contribution to Juneteenth. She organized and supported events that brought communities together to celebrate and reflect on the significance of the day. These events often included educational programs, historical reenactments, and cultural performances that highlighted the rich heritage and contributions of African Americans. By fostering a sense of pride and unity within the community, Galloway's efforts helped to ensure that the history and significance of Juneteenth were passed down through generations.

In addition to her advocacy and community involvement, Galloway was a prolific speaker and writer on the subject of Juneteenth and African American history. She used her platform to educate others about the historical and cultural importance of the day, emphasizing the need to remember and honor the struggles of those who fought for freedom and equality. Her speeches and writings often highlighted the connection between Juneteenth and the ongoing fight for civil rights, making it clear that the struggle for justice and equality is far from over.

part of history was accurately represented and accessible to a wider audience, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of the African American experience.

Lula Briggs Galloway's dedication to Juneteenth and her tireless efforts to promote its recognition and celebration have left a lasting impact. Her work has helped to elevate Juneteenth from a relatively obscure commemoration to a widely recognized and celebrated holiday that honors the legacy of African American resilience and the ongoing struggle for equality. Her legacy serves as a reminder of the importance of remembering and honoring our history, and of the need to continue working towards a future where freedom and equality are a reality for all.

In celebrating Juneteenth, we honor not only the historical significance of the day but also the contributions of individuals like Lula Briggs Galloway, who have dedicated their lives to ensuring that the stories and achievements of African Americans are remembered and celebrated. Her work has helped to create a more inclusive and equitable society, and her legacy will continue to inspire future generations to strive for justice and equality. Through her efforts, Juneteenth has become a powerful symbol of freedom, resilience, and the enduring spirit of the African American community.

+ COMMUNITY

# Honey Bun Cake



By VALINDA CROSBY

In preparation of this recipe, I thought of Proverbs 31:10, “A wife of Noble Character who can find. She is worth far more than rubies.”

### Ingredients

- 1 box of butter flavor cake mix.
- 3 eggs
- 7 Tbsp. of melted butter.
- 1cup water (I use butter milk)
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- 1 Tbsp. of cinnamon

### Instructions

- In a mixing bowl, add cake mix, eggs, melted butter, and milk - Mix well.
- In a separate bowl mix the Tbsp. of cinnamon and the ¼-cup of brown sugar and set to the side.
- In a 9x13-pan spray with flour, and pour half of the mixture into the pan.
- Take the cinnamon and brown sugar mixture, and sprinkle onto the batter in the pan.
- Bake at 350\* for 25 minutes or until brown on top
- Check cake by inserting a toothpick in the center of it, and if toothpick comes out without any batter, it is done



COURTESY PHOTO

### Glaze

- 1cup of powder sugar
  - 1 Tbsp. of melted butter.
  - 1 tsp of vanilla flavor
  - 3 Tbsp. of whole milk (Substitute with half & half, or heavy cream)
- Wisp well until all the lumps or out
  - Pour half over the hot cake
  - Let the cake cool completely
  - Add the remaining glaze on top and spread over the cake

**Please check me out on my YouTube channel @Valinda Crosby4716**



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*Re-Elect*

# LISA CONEY

SAGINAW COUNTY COMMISSIONER  
DISTRICT 10

★

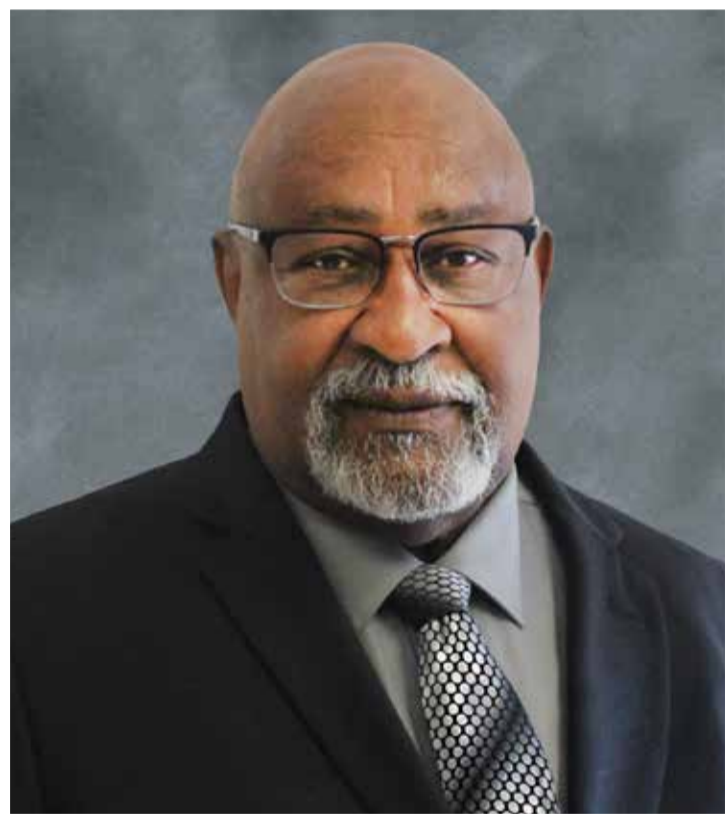
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+ FAITH BASED

SPONSORED CONTENT



MINISTRY WITHOUT WALLS - 3783 MANNION RD, SAGINAW, MI 48603

# Join us at Ministry Without Walls

By **PASTOR JOHN DUNN**  
MINISTRY WITHOUT WALLS

Ministry Without Walls recently returned to our building at 3783 Mannion Road with a new vision. The last couple of years, the direction of the world, and the pandemic starting with Covid have all certainly become eye openers. After seeking God for His direction and His will, we are expanding our vision. Today, we clearly understand that the Church is our community.

The assignment that God has given to us is to “Break Down Walls”, bringing both spiritual and those who work in the community together.

Our vision is for Ministry Without Walls to be:

- A place where the Spirit, Soul and Body becomes whole
- A place where resources are available to those in need
- A place where church, volunteers

and community professionals work together to accomplish the will of God.

- A place where love flows, and judgement is absent
- A place where privacy is protected
- A place where safety is a priority
- A place where the whole person is important

Our ongoing teaching and seminars will include:

- Outreach
- Growing Spiritually
- Mental Health
- Healthy Living
- Finding Purpose
- Money Matters
- Entrepreneurship
- Boys to Men
- Women of Wisdom
- Discipleship

We understand that the mission field is not a country far away. It is around the corner, down the street, in our community. We also know that the vision given to us will not be easy to accomplish. We know that we can not do it alone. It will take a “village”.

We are committing our resources, time, talents, people, and our connections to tear down the “walls of the church”.

If our vision is connecting with you on some level and it appeals to you and sounds like something you might want to be a part of, we invite you to join us at 11:00 on Sundays to meet us personally so we can answer any questions you might have.

God bless You, come experience for yourself, Join us!!

Pastor, John Dunn  
Ministry Without Walls  
3783 Mannion Road  
Saginaw, MI 48603

## + FAITH BASED

## A father's hand



By **REV. DR. VINCENT D. MCMILLON**  
ST. PAUL MISSIONARY BAPTIST  
CHURCH



When I was a very young boy, I loved to explore new things. I was innately inquisitive, and I also talked too much. In 1960 my parents, Joel and Earlease (Ponder) McMillon purchased their first new home on 16th and Janes Street in Saginaw, Michigan. On the corner of 15th and Janes was the neighborhood grocery store called Krohns Store. Each week on Friday, which was pay day, my father took me with him to buy the weekly supply of groceries for our home. Because I was so busy and curious, my father had a habit of placing one hand on the top of my head whenever we



entered the store, or any other place. And with that hand on top of my head, he would gently turn my head left, right, or straight; but always in the direction he was going. It was his way of keeping up with me and keeping me from wandering off too far, too soon. Our home was just a half-block away from the store and so after purchasing our food for the week, Dad would race me back home, running backwards with two bags of groceries in his arms. This is one fond memory I have of my father's hand.

Those memories were established at a different time and a different place in time. Census data show that the population trend in Saginaw grew upward from 92,918 in 1950, to 98,265 in 1960. Downtown Saginaw like many cities of that era was bustling with merchants engaged in commerce while others benefited from a growing service industry. Like my father and others in my family, people continued a 50-year migration pattern, to escape the Jim Crow South, seeking employment at one of GM's bustling automotive plants in Saginaw, Detroit, and other U.S. cities. Communities grew because there was opportunity to grow. Our schools that are now closed, were filled with students eager to learn, supported by families who demanded that they learn. I do not mean to sound nostalgic - nor do I long to go back to a time that once was. I just remember the importance of my father's hands.

We all know the challenges - the good and the bad, of our collective social and political past. But even in those volatile and changing times, the one constant in our communities was that fathers were present in the home. Even if the father was not present in the home, many of our children had a coach, a pastor, a barber, a teacher, or some other male role model in the community whose hand made a difference.

Many of us remember the historic assassinations that took place in the 60's and 70's. We can recall the radical cultural shifts that began to dismantle the landscape of our families and communities. There was a time when we were told that marijuana was a gateway drug that had the potential to lead one into the deep, and murky waters of drug addiction. Nancy Reagan's famous quote, "Just say no" (to drugs) in the 80's became a mantra for many. However, today there are

legalized marijuana dispensaries on every corner and in every neighborhood. We seem to have forgotten the common sense behind the science of addictions, in general. I believe this may be the final frontier of capitalism, the legalization of drugs for profit at the expense of the vulnerable.

While Nancy Reagan espoused, just no to drugs, her husband and former president, Ronald Reagan took President Nixon's, "get tough on crime" notion to another level. In the Reagan administration it was known as the Contra Scandal (1). Cocaine was smuggled into the United States under the watchful eye of the Reagan administration. The profits were



**CONTINUES ON PG 33,  
FATHER'S HAND**



## Continued from pg 32, Father's hand



used to support another war in another country. The result was the demolition of families and communities all across America. Saginaw was no exception. In the 80's the peoples of our communities had to navigate that demonic, government sponsored, cocaine and crack epidemic, which resulted in the blight of common life and neighborhood. But not only that, we had to deal with what Michelle Alexander called The New Jim Crow, the Mass Incarceration (of Black Bodies) in the Age of Colorblindness (2010). As a result of Reagan's consequence, there was suddenly an absence of fathers present in the home and in the community. As a WOKE (3.), man and father, as defined by Dr. Eric Mason, in his book WOKE



Church (2018), I have to ask myself, "Was Nixon and Reagan's get tough on crime agenda, really an attempt to get tough on families already marginalized?...particularly communities of color?" As husband and wife, I wonder if Nancy and Ronnie ever talked about their two agendas?

Our communities, families and children

suffered. The father's hand of wisdom - meant to guide, protect, nurture, provide, and to be united in marriage, for a season was systematically deconstructed and missing. Many father's hands are still tied, incarcerated, in many cases for drug use that is now considered legal.

However, I have to say I am encouraged when I observe some fathers of this present age. There is another generation of fathers who are WOKE. They are able to connect the "cultural, socio-economic, philosophical, historical and ethical dots" (Mason, 2018), that make up our national and historic history. They are able to communicate that history to their sons and daughters - our future fathers and mothers, without passing along the poison of cynicism and vitriol. Many young fathers of this generation are not alienated from the seeds of their historic past and are clear about the direction and destiny of themselves and their families. They understand the meaning behind the second stanza in James Weldon Johnson's Black National Anthem (4):

*Stony the road we trod, bitter the chastening rod,  
felt in the days when hope unborn had died.  
Yet with a steady beat, have not our weary feet  
come to the place for which our fathers sighed?"*

I really believe the fathers and mothers of this present age realize that they are the living hope of our forefathers who have come to a place and time that our fore-parents could only dream about when hope unborn had died. It's a great time to be alive! I see fathers today who are wise, present, strong, and nurturing providers.

There is a Native American tale about a grandfather who wishes to pass along the wisdom of how to deal with inner conflict to his grandson. He does so in the form of a fable. He tells his grandson that there are two opposing wolves inside of every man. These wolves are in a great and eternal struggle for the soul of man. That is, a fight

for man's mind, will, and his emotions. The grandson asks his grandfather, "In the end, which wolf wins the battle?" The grandfather replies, "whichever one you feed the most." Many of our young men have that internal struggle within them. Although we are blessed to see a generation of fathers who are WOKE, there are yet many others who lack the inter-



personal and social skills to resolve those inner conflicts.

There is a saying that "the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world," but I think there is something to be said about a father's hand in the life of not only his children, but children in general. Fathers, let us reorient our families and our communities by restoring the role of the father in his rightful place in the home and in the community; and when fathers are absent, let it be our historic duty as fathers, coaches, pastors, barbers, etc. that every man mentor another young man in our community.

Our nation's children are in desperate need of a father's hand!

**Happy Father's Day!**



+ FAITH BASED

SERMONETTE SERIES



By MINISTER CAROLYN  
CARTER TOWNSEL

We find the prophet Isaiah in 54:16-17, delivering a message from God to the Israelites. He shares with them that they do not have to worry any more of being terrorized and terrified, or the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians. The Lord Vows greater and magnificent restoration to the city than previously, and He promises them, ***“No weapon formed against thee shall prosper”*** (Isa. 54:17b).

This preceding verse Isaiah 54:16 stipulates the context for which Isaiah 54:17 rests upon, as it declares, ***“See, it is I who created the blacksmith who fans the coals into the flame and forges a weapon fit for its work. And it is I who have created the destroyer to wreak havoc.”*** This potent verse signifies and explains why no attack on Jeru-

salem will succeed. It is because Yahweh is in control of those who make and use weapons. John 1:3 validates this truth, ***“All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made”*** (KJV). Therefore, God is in control of the construction and usage of these weapons, and He is ensuring and reassuring the Israelites that any weapons used by their enemies, regardless of its type they would be rendered useless and ineffective against them.

This powerful declaration and promise given to Israel is for us as well. God is declaring that anyone who is seeking to do evil against Believers will fail. Although, we are not free from life’s problems or attempts by the enemy ***“to kill, steal, and destroy”*** we can place our trust in God because He has the right and power to rule over His creation. God is Sovereign - He controls both those who make weapons and those who use them. The battle is not

ours, but the Lord’s. The Lord promises to protect us, and no matter the enemy, we have the victory!

My Beloved, we can be confident in the Lord’s triumph over every enemy, as it was in Israel’s time, so it is in our time – every child of God must understand, believe, and be able to say, the weapon may form against me, but it shall not prosper!

Blessings to All,  
Carolyn



It may form -  
but it won’t prosper

***“No weapon formed  
against thee shall  
prosper”***

Isa. 54:17b



# + CHURCH DIRECTORY

## A



**Agape Faith Bible Training Center**  
Rev. Dr. Joseph Rodriguez  
8121 Dixie Highway  
Birch Run, MI 48415  
(989) 777-3200 Ext. 20

## 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**  
Rev. 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



**Glory House Ministries**  
Pastor Jim House  
3660 Hermansau Rd.  
Saginaw, MI 48603  
(989) 752-4769

**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

## H



**Holy Communion Gospel Center**  
Pastor Charlene Washington  
1245 E. Genesee  
Saginaw, MI 48607  
989-752-3993

## J

**Jacob's Ladder**  
Pastor Dennis Barlow  
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



**Ministry Without Walls**  
Pastor, John Dunn  
3783 Mannion Road  
Saginaw, MI 48603



**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 Ministries**  
Pastor Augustine Delgado  
701 Hess Avenue  
Saginaw, MI 48601  
newlife3881@gmail.com



**New Birth Missionary Baptist**  
Bishop 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

## P

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

## R

**Radiant Church of God**  
Pastor Adolfo & Erlinda Martinez  
708 W Genesee Ave.  
Saginaw, MI 48602  
989-401-2134  
www.radiantchurchofgod.org



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

## S



**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

## 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

## + FUNDRAISING GOODTIMES

# Nonprofit boards: time to move from hierarchy to partnership

By MEL AND PEARL SHAW

*Are your board members engaged, active, and working in committees to advance the organization? Does the board chair check in with the president or CEO every week, and vice versa? Does the board make all the decisions and then tell the executive director what the staff should do? Or maybe your board focuses on reviewing reports prepared by staff, working from an agenda prepared by staff? Does your board and executive team work together, or does one or the other have the “upper hand?”*

The relationship between board members and nonprofit leadership can represent the best of what nonprofit staff and community/business volunteers can accomplish together. Or it can be a lopsided relationship. We are long-term advocates of a partnership model where the board and staff work closely together. Yes, each has specific roles and responsibilities, but they can be carried out in a spirit of collaboration where all parties are focused on the best outcomes – both short-term and long-term.

We recommend taking time to evaluate what is working well for your board and how things could be improved. While we

don't believe in any one model for working together, we resonate with the partnership model suggested by Donna Murray-Brown, Vice President of Strategy and Development at the National Council of Nonprofits. In her column for Candid, “Embracing partnership: A promising paradigm for nonprofit governance,” Murray-Brown makes the case that “the best work gets done when the board and staff collaborate closely.” We agree, 100%.

We need real and active partnerships between nonprofit staff and boards, and this takes some worthwhile effort. First, you need to talk together about the current status of the board and staff relationship. What's working? What isn't? What could be different? Are there suggestions that board members – or staff – have based on their work with other nonprofit organizations? Consider using a short anonymous survey to surface different opinions that may not be put on the table through open conversation. The results can provide a neutral starting point for conversation. When reviewing these together the board

can learn what their peers are experiencing, what they would like to see, and what patterns emerge, especially around how board members would like to interact with each other in meetings of the board and in subcommittees. When individuals – and the positions they represent – move away from hierarchal systems and increase their collaboration you can find there is more shared responsibility, creativity, and more resources available to all.

Ideally, you want to create a partnership where individuals fulfill their responsibilities and are comfortable suggesting improvements. You want an environment where people ask questions, plan for the future, and – in the case of fundraising – work together to secure funds that will bring the organization's mission and vision to life! Let's move beyond reading and approving reports into collaborative, expansive action.

**Part two: Board members: it's time for collaborative fundraising**



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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](http://www.saadandshaw.com) or call (901) 522-8727.

## + EDUCATION

### First SAE cohort graduate high school with a collective GPA of 3.25



COURTESY PHOTO

The first cohort of the Saginaw Academy of Excellence (SAE) program, a dual enrollment partnership with Saginaw Public Schools and Delta College, has set the standard high, earning 597 college credits.

“Our SAE students are a joy to work with,” says Dorian Phelps, Downtown Saginaw coordinator. “This program has been a beautiful journey – and, as with all journeys there have been many successful pathways and others where we’ve needed to pause, reconsider, re-tool and reroute. Of the utmost importance is to listen to what our SAE students are telling us and to be responsive to their needs.”

In honor of the first cohort of high

school students leaving the SAE program, a celebration was held at the Delta College Downtown Saginaw Center on Wednesday, June 12. Family, friends and educators attended the event and shared reflections of their journeys.

“To quote Nelson Mandela, ‘It always seems impossible, until it’s done,’” shared Dr. Ramont Roberts, superintendent of Saginaw Public Schools. “As you begin your journeys and encounter new challenges, remember that saying and make us proud.”

Eli’sha Thomas, an Arthur Hill graduate, plans to attend Michigan Technology University in the fall to pursue a degree in

cybersecurity. He’s grateful for the communication and study skills he had the opportunity to develop and shared that his experience with SAE has been wonderful. For future SAE students, he says, “Get ready for late nights. Get ready to study. Get ready to learn.”

Tamariay Skinner, a Saginaw High graduate, plans to attend Michigan State University in the fall to pursue a degree in biochemistry and molecular biology / biotechnology. She credits her experience with SAE for realizing her interest in biochemistry and moving her career path. For future SAE students, she says, “It may be a lot of work at first, but it pays off in the end. Don’t wait until the last minute to work on assignments and don’t be afraid to ask for help.”

Congratulations, Class of 2024! We wish you all the best in your continued educational journeys.

- Barron Abby – Saginaw High
- Siena Asiala – SASA
- Leaira Benton – Saginaw High
- Justin Bryant-Hughes – Arthur Hill
- Raegan Byrd – Arthur Hill
- Dontae Cole, Jr. – Arthur Hill
- Alexander Curry – SASA
- Diego Delgado – Arthur Hill
- Aidan Deters – Arthur Hill
- Catasha Frazier – Arthur Hill
- Britney Henderson – Saginaw High
- Jeremiah Huffman – Saginaw High
- LaDonna Jones – Saginaw High
- La’Niya Jones – SASA
- Unmun Kaur – SASA
- Marcello Ledesma – Arthur Hill
- Violet Mersy-Frank – SASA
- Isabella Miller – SASA
- Serenity Montgomery – Saginaw High
- Mallory Peavey – Arthur Hill
- Isabella Robles – SASA
- Victoria Schanck – SASA
- Eli’sha Thomas – Arthur Hill
- Nicholas Thomas – Saginaw High
- Brooke Toshach – SASA
- Tayonna Wilson – Saginaw High

## + EDUCATION

# MDE Awards Grants to school districts to help students explore educator careers

LANSING – The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has selected 25 recipients of the Future Proud Michigan Educator EXPLORE grants for districts and charter schools to assist students who are interested in careers in education.

MDE awarded EXPLORE Program grants and EXPLORE staff grants totaling \$747,227.

EXPLORE Program grants are to provide opportunities for students to explore educational careers. EXPLORE staff grants pay for tuition reimbursement for graduates of the EXPLORE Program who hope to return to their home district to teach.

“The EXPLORE grants represent a crucial investment in the future of our education system and the future of our children,” said State Superintendent Michael F. Rice.

“By providing students with early exposure to teaching careers and continuing to support these aspiring educators as they transition to their preparation programs, districts are addressing teacher shortages by growing staff who are already committed to and representative of their communities.”

Increasing the numbers of certified teachers in areas of shortage is Goal 7 in Michigan’s Top 10 Strategic Education Plan.

MDE congratulates recipients of the 2024 Future Proud Michigan Educator EXPLORE grants. They are:

- Bloomingdale Public Schools
- Cadillac Area Public Schools
- Concord Community Schools
- Detroit Public Schools Community District
- Galesburg-Augusta Community Schools
- Grand Rapids Public Schools
- Grant Public School District
- Hartland Consolidated Schools
- Hazel Park Schools
- Holland Public Schools
- Holt Public Schools
- Huron Valley Schools
- Ida Public Schools
- Kentwood Public Schools
- Lincoln Consolidated Schools
- Midland Public Schools

- Mount Pleasant Public Schools
- Muskegon Public Schools
- Oakland International Academy
- Parchment School District
- Rockford Public Schools
- Romulus Community Schools
- Tecumseh Public Schools
- Van Buren Public Schools
- Waldron Area Schools

“I am excited that this grant will allow us to do more to prepare our current scholars to be our future teachers,” said Dr. Leadriane Roby, Grand Rapids superintendent. “These grant dollars will provide our students with the opportunity and support they need to return to their home school district as educators.”

Mount Pleasant Superintendent Ms. Jennifer Verleger said: “This grant allows us to expand our collaboration with the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe and Central Michigan University by reaching out to and supporting indigenous students who are interested in becoming teachers.”

Districts that are awarded an EXPLORE Program grant receive \$10,000 per school building to develop and maintain programming for students in grades 6-12 who are interested in teaching careers. MDE will partner with awarded districts by consulting on program design and implementation and by providing free curricular resources and professional learning for EXPLORE instructors. Student opportunities may include visiting Michigan’s educator preparation programs, tutoring younger students during summer learning, partnering with a mentor teacher, and celebrating college decisions at a Future Educator Signing Day.

Districts awarded EXPLORE Staff grants may use funds to support district-employed graduates transitioning from high school to post-secondary educator preparation pathways. Districts will receive reimbursement of up to \$10,000 in tuition costs per graduate who is currently undertaking pre-program coursework but has not yet enrolled in a teacher preparation program.

Teacher preparation enrollment in Michigan has rebounded from a 59% de-

crease between 2011-12 and 2016-17 to a 56% increase from 2016-17 to 2021-22.

In the last two years, the legislature has approved, and the governor has signed into law, budgets that include \$575 million and \$448 million in FY23 and FY24, respectively, for efforts to address teacher recruitment and retention. These efforts include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Grow Your Own Staff Grants, which create support staff-to-teacher programs where teaching candidates work while completing preparation programs.
- MI Future Educator Fellowships, which offer \$10,000 scholarships to up to 2,500 future educators every year.
- MI Future Educator stipends, which offer \$9,600 to support student teachers.
- Talent Together, which helps school employees earn certification through partnerships with intermediate school districts and educator preparation institutions.
- The Rural Educator Credentialing Hub to assist rural educators in becoming certified through a consortium of educator preparation institutions and rural school districts led by Central Michigan University.
- Mentoring and other support to new teachers and others new to their positions in education.
- Student loan repayments to help educators pay off their loans.

Educators who are interested in learning more about EXPLORE programs, including accessing the free curriculum and professional learning, may visit the EXPLORE website, email MDE-PME@Michigan.gov, or view the recent Proud Michigan Educator video, which highlights various EXPLORE programs across the state.

# The importance of Summer reading



By **CRAIG DOUGLAS**  
RETIRED EDUCATOR

We have looked at the need for year-round learning before. You may recall the effects of “summer slide, that is when some students regress over the summer months and fall behind.

One of the better antidotes for “summer slide” is summer reading.

The READ association of Saginaw is a great regional “voice” for reading options. READ is offering DEAR at the Zoo, cost-free for the first 200 students who attend.

Reading in the summer months has many attributes, and I will extract three as highlights.

## 1. Expands vocabulary

I was a math major, and what I have learned about reading I have picked up over the years from fine teachers like Nicole Green and Crystal Painter. They are exceptionally skilled teachers in Bay City Public Schools, and each do an outstanding job with vocabulary. I saw young learners challenged to learn and apply new vocabulary words every time I visited their classrooms.

From these visits, I am convinced reading skill is directly related to vocabulary. And reading in the summer months is a great way to learn new words. More importantly, books give context to these new words and allow students the chance to expand instead of falling behind.

## 2. Enhance emotional intelligence and empathy

I love this benefit summer reading brings. When young readers dive into a book during a car trip or on a beach, they have an opportunity to expand their perspectives. They can identify with various

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Storytelling

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Saginaw Children's Zoo  
1730 S. Washington Avenue, Saginaw  
Zoo admission: \$5 for adults/children over 1 yr.  
(for Saginaw County residents, Veterans, and Bridge Card holders)

COURTESY PHOTO

characters and open the door to thinking about life in new ways.

This happens in many books that tells stories. For me growing up, I recall books about athletes, their stories of where they grew up and how they rose to various levels of achievement. One I still recall was a book about the Hall of Fame catcher of the old Brooklyn Dodgers, Roy Campanella. He was one of the first wave of African American major league players; his career was tragically ended by an automotive accident in 1958 that paralyzed him. It was the first time I had thought about what it would be like to be in a wheel chair. What it would be like to be a major league player one moment and in the blink of an eye, be unable to walk.

These types of scenarios would not have come to me without learning Campanella's story being “told” to me in a book.

## 3. Background knowledge

Reading helps students connect with they already know with new concepts. The growth that results reflects maturing. A deeper understanding results about life and the world around us.

Summer reading options are available in multiple places. Look for your local school to see what may be offered by the staff for students during the summer.

Best wishes to all students this summer. I urge everyone to grab a book and dive in.

## + EDUCATION



COURTESY PHOTO

## Despite staffing challenges, Saginaw Intermediate School District's Early Childhood Department continues to provide students and families across the Great Lakes Bay Region with a variety of resources!

Despite staffing challenges, Saginaw Intermediate School District's Early Childhood Department continues to provide students and families across the Great Lakes Bay Region with a variety of resources!

The Saginaw ISD Early Childhood Services Department provides an array of resources for children and families throughout Saginaw County including home visits, preschool programming, and community support. Programs are designed to strengthen families by providing high-quality learning environ-

ments and support for their children while sharing access to essential family resources. Our programs include the following:

- Birth-5
- Early On
- Great Start Collaborative
- Great Start Readiness Program
- Great Start to Quality Eastern Resource Center
- Healthy Families America

- Head Start/Early Head Start
- Michigan Adolescent Pregnancy and Parenting Program (MI-APPP)
- Michigan Tri Share Child Care Program

Our largest programs encompass our preschool programming. The Early Head Start (EHS) program serves 156 students

**CONTINUES ON PG 41,  
SISD**



## Continued from pg 40, SISD

in 6 classrooms and several homes while our Head Start (HS) program serves 859 students in 51 classrooms and 17 sites. Our Great Start to Readiness Program (GSRP) serves over 1,100 students across Saginaw county in local school districts, community based organizations and charter schools. These programs are essential to providing our youngest, most vulnerable learners the experiences they need to build a firm foundation for future academic success. It's impossible to do this alone and we value our partners at the local, state and federal level helping us in our pursuit for funding, support and legislative advocacy for high quality services.

Despite staffing challenges, SISD continues to keep the provision of these services at the forefront of what we do. These challenges are not prevalent just in our county, but across the state of Michigan. Research shows that the early foundational years of a child's life are of the greatest importance due to (but not limited to) the following:

- There are 700 to 1,000 new neural connections forming every second in a child's brain,
- Genetics in addition to life experiences help shape the developing brain,
- The foundation is key for future cognitive abilities, and
- Vocabulary at age 3 can predict 3rd grade reading achievement.

Implementation of high quality programs depends on a quality workforce. Providers locally and across the state know all too well the challenges we have and continue to experience being able to recruit and retain highly qualified staff. We are in need of individuals with a passion to provide much needed services to our students and families across Saginaw County. We encourage you to review the Saginaw ISD current preschool openings at [www.sisd.cc](http://www.sisd.cc) and select "Join Our Team!" at the top right corner of the

page to see all of our openings for the following positions:

- Head Start Lead Teacher
- Head Start Associate Teacher
- Program Service Aide
- Home Visitor
- Early Head Start Lead Teacher
- Family Service Advocate
- Program Support Secretary

The credentials required for these positions range from a high school diploma to advanced degrees and certifications. Below you will find a list of our sites as well as our partner sites providing EHS, HS and GSRP services. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact Dr. Ericka Taylor at (989) 399-7423 or by email at [etaylor@sisd.cc](mailto:etaylor@sisd.cc). Please, join our team in providing much needed services to the children and families within Saginaw County!

Early Head Start/Head Start Locations:

- Adams Avenue
- Arrowwood Elementary
- Birch Run (North Elementary)
- Birch Run Annex
- Brucker
- Brunkow
- Building Blocks Child Care & Preschool Center
- Chesaning
- Claytor
- Hemmeter
- Jerome
- Kinder Kare Center
- Merrill
- Murphy Farm
- Saginaw Career Complex
- St. Peter & Paul
- Valley

Great Start to Readiness Program Locations:

- Birch Run Area Preschool
- Bridgeport-Spaulding Preschool
- Building Blocks Childcare & Preschool Center
- Carrollton Early Childhood Center
- Chesaning Union Schools Latchkey and Preschool
- EduPlay Discovery Center
- Francis Reh Public School Academy
- Hemlock Child Development Programs
- Merrill Community Child Development Center
- Michigan Child Care Centers, Inc.
- Roaring Lions Learning Center
- Saginaw Preparatory Academy
- Saginaw Public Schools
  - Arthur Eddy Academy
  - Henry Doerr Early Childhood
  - Herig PreK & B/ATB
  - Kempton PreK & B/ATB
  - Jessie Loomis Preschool
  - Merrill Park PreK
  - Rouse PreK
  - Stone Preschool
  - Zilwaukee Prek & B/ATB
- St Charles Children's Center
- Wee Care Christian Children's Center

<sup>4</sup>Head Start Program Information report (2019-2020); Kids Count Data Book (Michigan, 2021); U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics (2020); Great Start Readiness Program State Evaluation Annual Report (2019-2020).

# Ditch the bill.



➔ Apply for MI Reconnect.

## Get Free Tuition through Michigan's Reconnect Scholarship Program

Delta College, in partnership with the state of Michigan, is offering free in-district tuition to qualifying Michigan residents who want to earn an associate degree or certificate.

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- Michigan resident for 1 year or more
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- Do not currently hold a college or university degree
- Students must enroll for 12 credits per year

Newly expanded to those 21-24 for a limited time!

\*Other costs apply. Students outside Bay, Midland and Saginaw counties (Delta's service district) can receive the scholarship but will be responsible for the difference between in-district and out-of-district tuition and fees.

### Apply today!

[delta.edu/reconnect](https://delta.edu/reconnect) | 989-686-9093




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989.399.5500



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- Free Breakfast & Lunch
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- Child Must Be 4 By December 1

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- Child's Birth Certificate
- Up-to-Date Shot Record
- Health Appraisal/Physical
- Health Insurance Card
- Proof of Income
- Proof of Residency
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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](http://www.saginawheadstart.org)

Source: [www.saginawheadstart.org](http://www.saginawheadstart.org)



Sabrina Beeman-Jackson

Saginaw ISD Head Start/Early Head Start Program Director

**“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**

 + SPORTS

# Darvin Ham return to Milwaukee to join Doc Rivers' staff



DARVIN HAM

By HASANI ALI

While the Los Angeles Lakers were embarrassed by being turned down by UConn's head coach Dan Hurley, former Lakers head coach Darvin Ham has already moved on and found another team for the next season.

The Saginaw native will be returning to Milwaukee to be the top assistant coach for Doc Rivers. Ham served as an assistant coach for Mike Budenholzer from 2018-2022, including a championship run back in 2021.

ESPN's Adrian Wojnarowski posted on X (Twitter) to break the news.

"Darvin Ham is joining the Milwaukee Bucks as the top assistant coach to Doc

Rivers, sources tell ESPN. Ham returns to the franchise after spending two years as the Lakers head coach. He had been highly sought-after amongst teams this spring.

Ham's departure with the Lakers was highly controversial as the team found an immediate turnaround with him in charge, but not to the liking of LeBron James and the Lakers' administration.

Many of the sports analysts around the league commented on the wrongful firing as the Lakers were given what they were promised and whether the departure was something that coach Ham actually deserved.

"Absolutely not," Stephen A. Smith said during an episode of ESPN First Take. He got screwed, it was the wrong decision.

"In two seasons, he's gone to the playoffs twice and ended up in the Western Conference Finals last season. They were a better team this year than they were last year."

Smith added that the only teams that the Lakers lost to were of championship caliber.

They just happened to have run into the reigning defending champions (Golden State) two seasons ago. Then last year, they ran into the best team in basketball who ended up becoming champions (Denver). Then they ran into them again this year. Those were the only teams to knock off the Lakers. If that's the course of being fired, then I don't know what to say."

According to LASportsHub.com, Darvin Ham's tenure with the Lakers received a ton of criticism from the media and the fanbase. However, he still managed to make the playoffs in both seasons, going all the way to the conference finals in 2023. Considering the ill-fitting roster and lack of depth on the team, it's hard to argue that Ham was not successful in Los Angeles.

Now, he has a chance to revive his career in a familiar franchise and get back to being a head coach elsewhere.

There is a decent chance he might get that opportunity with the Bucks. Rivers is the current head coach in Milwaukee and the 2023-24 campaign was a total disaster for the team.

After being hired mid-season, the team went 17-19 and lost in the first round of the playoffs. If they were to start next season in a similar fashion, Ham might get his shot at head coaching sooner than expected.

The expertise of Ham has the potential to bring Milwaukee back into title contention as long as they can find a way to mold a solid offense and to make sure superstars Damian Lillard and Giannis Antetokounmpo continue to play well together.



CLARESSA SHIELDS

## Shields to return to LCA for shot at WBC Women's Heavyweight World Championship

By HASANI ALI

Flint native Claressa Shields is looking to add another championship in her fourth division as she challenges Vanessa Lapage-Joanisse for the WBC Women's Heavyweight World Championship at Little Caesars Arena on July 27.

Jumping up two weight classes would certainly add to her resume as the "Greatest Woman Of All Time." It would be a dream come true to keep her status as she had this dream since she started boxing at the age of 11.

Shields admits that jumping up two weight classes will not be easy, but it's a challenge that she's ready for. Being the first woman to fight on premium cable, she's ready to put on a show for her fans.

"It's definitely not easy, but there's a sweet science to it," she told CBS News Detroit during an interview. "I have to gain a little bit of weight, but still keep my speed and gain strength and that's definitely a challenge. I'm benching 185 pounds and squatting 250 (pounds.) I'm pushing cars, I'm punching bags, I'm getting very, very

strong."

The vacant WBO Light Heavyweight Championship will also be on the line in a special edition of "Big Time Boxing USA," which will be airing live on DAZN – presented by Salita Promotions and 313 Presents.

Shields is a three-division world champion at 29 years old and the only female fighter to be undisputed in two different divisions in the four-belt era (junior middleweight and middleweight).

With her accolades and perfect record on display, Shields is taking her opponent very seriously.

"I have a very tough opponent in Vanessa Lapage-Joanisee," she said. "She's tough, has a hard head, likes to take punches and likes going to war, doesn't mind getting bloody, so I have to have power to get her off of me and to gain her respect. I'm looking forward to see what she brings on July 27."

She hasn't been in action since June 2023, where she successfully defended her middleweight title against Maricela Cornejo via unanimous 10-round decision.

The event was the first boxing match ever held at LCA and saw an impressive 11,784 fans in attendance.

"The queen of boxing is back!" Shields said. "I'm so excited to return to the ring, especially after my MMA victory in February. I'm excited to bring another entertaining fight to Little Caesars Arena. Last time 12,000 fans filled the arena, and this time we're going to lift the roof off the building!"

Though she's adding to her own boxing glory, Shields is dedicated to making a splash in women's boxing.

"This is a significant and unique fight where I am moving up two weight classes against a very tough champion in my quest to become World Champion in my fourth weight division," she said. "It's an exciting time for women's sports, and I thank DAZN for providing a global platform for women's boxing. I plan to do what I do best: bring that GWOAT energy and continue putting women's boxing on the map."

Tickets for the live event are on sale now and can be purchased at Ticketmaster.com and the XFINITY Box Office at LCA.

## + SPORTS



JERMAINE FRANKLIN

It was a rewarding experience for the “989 Assassin,” but it wasn’t convincing in any way to trade in his boxing gloves for golf clubs.

“No, I don’t plan on dropping the gloves for golf clubs anytime soon,” Franklin said with a smile. “Once I am done and retired, then I may pick it back up, but I can’t put down boxing right now because I’m too good at it.”

Franklin (23-2, 15 KOs) just came off a sixth-round TKO victory over former Olympian Devin Vargas (22-11) last month at the

Wayne State University Fieldhouse in Detroit.

The Saginaw native was dominant throughout the entire fight, including two early knockdowns during the contest.

“It was a great fight for me,” Franklin said during the post-fight interview with DAZN. “I made the fight harder than it needed to be by being overly aggressive and taking too many power shots. We just need to get back to the drawing board and tweak the gameplan a bit so I can finish these fights a little bit sooner.”

Franklin is currently in negotiation for his next fight. According to sources, he may be a featured bout on the Aug. 3 card in Los Angeles, Calif.

Heavyweight Andy Ruiz will be taking on “Big Baby” Jarrell Miller and upcoming star Jared Anderson is set to square off against Martin Bakole on the undercard.

The main event is Terence Crawford defending his junior middleweight title versus Israil Madrimov.

## Jermaine Franklin takes a swing at American Cancer charity event

By HASANI ALI

Saginaw native Jermaine Franklin exchanged 10 rounds for 18 holes last weekend during an American Cancer Charity event.

Franklin chose to participate in this event because cancer is something that hits close to home.

“I’ve had a close friend of the family who passed from breast cancer,” Franklin said. “And last year when I fought in England, I met a young boy named James who had cancer. He gave me a lot of inspiration. I’m just doing what I can to give back at the time,” he said.

It was Franklin’s first time picking up the clubs and he admits that he struggled to adjust to the new sport, but it was worth it in the end.

“I’m out here trying to be Tiger Woods out here, but I can’t hit off the tee though,” he said jokingly. It’s terrible. If I hit it off the tee, then I’ll be yelling ‘fore’ every time and you better watch out and duck your head.”

Franklin was accompanied by his advisor Aaron Alfaro, his wife and childhood friend to make up the group of four.

They didn’t win the gold outing, but they did manage to take second place.

“It was a great experience for Team Franklin,” Alfaro said during a phone interview. “People got to see the personal side of Jermaine. He brought his family and he shook hands with a lot of people. His fan base is growing drastically and doing events like this will definitely boost his credibility because he’s now viewed as a humanitarian, not just a fighter.”



## Grand Valley names Mike Korman as soccer Assistant Coach



MIKE KORMAN

By **HASANI ALI**

Grand Valley State University's women's soccer program welcomes Mike Korman to its coaching staff as an assistant coach for the upcoming 2024 season, announced by head coach Katie Hultin.

Expressing her enthusiasm for Korman's addition to the team, Coach Hultin emphasized his wealth of experience and the significant impact he is expected to make on both the student-athletes and the coaching staff.

Korman brings valuable coaching experience from his previous roles, notably spending five seasons as an assistant coach at Bemidji State University.

During his tenure there, Korman played a pivotal role in training goalkeepers, coordinating recruiting efforts, and

managing team logistics.

His contributions contributed to Bemidji State's impressive achievements, including three NCAA Tournament appearances and a historic Central Regional Championship in 2022.

Korman was also part of the coaching staff that earned recognition as the United Soccer Coaches Central Region Staff of the Year for consecutive seasons in 2021 and 2022.

Prior to his time at Bemidji State, Korman served as an evaluator at Sport Contact USA, a collegiate soccer-specific recruiting service.

His responsibilities included traveling nationwide to evaluate players and providing guidance to parents and players on the collegiate soccer recruitment process.

Korman's coaching journey began at

Saint Joseph's College in Rensselaer, Ind., where he served as the assistant men's soccer coach and goalkeeper coach from 2014 to 2017.

In addition to his coaching duties, he played a key role in developing recruiting strategies, implementing strength and conditioning programs, and managing team logistics.

Korman's dedication extended to academic support, where he initiated a program to ensure team members maintained a 3.0 GPA. He also assumed the role of head coach for a portion of the 2014 season.

Prior to his time at Saint Joseph's, Korman gained coaching experience at Millikin University in Decatur, Ill., as an assistant coach for the men's soccer program.

During his tenure, he contributed to player recruitment and retention, goalkeeper training, academic monitoring, and overall team management.

His efforts contributed to the program's significant improvement, achieving its first winning season in six years.

As a student-athlete, Korman excelled as a goalkeeper at Saint Joseph's College, competing at the NCAA Division II level from 2007 to 2012. He graduated with a degree in sport management in 2012 and has been a member of the United States Soccer Coaches since 2013, holding certifications including the National Diploma and Goalkeeper I Diploma.

With Korman's extensive coaching background and dedication to player development, Grand Valley State University's women's soccer program anticipates continued success under his guidance.

The Lakers had an impressive record during the 2023 campaign, going 14-4-6 overall, 8-1-5 in GLIAC – going 3-0-2 in the last five games of the regular season.

Grand Valley was ranked second under Northern Michigan.

With hopes of capturing a GLIAC tournament title, they were cut short with a 1-0 loss to Parkside University.

However, Grand Valley punched their ticket into the NCAA tournament.

The season ended for the Lakers with a 1-0 loss to Washburn University during the Elite Eight of the NCAA tournament.

## + SPORTS

## Brad Bez named GVSU Offensive Line Coach



BRAD BEZ

**By HASANI ALI**

Grand Valley State University's football program welcomes Brad Bez as the new offensive line coach, as announced by head coach Scott Wooster. Bez joins GVSU after two successful seasons as the offensive line coach at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls.

During his tenure at UW-River Falls, Bez played a pivotal role in the team's success, contributing to a combined 14-7 record over the 2022 and 2023 seasons. Under his guidance, the Falcons' offensive line emerged as a formidable force, facing tough competition against seven nationally ranked teams.

Notably, Bez mentored Alex Klecker,

who earned consensus All-American honors in 2023. Moreover, the team showcased a high-powered offense, averaging an impressive 43.0 points and 197.1 yards rushing per game in the 2023 season.

Expressing his excitement about Bez's appointment, Coach Wooster highlighted Bez's familiarity with the fundamental, technical, and schematic aspects of the game, which will bring continuity and excellence to GVSU's offensive line.

Additionally, Wooster emphasized Bez's experience and energy, foreseeing a significant impact on both recruiting and developing championship-caliber offensive linemen.

Before his tenure at UW-River Falls, Bez gained valuable coaching experience

at Western Michigan University, where he served as the offensive line graduate assistant for two seasons.

During his time with the Broncos, Bez contributed to the team's success, helping them achieve an 8-5 record and an appearance in the Quick Lane Bowl.

His coaching prowess was evident as he coached three players to All-Mid-American Conference honors in 2021.

Prior to his stint at Western Michigan, Bez spent a year at Wayne State University, where he worked with the offensive line as part of a coaching staff that secured an impressive 8-3 record and finished second in the GLIAC conference.

A native of Okemos, Michigan, Bez is a distinguished alumnus of Kalamazoo College, where he graduated in 2019.

During his time at Kalamazoo, Bez was a standout member of the Hornets' Offensive Line, earning accolades for his on-field performance. He also excelled academically, earning Dean's List honors and appearing multiple times on the MIAA Academic Honor Roll.

Additionally, Bez pursued his passion for sports administration by completing a Master's degree while at Wayne State University.

With Bez's extensive coaching experience and dedication to excellence, Grand Valley State University's football program looks forward to continued success and growth under his leadership.

The Lakers had a dominant regular season, going 11-2 overall, 6-0 in GLIAC and claiming the GLIAC championship.

The first game of the season was the only adversity that the Lakers faced until the postseason, suffering a 31-28 loss to the Colorado School of Mines.

As for the remaining of the nine games of the season, the games were won pretty convincingly, including a 43-7 win against no. 19 Assumption University back in September and a 38-0 win over no. 16 Davenport University.

Grand Valley's national title hopes were cut short with a 7-6 loss against Harding University back in December.

The 2024 campaign begins on Sept. 5 when the Lakers host the Marauders of Central State University. Kickoff is at 7 p.m.

# EMU adds Jay Smith to basketball Coaching Staff

By HASANI ALI

Eastern Michigan University's men's basketball program has bolstered its coaching staff with the addition of Jay Smith as Assistant Coach/Player Development, as announced by Head Coach Stan Heath on Monday, June 10.

Smith brings a wealth of experience and expertise to the program, boasting a remarkable 39-year career in collegiate basketball.

His most recent role as Director of Player Personnel and Development at the University of Michigan saw him contribute to the team's success with an impressive 87-72 record over the past five seasons.

Coach Heath expressed his enthusiasm for having Smith join the Eagles' coaching staff, highlighting Smith's extensive coaching background and his proven track record of working with high-caliber athletes.

With experience coaching at various levels and a focus on player development, Smith is poised to make a significant impact on the program's success.

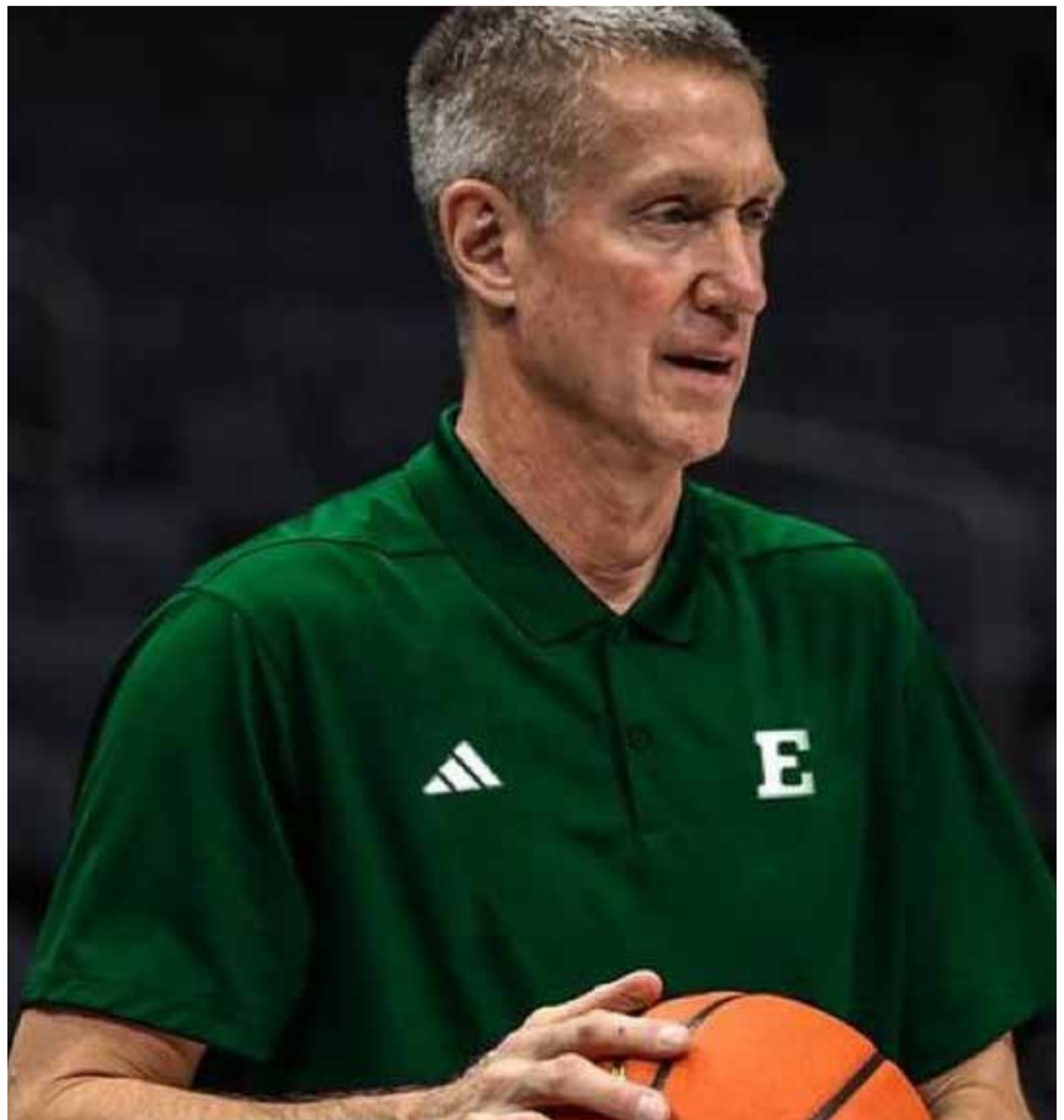
A native of Mio, Mich., Smith has held coaching positions at esteemed institutions such as Kalamazoo College, Central Michigan University, and Grand Valley State University.

His coaching journey also includes stints as an Assistant Coach at the University of Detroit Mercy, the University of Michigan, and Kent State University.

"I want to thank Head Coach Stan Heath and Eastern Michigan University for this opportunity and look forward to working with our student-athletes and staff," said Smith. "Having known Stan for thirty years, I am excited to collaborate with him and contribute to the success of the program."

Smith's coaching accolades include leading Central Michigan University to Mid-American Conference titles in 2001 and 2003 and playing a pivotal role in recruiting the iconic "Fab Five" during his tenure at the University of Michigan.

His coaching prowess has been instrumental in guiding teams to NCAA Tournament appearances, including Detroit Mercy in 2012 and Grand Valley State University in 1996-97.



JAY SMITH

A graduate of Saginaw Valley State University with a degree in Physical Education and a minor in Business, Smith furthered his education with a Master's in Sport Management from Kent State University.

His illustrious playing career at Mio AuSable High School, where he scored 2,841 career points, remains a testament to his basketball prowess.

Smith's appointment adds depth and experience to the coaching staff, complementing the existing team of fourth-year assistants Bob Simon, Drew Denisco, and Shawn Trice, along with newly hired Director of Operations, Carlos McMath.

The Eagles struggled last season, going 13-18 overall, 6-12 in the Mid American Conference – maintaining a 9-6 record at

home.

Eastern Michigan is looking to make a drastic turnaround as they sat in the bottom half of the conference standings in 10th place.

After a 94-55 loss to Butler University, the Eagles won five of their last eight games. The turbulence got rocky awfully fast as a five-game losing streak started with a 80-64 loss against Central Michigan on Jan. 9.

Another four-game losing streak ensued at the end of the month, starting with a 77-46 loss against Akron.

To end the season on a positive note, the Eagles did manage to win three of the last five games.

## + SPORTS

## Eastern Michigan names Andy Walker as new Golf Head Coach



ANDY WALKER

**By HASANI ALI**

Eastern Michigan University's commitment to excellence in collegiate golf reached new heights with the appointment of Andy Walker as the head coach of the men's golf program.

This announcement, made by EMU Vice President/Director of Athletics Scott Wetherbee on June 12, follows closely on the heels of a transformative \$6.5 million commitment from GameAbove to bolster EMU Golf.

Walker, a distinguished figure in the golfing world, brings a wealth of experience and a stellar track record to his new role.

With four national championships to his name as both a player and coach, Walker's arrival in Ypsilanti heralds a new era of promise and potential for EMU Golf.

His extensive coaching career includes successful stints at Virginia Common-

wealth University (VCU), Lynn University, and South Mountain Community College (SMCC), where he cultivated a culture of excellence and achievement.

Wetherbee expressed confidence in Walker's ability to lead EMU's golf program to greater heights, citing his remarkable professional experience and his proven track record of developing highly successful student-athletes.

Walker's results-driven approach and his commitment to fostering meaningful relationships with players and donors align perfectly with EMU's vision for its golf program.

During his tenure at VCU, Walker orchestrated a remarkable transformation, elevating the men's golf team from obscurity to prominence on the national stage.

Under his guidance, VCU experienced a meteoric rise in performance, culminating in four of the six lowest-scoring team rounds in the program's history.

His emphasis on recruiting, player development, and strategic coaching propelled VCU to unprecedented success, earning him accolades such as the Atlantic 10 Coach of the Year.

Walker's coaching philosophy emphasizes not only athletic achievement but also academic excellence and personal growth.

His players have consistently garnered accolades for their performance on the course and in the classroom, reflecting Walker's holistic approach to coaching.

In addition to his coaching prowess, Walker's professional playing career and his extensive experience as a golf instructor further underscore his qualifications for the role of head coach at EMU.

His tenure at Lynn University saw the team capture an NCAA National Championship in his first season, setting the stage for continued success in the years to come.

The appointment of Walker coincides with GameAbove's ongoing commitment to support EMU Golf.

The recent \$6.5 million commitment from GameAbove underscores the organization's belief in the potential of the men's and women's golf programs to achieve greatness.

This substantial investment marks the largest level of support from a single donor to one sport in EMU's history, reaffirming GameAbove's dedication to fostering excellence in collegiate athletics.

The synergy between Walker's coaching expertise and GameAbove's financial backing bodes well for the future of EMU Golf.

With the opening of the state-of-the-art GameAbove Golf Performance Center at Eagle Crest Golf Course, EMU's student-athletes will have access to world-class training facilities and resources, further enhancing their development and competitive edge.

As EMU continues to invest in its golf program and cultivate a culture of excellence, the appointment of Andy Walker signals a bold step forward in the pursuit of athletic and academic distinction.

With Walker at the helm, EMU Golf is poised to soar to new heights and leave an indelible mark on the collegiate golf landscape.

# Scott Dixon wins 2024 Detroit Grand Prix



2024 DETROIT GRAND PRIX

By **HASANI ALI**

In a display of unparalleled skill and strategic finesse, Scott Dixon, affectionately known as "the Iceman," clinched his 58th career win in the IndyCar Series by expertly navigating a challenging race scenario at the IndyCar Detroit Grand Prix.

Dixon's victory was not merely a product of speed but a testament to his ability to avoid all contact and penalties while executing a meticulous fuel-saving strategy, solidifying his reputation as one of the sport's most adept drivers.

Following closely behind Dixon, Marcus Ericsson of Andretti Global secured the second position, while Marcus Armstrong, Dixon's teammate at Chip Ganassi Racing, celebrated his first IndyCar podium finish after starting from the 19th position.

Despite a largely clean start to the race, chaos erupted between laps 32 and 70, relegating series points leader Alex Palou, pole-sitter Colton Herta, and Indianapolis 500 champion Josef Newgarden to lower

positions and effectively taking them out of contention.

Dixon, leveraging his experience and expertise with six IndyCar points titles under his belt, capitalized on the chaos to seize the championship lead, further cementing his status as a dominant force in the series.

The conclusive results of the IndyCar Detroit Grand Prix saw Dixon claiming the top spot on the podium, followed by Ericsson in second place and Armstrong in third.

Kyle Kirkwood, Alexander Rossi, Will Power, Pato O'Ward, Felix Rosenqvist, Santino Ferrucci, and Theo Pourchaire rounded out the top ten positions, each contributing to the intensity and excitement of the race.

A comprehensive overview of the IndyCar points standings, current as of June 2, underscored Dixon's ascendancy to the forefront with a commanding total of 216 points.

Trailing behind were contenders such as Alex Palou, Will Power, Pato O'Ward,

Alexander Rossi, and Kyle Kirkwood, setting the stage for a fiercely contested championship battle in the ensuing races.

Throughout the race, live updates provided a dynamic narrative of the unfolding events, capturing pivotal moments such as Ericsson's surge to second place, Dixon's strategic maneuvers to maintain his lead, and Newgarden's unfortunate collision leading to an early exit from contention.

Despite facing challenges posed by adverse weather conditions and on-track incidents, Dixon's unwavering focus and tactical acumen ultimately propelled him to victory, reinforcing his reputation as one of the sport's most formidable competitors.

As the IndyCar season progresses, fans can anticipate further exhilarating races and intense competition as drivers vie for championship glory on the dynamic and demanding circuits of the series. Dixon's triumph serves as a testament to the resilience, skill, and determination that define the essence of motorsport excellence.

## + SPORTS

# Northwood names Matt Bullinger as Assistant Men's Basketball Coach



MATT BULLINGER

By **HASANI ALI**

Northwood University's men's basketball program has unveiled its latest addition to the coaching staff with the appointment of Matt Bullinger as an assistant coach.

Expressing his enthusiasm for the recruitment, Tom Church, who recently assumed the role of head coach for Northwood, conveyed his thoughts on the new additions to the Timberwolves.

"I'm extremely excited to add Coach Matt Bullinger to my staff. Matt is a high-energy, knowledgeable, and well-connected coach who will seamlessly integrate into the fabric of Northwood. His track record of consistent success, coupled with his exemplary character and diligent work ethic, positions him as an ideal role model for our players."

Bullinger arrives at Northwood following a successful tenure as the Graduate Assistant at Wayne State University from 2022 to 2024.

During his two-year stint in Detroit, Bullinger played an instrumental role in the Warriors' notable improvement in both overall performance and conference standings compared to the preceding season.

His coaching acumen was underscored by the recognition garnered by two All-GLIAC selections, one All-Defensive selection, and the 2024 GLIAC Freshman of the Year.

Additionally, Bullinger contributed to the 2022-23 team's receipt of the prestigious NABC Academic Team Excellence Award, showcasing his commitment to fostering both athletic and academic excellence.

Prior to his tenure at Wayne State, Bullinger distinguished himself as the Associate Head Coach at Kalamazoo Valley Community College from 2018 to 2022.

Under his tutelage, the Cougars experienced a remarkable transformation from a modest 8-22 record in the season preceding his arrival to a commendable 23-9 fin-

ish in his final year.

Bullinger's coaching prowess was further evident in the development of two All-Region XII players, as well as his instrumental role in facilitating scholarships for eight student-athletes to four-year institutions.

Additionally, his commitment to academic success was highlighted by the recognition of nine Academic All-Conference players during his tenure.

Bullinger's coaching journey also included a stint as a summer coach at IMG Academy in Bradenton, Florida, in 2018, coupled with involvement in numerous NCAA Division II Elite Camps and high-level prospect camps across Michigan.

Drawing from his collegiate playing experience, Bullinger's athletic journey spanned two seasons at Jackson Community College and culminated at Indiana University - South Bend, where he amassed an impressive record of over 900 points and 400 rebounds.

His standout performances were mirrored by his achievements at Jackson Lumen Christi High School, where he played a pivotal role in leading the Titans to a school record in wins and clinching the MHSAA Regional Championship in 2012-13.

Hailing from Jackson, Michigan, Bullinger earned his bachelor's degree in liberal arts & sciences from Indiana University-South Bend in 2019, followed by a master's degree in sports administration from Wayne State University in 2024.

Reflecting on his appointment, Bullinger expressed his gratitude, stating, "I am really excited to join the Northwood Family. I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to Athletic Director Jeff Curtis and Head Coach Tom Church for affording me the opportunity to contribute to a program poised for success.

I eagerly anticipate the opportunity to play a part in building a program that resonates with the pride of students, administration, and alumni for generations to come."

# Son of Barry Sanders, offered gray shirt by MSU

By HASANI ALI

Michigan State University extended an offer to Noah Sanders, a running back from Birmingham Groves High School, as a gray-shirt prospect for the Class of 2025, a decision made promptly following his participation in a prospect camp on Monday.

Should Sanders opt to join the Spartan program under this arrangement, he would forego scholarship benefits during the initial semester of his freshman year. However, upon completion of this period, he would then transition to a scholarship status for the duration of his collegiate tenure at Michigan State.

Sanders formally announced this gray-shirt opportunity via social media on Tuesday.

Before Michigan State presented him with the gray-shirt offer, Sanders had garnered scholarship opportunities from several institutions, including Bowling Green, Buffalo, Toledo, and Western Kentucky, among others.

His relationship with the Spartan program has been cultivated over time, with Sanders having visited the campus on multiple occasions throughout the preceding year.

Notably, Noah Sanders hails from a family deeply intertwined with athletic prowess. His eldest brother, Barry Sanders Jr., notably contributed to college football programs at Stanford and Oklahoma State from 2012 to 2016, showcasing his talents as both a running back and kick returner.

Furthermore, his brother Nick Sanders currently serves as a walk-on guard for Michigan State's basketball team under the tutelage of Coach Tom Izzo. Conversely, his brother Nigel chose to pursue a career in music following his high school endeavors.

Sanders' receipt of the gray-shirt offer follows his close engagement with Michigan State's running backs and associate head coach, Keith Bhonapha, during Monday's prospect camp.

As Michigan State navigates its summer official visitations, speculation abounds regarding the program's intentions to secure two scholarship positions for running backs in the Class of 2025.



NOAH SANDERS

Notably, one of these coveted spots has been earmarked for Jace Clarizio, a standout talent from East Lansing, renowned as a four-star prospect in the On3 Industry Ranking.

Should Sanders elect to embrace the gray-shirt opportunity extended by the Spartans, he would not occupy one of the allocated spots for tailbacks in the Class of 2025, thus allowing Michigan State to pursue additional prospects.

Recent activities indicate the program's concerted efforts to scout and recruit top-tier running back talent, exemplified by visits from prospects such as Jon Denman from Palestine, Texas, and Jabree Wallace-Coleman from Imhotep Institute in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Further scholarship offers have been extended to running backs DJ Dugar from

Leander, Texas, and Dramekco Green from Conroe, Texas, highlighting Michigan State's proactive recruitment strategy.

Sanders' athletic prowess extends beyond the gridiron, as evidenced by his achievements in track and field at Groves.

His junior season saw him amass 401 rushing yards and seven touchdowns on 71 carries, alongside contributions in the passing game.

Additionally, Sanders excelled in track events, recording a notable time of 10.9 seconds in the 100-meter dash and securing a third-place finish in the 100-meter event at the Oakland County Championship.

His versatility further extends to relay events and the long jump, where he has showcased commendable performances for his high school team.

## + SPORTS

## Former Heritage standout Spencer Schwellenbach to debut with Atlanta Braves



SPENCER SCHWELLENBACH

By HASANI ALI

According to a report by MLB insider Robert Murray, Spencer Schwellenbach, formerly of Saginaw Heritage and acclaimed as an ace, is poised to mark his inaugural appearance in Major League Baseball this Wednesday.

Schwellenbach, who will celebrate his 24th birthday on Friday, was selected as the Atlanta Braves' second-round pick from Nebraska in the 2021 draft.

Despite missing the 2021 and 2022 seasons due to Tommy John surgery,

Schwellenbach showcased exceptional prowess during the 2023 season, leading to commendable rankings as the No. 5 prospect by Baseball America, No. 3 by MLB.com, and No. 2 by The Athletic.

Notably, his impressive fastball, reaching speeds of up to 98 mph, along with a proficient change-up and breaking ball, contributed significantly to his acclaim.

Throughout the ongoing season, Schwellenbach has demonstrated remarkable proficiency while pitching in High A and Double A leagues. Standing at 6-foot-1, the right-hander has commenced eight games, maintaining a stellar 1.80 ERA

across 45 innings, coupled with 51 strikeouts and merely 10 walks.

His transition to Double A Mississippi has been particularly noteworthy, evidenced by his dominant performances in two starts for the Mississippi Braves, wherein he struck out 17 batters in 13 innings, conceding only one walk and five hits, holding opposing hitters to a mere .122 average with an impressive whip of 0.46.

Despite Atlanta's initial cautious approach following his recovery from Tommy John surgery, the current spate of injuries to key pitchers has expedited Schwellenbach's ascent.

Although he is not yet listed on Atlanta's 40-man roster, the Braves have made arrangements to accommodate his debut by clearing a roster spot, notably replacing outfielder Ronald Acuna Jr., who has been sidelined due to injury.

Furthermore, scheduling constraints necessitated Schwellenbach's selection for Wednesday's start, as other pitching options, namely Bryce Elder and Dylan Dodd, would have been compelled to pitch on short rest.

Having recently delivered a commendable performance on May 22, Schwellenbach enters his debut with a week of well-deserved rest.

His journey to professional baseball began during his tenure at Nebraska, where he earned accolades as the Big Ten Player of the Year for his remarkable batting average of .284, complemented by a .403 on-base percentage, and stellar performances as a shortstop.

Notably, Schwellenbach's transition to a two-way player showcased his versatility, as he assumed closer duties for Nebraska, achieving notable success with a 0.57 ERA and an impressive fastball reaching 99 mph.

Schwellenbach's exceptional journey traces back to his high school days at Heritage, where he earned recognition as the Michigan High School Baseball Player of the Year in 2018, embodying his long standing dedication and talent in the sport.



## Saginaw Spirit becomes first Michigan team to win Memorial Cup



SAGINAW SPIRIT

By **HASANI ALI**

Saginaw Spirit head coach Chris Lazary vowed to the city of Saginaw that the Spirit will be bringing home the Memorial Cup.

This was in a press conference after losing the Western Conference Finals series to the London Knights, 4-2.

The Knights only suffered two playoff losses thanks to Saginaw before going on to sweep the Oshawa Generals to win the OHL National Championship.

Saginaw and London collided again on May 29 during tournament play and the Spirit lost again to the Knights, 4-2.

The Spirit were 0-3 against the best team since the playoffs and it looked like it was nearly impossible to beat the Knights. It's far from a David vs. Goliath tale, but the second-best team in the league needed to find an answer to topple over London.

London will be entering its fourth Memorial Cup finals, but to everyone's surprise, this will be the second time where they were upset by the host team – the first time was Shawinigan 12 years ago in overtime.

On Sunday, the game was just 21.7 seconds from the end of regulation before Saginaw left wing Josh Bloom banged home a loose puck after a failed clearing

attempt for a bitter 4-3 Knights defeat before nearly 5,400 screaming fans at the Dow Event Center.

London Knights assistant coach Dylan Hunter felt like the game was snatched away from them as they were embarking on a perfect postseason.

"You're devastated," he said during the post-game conference. "It's not the ending you want. We didn't play our best game for the first 45 minutes. We came on there (with a three-goal rally). They went right to the bitter end."

Saginaw finally gave London a taste of its own medicine after upstaging the host team multiple times leading into the final game.

"We had to get our hearts ripped out to win," Spirit defenseman Zayne Parekh said, "and that's what we did."

Saginaw was ahead 3-2 rolling into the third period. Yet, the Knights were not going away easy as they scored a third goal to tie the game.

"The energy from fans in the crowd also heightened," superfan Sav Neth said. "The fans were getting pretty loud."

The same fan who'd questioned the Knights on Reddit edited that post to say, 'WAIT,' and then, "HOLD ON."

A young boy, wearing a Knights jersey,

with tears streaming down his face – the image from Sunday's Memorial Cup television broadcast said it all for London fans.

The boy, captured on camera in the stands as London lost the final to the Saginaw Spirit, is the son of London Knights super-fan Sav Neth. Like many of the Londoners it was a long three and a half hour trip back to Canada.

According to The London Free Press, another big factor was the major penalty and ejection handed to London forward Landon Sim for catching Parekh with what was deemed a head check by the referees.

London coach Dale Hunter complained, Parekh was back on the ice in no time and Beck ended the Knights' perfect 11-for-11 kill streak with a power-play goal.

"I haven't watched it yet," Dylan Hunter said. "They're (the officials) the ones looking at it. They get to watch on video so obviously it must have been called for."

Parekh got away with a vicious high-stick on Denver Barkey late in the second period without a penalty. The Knights didn't get a single power play in the final.

"I find the deeper you go in playoffs, they'll let a little bit go," Dylan Hunter said. "I think there were penalties on both sides. They make the game as playable as possible. It made it exciting at the end."



## PICS OF THE WEEK

The Saginaw Juneteenth festivities kicked off over the weekend, highlighted by the first annual Saginaw Juneteenth Excellence in Education Awards on June 14, 2024, at Horizons Conference Center. The event celebrated the outstanding contributions of local educators and educational advocates. Eight individuals, including Dr. George Grant, Jr. and Dr. Pamela Ross McClain, received presidential awards for their significant impact on the educational landscape. Twelve organizations, such as Charles McNair Freedom School and First Ward Community Center, were honored with Community Service Awards. The evening also recognized retired teachers for their dedicated service. Festivities continued on June 15 with a parade and festival, where Dr. George Grant served as Grand Marshall.





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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.**



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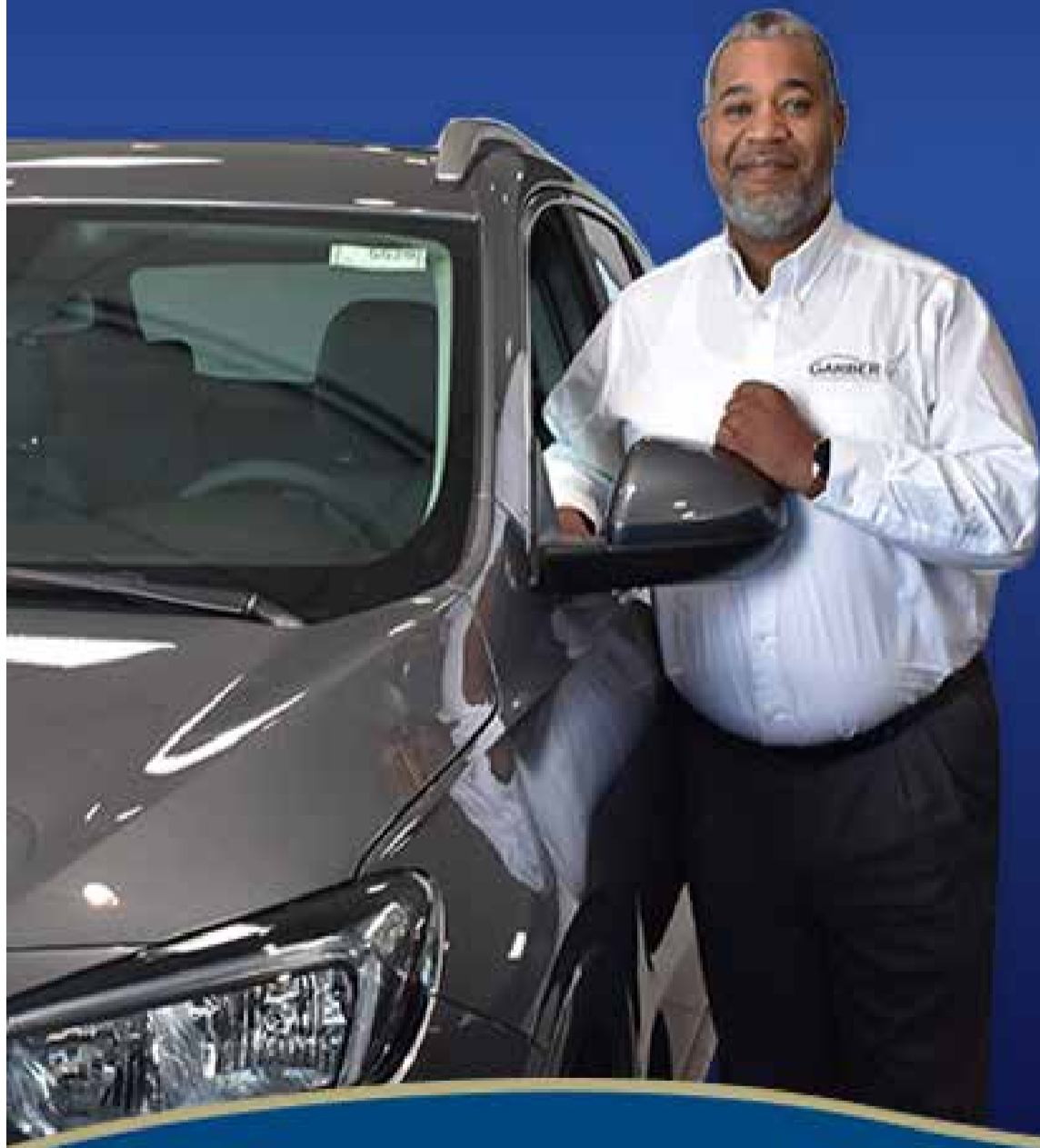


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