



HARLEM COMMUNITY  
NEWSPAPERS, INC.

"GOOD NEWS YOU CAN USE"

The Harlem Community Newspapers, Inc. Connecting Harlem, Queens, Brooklyn and The Bronx

# COMMUNITY QUEENS NEWS

"Good News You Can Use"

Vol. 30 No. 5

February 1, 2024 – February 7, 2024

FREE



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Scott King's Son,  
Dexter, Dies**

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## OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The Harlem Community Newspapers, Inc. will publish positive news and information. Our mission is to deliver “good” and informative news to our readers focusing on health, education, housing, business and employment opportunities. We look for and publish results, not problems. We promote businesses, opportunities and events happening in the communities we serve. We are dedicated to providing our readers with valuable information they can use to improve the quality of life for themselves, their families and our communities.

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Publisher/Editor	Pat Stevenson
Editor	Cynthia Horner
Social Media Mgr	Steven Bennett
Layout Mgr	Steven Bennett
Proofreader	Hazel Rosetta Smith
Publisher Assistant	Steven Bennett
Borough Writer	Howard Giske
Feature Writer	Jennifer Cunningham
A&E Editor	Linda Armstrong
Social Media Mgr.	Charlotte Anderson
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Photographer	Nadezda Tavodova Tezgor
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Photographer	Seitu Oronde
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Mailing: P.O. Box # 1775, New York, New York 10027  
Phone: 646-988-1015  
Email: [harlemnewsinc@aol.com](mailto:harlemnewsinc@aol.com)  
Website: [www.harlemcommunitynews.com](http://www.harlemcommunitynews.com)  
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PAT STEVENSON

February is Black History month. Each week this month, we will focus on Black History with historical-focused articles, as well as Black history in the making. As a member of the Black press, the Harlem Community News reports on the accomplishments of Black individuals and organizations every week. In 2024, we will continue the commitment to our Mission Statement. In this issue, we are reminding you of the history of Black History Month, as well as the importance of the Black Lives Matter movement and Democracy. (see pages 10-11).

Next week, in our February 8 edition, we will publish our annual “Blacks on Broadway” feature. Look for that edition in your neighborhood or online at [www.harlemcommunitynews.com](http://www.harlemcommunitynews.com), and start planning to see some Broadway shows, and support our Black actors.

I began publishing community newspapers primarily covering the African American communities in New York 30 years ago. At that time, I decided to focus on the rarely reported “Good News” in the community and provide information pertinent to improving the lives of our readers. Celebrating 30 years of publishing, we are pivoting to a more significant online presence while maintaining our print editions. Go to our website and subscribe to our daily newsletter, Harlem Daily. It is free. Watch for our 30th Anniversary events and support requests--coming soon!

Did you get the COVID-19 booster and your flu shot? People are still getting sick from and dying from COVID. It has been reported that more than 10,000 people died from COVID in December. It is still here--get vaccinated!

You can visit our website at [www.harlemcommunitynews.com](http://www.harlemcommunitynews.com) to see past issues, subscribe to our daily newsletter, and view past videos, current events, advertising, subscription information, etc. We are also on Instagram and Facebook.

[Welcome To Our Black History](#)

Month issue!

**Pat Stevenson  
Celebrating**

# MLK and Coretta Scott King's Son, Dexter, Dies

By The Associated Press  
The late Dexter King

**D**exter Scott King, the younger son of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and Coretta Scott King, recently died after battling prostate cancer.

The King Center in Atlanta, which Dexter King served as chairman, said the 62-year-old son of the civil rights icon died at his home in Malibu, California. His wife, Leah Weber King, said in a statement that he died "peacefully in his sleep."

The third of the Kings' four children, Dexter King, was named after the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, where his father served as a pastor. When the Montgomery bus boycott launched him to national prominence in the wake of the 1955 arrest of Rosa Parks.

Dexter King was just seven years old when his father was assassinated in April 1968, while supporting striking sanitation workers in Memphis, Tennessee. In his 2004 memoir, "Growing Up King," Dexter King recalled his father's slaying as the end of a carefree childhood.

"Ever since I was seven, I've felt I must be formal," he wrote, adding: "Formality, seriousness, certitude — all these are difficult poses to maintain, even if you're a person with perfect equilibrium, with all the drama life throws at you."

As an adult, Dexter King became an attorney and focused on shepherding his father's legacy and protecting the King family's intellectual property. In addition to serving as King Center's chairman, he was president of the King es-

tate. In addition to his work with the King Center, Dexter King was known for his striking resemblance to his father. They looked so much alike that the son portrayed his famous father in a 2002 TV movie about Parks.

Coretta Scott King died in 2006, followed by the Kings' oldest child, Yolanda King, in 2007.

"Words cannot express the heartbreak I feel from losing another sibling," the Rev. Bernice A. King, the youngest of the four, said in a statement.

His older brother, Martin Luther King III, said: "The sudden shock is devastating. It is hard to have the right words at a moment like this. We ask for your prayers at this time for the entire King family."

*Photo courtesy NNPA*





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# PONDER THIS! Go Back and Get It



By Hazel Rosetta Smith

January, the first month of the new year has passed on. The celebratory crystal ball dropped on Times Square announcing 2024. We made resolutions again to make changes and plans of completion of projects too long on hold.

Then oops, the demons of doubt came along saying we have taken on more

than we can chew. The best of our heartfelt plans got shredded and minor changes were activated. Unfortunately, that is how too many of us roll. Starting out enthusiastic, full of determination and too soon giving up on what was a possibility for change. The motivation and energy to “do the work” feels far-fetched.

Sankofa is a word in the Twi language of Ghana that translates to “Go back and get it.” The word has also been adopted as an important symbol in an African-American and African Diaspora context to represent the need to reflect on the past.

The Sankofa bird with its head turned backward is a part of the Asante Adinkra symbols used by the Akan people of Ghana to symbolize taking from the past and

bringing it into the present to make positive progress to build a successful future.

Step back and revisit those resolutions from prior years; anything worth doing necessitates time, fortitude, and serious study. Not even God gives us what we want when we want it, and He is in the miracle business.

Resolutions do not have to be focused on changes. Before you decide to take on something new or even something that you wanted to achieve and did not, do the research, and do not give up until you have checked all avenues. Give respect to what you have done and take pride in yourself.

I remember my sorrowful thoughts when COVID-19 came along. New York was mandated to shut down and stay in.

Loss of life and loved ones was on every mind. Loss of work was traumatic. I was contracted for performances of my plays and excited to be and bring a blessing to those audiences. Within a few days, those contracts were undoable pieces of paper and returned deposits were requested, rightfully so. It was natural to feel devastated and ask how long, Lord, how long?

I spent my shut-in days thinking back in prayer and meditation on all that God had done for me and brought me through. I discovered that if I concentrated on positive thinking and refused to wallow in the throes of negativity, my faith would carry me through and all would be well in God’s time.

Three years later, I am



rejoicing that the Greater Hood AME Zion Church in Harlem is bringing back my play THE FLIP SIDE OF THE COIN-THE BROTHERS SPEAK! on February 17, 2024. Like the Sankofa bird, I am looking back and bringing forward what I have done that can help

somebody. Remember what you have in your hand.

[Hazel Rosetta Smith is a journalist, playwright, and artistic director for HSTM-Help Somebody Theatrical Ministries. Contacts: [misshazel@twc.com](mailto:misshazel@twc.com) and online [www.hazelrosettasmith.com](http://www.hazelrosettasmith.com)]

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## GREATER HOOD MEMORIAL A.M.E. ZION CHURCH

Presents a Gospel Musical Play

## THE FLIP SIDE OF THE COIN THE BROTHERS SPEAK!

Written & Directed by Hazel Rosetta Smith

Musical Director Jeff Bolding  
Minister of Music Kevin Sibley

Saturday, February 17, 2024  
Showtime: 2:00 pm Prompt

All Tickets \$25 – Must Register

Virginia Montague (Greater Hood)  
212-283-0294

Hazel Rosetta Smith (HSTM)  
646-320-1760

Greater Hood Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church 160 West 146th Street, NY, NY 10039  
(between Malcolm X & Adam Clayton Powell Blvd.) Reverend Wendell Lancaster, Pastor

# QBP Richards Announces \$30.5 Million Capital Funding for Queens Schools

In an illustration of his continued commitment to make sure all Queens students benefit from top-quality educational facilities, Borough President Donovan Richards Jr. announced his allocation of more than \$30.49 million in capital funding for borough schools in Fiscal Year 2024.

The announcement was made at August Martin High School in South Jamaica, which received \$4.25 million in FY24 capital funding from Borough President Richards for a trio of projects — \$2 million to renovate the school’s cafeteria, \$1.5 million to upgrade the aging gymnasium and \$750,000 to install a cooling system in its

auditorium.

“To be successful, a school needs to have high-quality facilities that provide a modern and comfortable learning environment for its students,” said Borough President RICHARDS. “Sadly, many schools in our borough and city do not have such facilities thanks to long-standing disinvestment in school infrastructure. To address this, I focused my latest round of school capital allocations on rectifying long-standing inequity in school infrastructure spending, especially among Queens high schools. That’s why I’m proud to announce my allocation of more than \$30 million in Fiscal Year 2024 funding

to pay for capital projects at August Martin High School and at public schools across Queens. “

Borough President Richards’ total FY24 allocation of \$30.49 million is significantly more than what he allocated to schools in FY22 (\$11.5 million) and FY23 (\$10.7 million) combined. It also represents his largest single-year allocation in any category of investment. Overall, Borough President Richards has allocated nearly \$53 million in capital funding to Queens schools since he took office in December 2020.

Other highlights from the Borough President’s \$30.5 million FY24 allocation in-

clude:

- A combined \$8 million for auditorium upgrades across Jamaica High School in Jamaica, Queens High School for Information, Research and Technology in Far Rockaway, M.S. 72 in Rochdale, P.S. 132 in Laurelton and P.S. 171 in Astoria.
- \$1.65 million for athletic field renovations and locker room upgrades at Hillcrest High School in Jamaica Hills.
- \$1.1 million for a cafeteria cooling system, a video production room and upgrades to the computer lab at the Springfield Gardens Educational Campus in Springfield Gardens.
- \$1 million for play-

ground renovations at P.S. 118 in Hollis.

- \$1 million for locker room upgrades at John Adams High School in Ozone Park.
  - \$1 million for library renovations at P.S. 136 in St. Albans.
  - \$750,000 for a new media and graphics arts center at Richmond Hill High School in Richmond Hill.
- In keeping with his past pledge to significantly increase the number of hydroponics labs in schools across Queens, Borough President Richards also allocated a total of \$700,000 to construct new hydroponics labs across Maspeth High School in Maspeth, Jamaica Gateway

to the Sciences in Jamaica Hills, P.S. 52 in Springfield Gardens and P.S. 360 in St. Albans.

Borough President Richards was joined at the press conference by August Martin High School leadership and representatives from the New York City School Construction Authority and the United Federation of Teachers, along with other local education leaders, including the Borough President’s representative on the Panel for Educational Policy, Shirley Aubin.

Follow the Queens Borough President’s Office via @QnsBPRichards on Twitter and @QueensBPRichards on Facebook and Instagram

## QUEENS UPCOMING EVENTS



Feb 8 JCAL Thursday Night Jazz

### February 8 - 9:30pm JCAL Thursday Night Jazz

JCAL’s free Jazz series presents the legendary Ravi Coltrane. A special presentation of Thursday Night Jazz featuring Ravi Coltrane. Coltrane is a critically acclaimed Grammy™ nominated saxophonist, bandleader, and composer. In the course of a twenty plus year career, Mr. Coltrane has worked as a sideman to many, recorded noteworthy albums for himself and others and founded a prominent independent record label, RKM.

Jamaica Performing Arts Center is located at 153-10 Jamaica Avenue Jamaica, NY 11432

### Feb 10 5pm Kings of Soul at Spectrum Theater

Kings of Soul showcases the music of legendary artists Teddy Pendergrass, Marvin Gaye, Luther Vandross, and Al Green in an evening of soulful rhythms and melodies. Honoring the true “Kings” of classic soul, featured hits include “Turn Off The Lights,” “Lady Love,” “Let’s Get It On,” “Sexual Healing,”

“Here And Now,” “Let’s Stay Together,” “I’m Still In Love With You,” and more. The songs are sung by some of the top up-and-coming male crooners. Spectrum theater, 177th St & Baisley Blvd. This is a Dinner & Show event. \$65

### February 23 8pm and 10pm JCAL A Weekend of West African Dance: Black History Month Presentation

A Weekend of West African Dance: A Black History Month Presentation Featuring Kofago Dance Ensemble and FANIKE!



Feb 23 JCAL West African Dance

African Dance Troupe. A vibrant celebration of West African dance and culture at the Jamaica Performing Arts Center. This exciting event is a part of our Black History Month festivities and promises to be a weekend filled with rhythm, energy, and joy. Friday February 23rd 8:00 PM - 10:00 PM - Kofago Dance Ensemble performance. Saturday February 24th 8:00 PM - 10:00 PM - FANIKE! African Dance Troupe performance Get your tickets for an explosive performance by Kofago Dance Ensemble and FANIKE! African Dance Troupe!

Dance show celebrating West African dance.



Feb 10 Spectrum Theater

# Op-Ed: Balancing Our City's Budget



By Mayor Eric Adams

Our administration came into office with a clear mission: to protect public safety, revitalize our economy, and make all five boroughs more livable for the 8.3 million people who call New York City their home. For the last two years, we have worked every day to make our vision a reality. And the recently released Fiscal Year 2025 Preliminary Budget keeps us on track.

I am proud to report that jobs are up, crime is down, tourists are back, our streets are cleaner, and our children's test scores are better. We have accomplished all this and delivered a balanced budget for New Yorkers.

It is important for New

Yorkers to understand how we achieved this balanced budget that invests in working-class families, despite a perfect storm of COVID-19 stimulus funding drying up, tax revenue growth slowing, labor contracts that went years overdue, and an ongoing national humanitarian crisis that has brought more than 170,000 asylum seekers to our city in less than two years.

Despite a record \$7.1 billion gap, we were able to balance and stabilize our budget without laying off a single city worker, raising taxes, and with minimal disruption to services that New Yorkers rely on. This is the result of careful fiscal planning and management.

We made tough but necessary decisions like implementing a hiring freeze and a Program to Eliminate the Gap (PEG) savings program. These steps, along with an unexpectedly strong economy, and lowering asylum seeker costs helped balance the budget.

And to properly manage the asylum seeker crisis, we helped file over 27,000 applications for asylum, work authorization, and temporary protected status. We also helped more than 60 percent of migrants take the next steps in their journeys.

Our strong fiscal management also helped to make restorations that put dollars back towards public safety, public space, and young people.

We restored funding for the April Police Academy Class, which means 600 additional officers out on our streets this fall. Additionally, we restored the fifth firefighter at 20 of the city's engine companies because more firefighters on the job always helps.

We will maintain 23,000 litter baskets across the five boroughs, and continue to install the award-winning "Litter Basket of the Future," so we can keep on winning the war against rats. And we will continue to fund our Parks Opportunity Program, which keeps our public spaces clean and green while helping our neighbors find job opportunities.

And to support one of our young people, our administration restored funding for 170 community schools so that students and families can continue to get the support they need, both in and out of the classroom. In addition, for the first time ever, our city will invest new funds into and entirely pay for Summer Rising, a program that impacts 110,000 children, and had originally been funded with temporary federal stimulus dollars.

Finally, libraries across all five boroughs will maintain their current level of funding so they do not have to further reduce the library programs and services that New Yorkers of all ages love.

All of these wins are possible because of our fiscal planning and discipline that keep our city safe and clean and open the doors of opportunity for everyone.

But we must continue to be cautious.

Experts expect the economy and job markets to slow this year, and asylum seekers will continue to arrive, so we must be vigilant and remain focused on making government more efficient and spending taxpayer dollars carefully. That is why we are proud that our preliminary budget includes a near-record Rainy-Day Fund of \$8.2 billion.

Running a city of any size is never easy. And balancing the many competing needs of a city like New York requires us to think ahead and make the best decisions we can for today and tomorrow. Everything we do is about making this city safer and making it work better for working-class New Yorkers. That is what this budget delivers.



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# Home Buying in Harlem Be Prepared to Buy Now



Rev. Dr. Charles Butler

Can anyone afford to buy a home in Harlem? The new message being sent throughout the community is that it is better to rent rather than own. More luxury high-rise apartment buildings are starting to fill the Harlem landscape. The monthly rents are somewhere between \$4500 and \$6000 per month!

Harlem has transitioned from one of the most unattractive crime and drug-infested eyesores in the city into a beautiful, vibrant, multi-ethnic, and family-oriented community. This transition has been wonderful to witness.

On the one hand, this influx of new wealthier residents into Harlem has also changed our census tract designation from a low to moderate community to a middle and upper community. This census tract change indicates that long-time community

residents are being forced to move out of their own neighborhoods.

These community residents are now finding that they are on the outside looking in. They cannot compete with many prospective buyers looking to move into the community. The market purchase price of many renovated and newly constructed homes that are coming on the market greatly exceeds what they can afford to spend.

Although these new properties are being labeled as 'affordable,' they are not for many community residents, and regrettably, these opportunities are simply passing them by. Today, we must consider who can afford to live in Harlem. It does appear that Harlem, like most of New York, has become a place with style and flair, making it one of the most unique communities in the city.

However, on the other hand, this transformation has become a good thing for the community residents. New businesses have moved into the neighborhood, making shopping more convenient and accessible. There is now a better quality and variety of fresh foods and produce

available. This selection has allowed the community to prepare more nutritious and healthier meals than we could have previously provided for our families.

This is indeed most unfortunate, quite discouraging, and remains the foremost challenge confronting most prospective first-time home buyers. But have faith; all is not lost. Homeownership can still become a reality. Understand not every unit in Harlem costs a million dollars, but nothing is cheap. You must get in where you fit in!

If you want to buy, you must have the desire, dedication, and willingness to make some tough, disciplined changes in your lifestyle. Start today. Register for the Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement, Inc. (HCCI) home buyer education workshop. Create a monthly household budget. Eliminate all unnecessary spending. Establish a monthly savings goal and stick to it. Pay off your credit debt, but keep the accounts open to improve your credit score.

For more information on the home buying process, contact Rev. Dr. Charles Butler at 212 281 4887 ext. 231 or email [cbutler@hcci.org](mailto:cbutler@hcci.org).

## MTA Procurement

The MTA encourages vendors who have not done business with us to register for our bidders list using MY MTA Portal for vendors at [www.mymta.info](http://www.mymta.info). Registered vendors can search for procurement opportunities across all MTA agencies and receive invitations to bid or propose on the types of goods and services they can provide. Certified minority and women-owned businesses (M/WBE), service-disabled veteran-owned businesses (SDVOB), and disadvantaged businesses (DBE), are strongly encouraged to compete for MTA opportunities. Visit our website at <https://new.mta.info/doing-business-with-us> for detailed information and guidelines.

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HARLEM CALENDAR OF COMMUNITY EVENTS



Feb 1 Opening The Ways of Langston Hughes at Schomburg

**Feb 1st 7:30pm  
Reckoning With Our Past at Jazz at Lincoln Center**

Jazz At Lincoln Center, for Reckoning With Our Past: Conversations For Our Shared Future, moderated by Soledad O'Brien with Lonnie Bunch (Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution), and special guests! You can REGISTER FOR FREE using my customized link: <https://bit.ly/3tEZ-TLV>

**Feb 1  
Exhibition Opening:  
The Ways of Langston Hughes  
At Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture**

Harlem Renaissance poet Langston Hughes (1901 - 1967) held friendships with artists across generations and disciplines. He forged connections between creative professionals, encouraged the work of others, and helped build a larger network of Black creatives and intellectuals responding to, and shaping, the current events of the time.

One friendship began in the classroom at Atlanta University when photojournalist Griffith Davis (1923 - 1993) was a student and Hughes a visiting professor. The photographs in *The Ways of Langston Hughes: Griff Davis and Black Artists in the Making* offer an intimate look at Langston Hughes with students, writers, visual artists, and performers in different periods of their maturation. Davis's photography is complemented by archival material from the Schomburg Center's collections and letters reflecting decades of personal correspondence. Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture is located at

515 Malcolm X Boulevard New York, NY 10037

**Feb 2-3 8:00pm  
Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis performs Music of Duke Ellington**

Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton

Marsalis performing masterfully structured pieces from musical architects Duke Ellington, Jelly Roll Morton and Charles Mingus. The concert even also features the world premiere of "Usonian Structures," a new suite by award-winning jazz composer, arranger and saxophonist Andy Farber, inspired by architectural structures of the immortal architect Frank Lloyd Wright. Ticket prices \$30 up.

**Feb 4th, 8:00PM  
Afrique en Cirque at Lehman Performing Arts Center**

Afrique en Cirque is a show by Yamoussa Bangoura, inspired by daily life in Guinea. This performance shares the beauty, youth and artistry of African culture. A colorful show beyond its scenery, costumes and staging, it makes any theatre vibrate with energy and represents the strength, agility and life's joys of young Africans. The audience will see acrobats execute gravity-defying moves and human pyramids,

accompanied by the contemporary sounds of live Afro-Jazz, percussion, and kora. Welcome to the universe of Kalabanté Productions, and prepare for an unforgettable journey. Tickets can be purchased at Lehman Performing Arts Center.

**Feb 17 2:00pm  
"The Flip Side of the Coin" at Greater Hood Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church**

A Gospel Musical Play "The Flip Side of the Coin: The Brothers Speak" will be held at Greater Hood Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, 160 West 146th Street. This play is written and directed by Hazel Rosetta Smith. Tickets are \$25. For tickets call Virginia Montague 212-283-0294 or Hazel Smith at 636-320-1760.

**February 25– July 28, 2024  
The Harlem Renaissance and Transatlantic Modernism at the Met**  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art will present



Feb 24 Central Baptist Church

the groundbreaking exhibition *The Harlem Renaissance and Transatlantic Modernism*. Through some 160 Works of painting, sculpture, photography, film, and ephemera, it will explore the comprehensive and far-reaching ways in which Black artists portrayed everyday modern life in the new Black cities that took shape in the 1920s–40s in New York City's Harlem and nationwide in the early decades of the Great Migration when millions of African Americans began to move away from the segregated rural South. The first art museum survey of the subject in New York City since 1987, the exhibition will establish the Harlem Renaissance and its radically new development of the modern Black subject as central to the development of international modern art. Free with Museum admission

**Church**

Thelma Hill Performing Arts Center in association with Central Baptist Church of New York City will present its 2nd annual Black History Month Program. The event is located at 166 West 92nd Street. The event is Free to the public. The program will include three bible-themed works by choreographer Walter Rutledge, featuring dancers Amina Konate and Tevin Johnson. The works will revive Johnson's solo set to 2 Chronicles and extend the work with another selection from Hebrew 11, narrated by theater legend James Earl Jones. Two additional sections, a solo for Konate and a new duet for the pair, will also be offered.

**Feb 24 4pm  
Black History Month at Central Baptist**



Jazzmobile Feb 14



Feb 29 MET



Jazzmobile Mar 13



## Proposed Toll Rate Schedule for the Central Business District Tolling Program (CBDTP)

The **Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority (TBTA)**, doing business as MTA Bridges and Tunnels, will hold hybrid public hearings to solicit comments on the proposed toll rate schedule for the Central Business District Tolling Program (CBDTP). The hearings will be held in a hybrid format with options to participate in-person as well as virtually via Zoom's online platform and conference call feature, with a livestream available on the MTA YouTube channel.

Under the MTA Reform and Traffic Mobility Act of 2019 (the "Act"), TBTA will establish the CBDTP and collect tolls from vehicles entering the Manhattan Central Business District, an area defined by statute as south of and inclusive of 60th Street but excluding the FDR Drive, New York State Route 9A (including the Battery Park Underpass), and any surface roadway portion of the Hugh L. Carey Tunnel connecting to West Street. The purpose of the Program is to reduce traffic congestion and generate revenue to fund \$15 billion in improvements to subway, bus, and commuter rail systems under MTA's 2020-2024 Capital Plan and successor plans.

The Act established a Traffic Mobility Review Board and tasked it with issuing recommendations for a toll rate schedule within the parameters of the Act, including toll amounts and any credits, discounts, and/or exemptions. These recommendations were published on November 30, 2023. On December 6, 2023, the Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority Board voted to proceed with the administrative procedure required to establish and adopt a toll rate schedule.

Accordingly, a public comment period is underway and hybrid public hearings will be held in order for TBTA to receive feedback on the proposed toll rate schedule. The public comment period began December 27, 2023 and will continue through March 11, 2024. The proposed toll rate schedule can be viewed at: <https://new.mta.info/document/129191>. The proposal in summary includes the following:

- Passenger vehicles and passenger-type vehicles with commercial license plates would be charged a \$15 peak period E-ZPass toll for entering the CBD, no more than once per day.
- Trucks would be charged a \$24 or \$36 peak period E-ZPass toll for entering the CBD, depending on their size.
- Buses providing transit or commuter services would be exempted from the toll. Other buses would be charged a \$24 or \$36 peak period E-ZPass toll for entering the CBD, depending on their type.
- Motorcycles would be charged half the respective passenger vehicle toll, no more than once per day.
- Tolls would be charged to vehicles only as they enter the CBD – not if they remain in or leave the zone.
- Peak period toll rates would apply during the most congested times of the day – from 5am to 9pm on weekdays, and from 9am to 9pm on weekends. Toll rates would be 75% lower in the overnight period.
- A tunnel credit against a portion of the peak period CBD toll rate would be provided to vehicles with E-ZPass entering through the four tolled entries that lead directly into the CBD: the Queens-Midtown, Hugh L. Carey, Holland, and Lincoln Tunnels. No crossing credits would be in effect in the overnight period, when CBD toll rates are already 75% lower than in the peak period.
- NYC Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) taxis, green cabs, and for-hire vehicles (FHVs) would be exempted from the daily system toll on vehicles. Instead, a per-trip CBD toll would be added to each paid passenger trip fare for trips made to, from, or within the CBD at the toll rate of \$1.25 per-trip for taxis, green cabs and FHVs, and \$2.50 per-trip for FHVs on trips dispatched by a high-volume for-hire service (HVFHS).
- Specialized government vehicles would be exempted from the CBD toll (in addition to qualifying authorized emergency vehicles and qualifying vehicles transporting persons with disabilities, as required by the Act).
- Low-income vehicle owners who qualify and register with TBTA for the Low-Income Discount Plan would receive a peak period E-ZPass toll rate that is 50% less than the passenger vehicle peak period E-ZPass toll rate, on their eligible vehicle's 11th trip and trips thereafter in a calendar month.
- Generally, CBD toll rates for vehicles using fare media other than E-ZPass, commonly referred to as Tolls by Mail, would be 50% higher than that of E-ZPass customers.

Complete details of the proposed toll rate schedule can be found at <https://new.mta.info/document/129191>.

### DATES AND TIMES OF THE PUBLIC HEARINGS

#### Central Business District Tolling Program (CBDTP) Public Hearings

Thursday, February 29, 2024, at 6:00 PM

Friday, March 1, 2024, at 10:00 AM

Monday, March 4, 2024, at 10:00 AM and 6:00 PM

Hybrid public hearings will include both in-person and virtual platforms.

#### Location of the Hearings (In-Person)

The hearings will be held at MTA Headquarters, 2 Broadway, 20th Floor – William J. Ronan Board Room, New York, NY 10004.

#### Joining the Public Hearing (Virtually)

If you are registered to speak, you may join in person, online, or by phone by following these instructions:

**Join Zoom Webinar Online:** To access the Zoom webinar online, go to <https://mta.zoom.us/j/82624594335>

**Join Zoom Webinar by Telephone:** To access the Zoom webinar by telephone, please call (929) 436-2866 (local) or (833) 548-0282 (US toll free). Then enter Webinar ID 826 2459 4335, followed by the pound (#) sign.

#### Public Hearing Format

This will be a hybrid hearing format with in-person participation as well as via Zoom's online platform and conference call feature, with a livestream available on the MTA YouTube site. Those interested in speaking must register to speak at the public hearing. Each registered speaker will have two (2) minutes to speak. Public comments will be limited to a total of 240 minutes per hearing, or approximately 120 speakers. Speakers who have not already spoken at a CBDTP toll rate schedule hearing will be given priority over those who have previously spoken at a hearing. All comments will be transcribed and made part of the permanent record for these hearings.

#### Registering for the Public Hearing


To register, please go to: <https://new.mta.info/agency/bridges-and-tunnels/cbd-tolling-hearing>, or call the Public Hearing Hotline at (646) 252-6777. Telephone agents are available daily from 6 AM to 10 PM. Registration will begin one week in advance of each hearing, and will close 30 minutes following the start of each hearing.

#### To Submit Comments

You may submit comments online at <https://new.mta.info/project/CBDTP>, by e-mail to [cbdtb.feedback@mtabt.org](mailto:cbdtb.feedback@mtabt.org), or by postal mail to **Central Business District Tolling Program, 2 Broadway, 23rd Floor, New York, NY 10004**. You may also call the CBDTP comment line at 646-252-7440.

All comments must be received no later than 11:59 PM on March 11, 2024. Comments received after that date and time will not be considered.

#### Accessibility and Language Assistance Services

American Sign Language and CART Captioning Services will be available. Members of the public who are deaf or hard of hearing can use their preferred relay service or the free 711 relay service, and then ask to be connected to the Public Hearing Hotline at (646) 252-6777 to speak with an agent. 

Members of the public who do not have access to a computer or who do not have access to the Internet can listen to each of the hearings by calling the Zoom meeting at (929) 436-2866 (local) or (833) 548-0282 (US toll free). Then enter Meeting ID 826 2459 4335, followed by the pound (#) sign.

If language assistance or any other accommodations are required, please submit a request at least five (5) business days before the scheduled hearing date in one of the following ways: by e-mail to [cbdtb.feedback@mtabt.org](mailto:cbdtb.feedback@mtabt.org), by telephone by calling the Public Hearing Hotline at (646) 252-6777, or send a letter via postal mail to MTA Government & Community Relations, Attn: Central Business District Tolling Program Hearings, 2 Broadway, 17th Floor, New York, NY 10004.



# 98 Years of Celebrating Black History Nationwide

By Erin Lewenauer

The month of February kicks off with the bright splash of Black History Month, also known as African-American History Month, an annual observance originating in the United States.

Black History Month began as a way of remembering significant individuals and events in the history of the African Diaspora and is now recognized in several countries, including Canada, Ireland, and the United Kingdom. The precursor to Black History Month was Negro History Week, created in 1926 by historian Carter G. Woodson and the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. They hoped to raise awareness of African-American



contributions to civilization.

The second week of February was chosen because it aligned with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass. The primary emphasis was on encouraging the teaching of the history of Black Americans in public schools. It took awhile for these efforts to gain momentum and come to fruition. Woodson insisted that valuing and

preserving the history of cultures and traditions is essential.

Negro History Week gained popularity through the decades, with mayors across the country who endorsed it as a holiday. At the time of Woodson's death in 1950, the week had become a major part of African-American life, and progress had been made in involving more Americans in the appreciation of the

celebration.

The Black Awakening and Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s dramatically expanded consciousness and awareness around the importance of Black history and cultural contributions. Black History Month was first presented by Black educators and the Black United Students at Kent State University in February 1969. The first celebration took place one year later. Within six years, Black History Month spread across the nation and was celebrated in educational institutions, centers of Black culture, and community centers.

In 1976, President Gerald Ford recognized Black History Month during the celebration of the United States Bicentennial, stating, "Seize the opportunity

to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history." This occurred 50 years after the first celebration of Black History Week. Since then, each American president has made Black History Month proclamations and the renamed Association for the Study of African American Life and History continues to promote and share the study of Black history year-round.

New York City is one of the best places to celebrate Black History Month. There are numerous parks, museums, cultural sites, and monuments dedicated to Black inspirational leaders. There are many African-American Name-sake Parks in the city, in-

cluding Martin Luther King Triangle, Dred Scott Bird Sanctuary, Grant Park, and Elston Gene Howard Field. There are also a number of cultural sites dedicated to the African Diaspora, including the Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute, the Louis Armstrong House Museum, the Malcolm X and Dr. Betty Shabazz Memorial & Educational Center, the Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Art, the Sandy Ground Historical Society Museum, the African Burial Ground National Monument, and more. The annual celebration pays tribute to the generations of African-Americans who struggled with adversity to achieve full citizenship in American society and their enormous accomplishments.

*Photos courtesy history.com*

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# Black History Matters, Black Lives Matter, Democracy Matters

By Pat Stevenson

It is because the United States is a Democracy that people of color have had the platform to fight for and win civil rights in this country.

The NAACP was founded in 1909 by a group of white liberals and African American activists. The NAACP aimed to secure for all people the rights guaranteed in the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the United States Constitution, which promised an end to slavery, provided equal protection of the law, and the right for all men to vote. The organization's mission is to ensure the political, educational, equality of minority group citizens, and eliminate race prejudice. It was believed in the 1920s that the education of African American contributions, via the creation of Negro History Week, would raise awareness.

In the 1960s, the Civil Rights Movement, led by Dr. Martin Luther King and others, dramatically expanded consciousness and awareness. The Black Lives Matter movement began in 2013, via social media due to the acquittal of George Zimmerman in the shooting death of Trayvon Martin. Black Lives Matter gained national recognition as it was the rallying cry used in street demonstrations following the 2013 deaths of Michael Brown and Eric Garner. The Black Lives Matter movement returned to national headlines and gained international attention during the global George Floyd protest in 2020, when an estimated 15 to 26 million people worldwide participated in what was one of the largest movements in the country's history.

Slavery ended after the Civil War, which lasted from 1861 to 1865. It was in the early 1900s that Black people built communities with schools, banks, insurance companies, and other businesses they owned. These communities grew and became prosperous for a couple of decades. I believe there were at least 100 of these communities across the United States. However, around the 1920s, groups of white people began setting fires, bombing, and destroying these communities. Politicians began building highways right through them because they wanted the Black community to be reliant on them for products and services.



In the past few years, we have all heard about "Black Wall Street" in Tulsa's demise in 1921, the Rosewood Massacre in Florida in 1923, and others; however, there are many more of these communities that were destroyed. African Americans today must understand that the gains we have made must be fought for every day and that we cannot take them for granted.

I was born in Savannah, Georgia, in 1952. I witnessed water fountains, bathrooms, and movie theaters with postings "White only" and "Black only." Our civil rights leader in Savannah was Josiah Williams. My family took me to churches and community centers to participate in protests. I learned all the civil rights songs when I was about ten years old. My family participated in the marches, and my grandmother took me to the Woolworths restaurant counter when it was integrated. I went to segregated schools in my elementary and junior high years. I attended my first integrated school, Andrew Jackson High in Queens, when I moved to New York. I had many family members who have lived here all their lives.

During my working career in media, I witnessed racial exclusion of Black media. When I was a media buyer, with the job of placing ads on radio stations, I had one boss who told us, "Do not place ads on any Black radio stations." I

asked why not when many of our clients' stores were located in predominantly Black areas and were doing very well. He said, "Those stores should never have been placed in those locations." I had to write him up and left the company. Several years later, the company was out of business.

As a media director, I was told not to include any Black radio stations in purchasing advertising for a car dealer whose location was in a predominantly Black area in Chicago because they did not want to attract any more Black customers. Most people believe that "money matters." I learned in my years in advertising as a media buyer that there are many people in this country who prefer Black people not to buy their products and services. On the other side, I have placed ads for corporations who have carved out budgets specifically for ads to be placed in Black-owned media – because they do respect and appreciate their Black customers. Bottom-line, if you see an advertisement from a corporation or business in Black newspapers or radio stations, you know these corporations and companies appreciate your business.

From 2021 to 2023, we have witnessed many of the gains of the Civil Rights movement being undone as politicians engage in tactics to make it harder to vote, more difficult to vote for people of color, and even engage in outright fraud. We have seen many books that were meant to teach

Black history and about the accomplishments of African Americans and other ethnic groups taken off the shelves of schools. We are witnessing the undoing of Affirmative Action programs and African

Americans in prominent positions being challenged and ousted. We are witnessing in "real time" a group of Americans who want to take us back. More than ever, in 2024, we must all vote. We must vote for the

politicians who are committed to, believe in, and will fight for civil rights for all and Democracy. Black History Matters, Black Lives Matter, Democracy Matters!

NEW YORK STATE Office of Children and Family Services

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## Ignite Change: Seize the \$1000

### Changemaker Grant

By Larnez Kinsey,



Resource Editor

Hey, young visionaries aged 12-23, here's a call to turn your dreams into action! You've got until February 10, 2024, to grab the opportunity of a lifetime – the \$1000 Changemaker Grant is waiting for you.

In a world where change is the rhythm we need, this grant offers you a chance to compose your own melody

against violence. The application process? It's a breeze – just four questions stand between you and a grand opportunity to make a difference.

Imagine what you could do with \$1000 to fuel your vision! Whether it's a community project, an initiative, or a creative endeavor, this grant is the catalyst you've been waiting for. It's not just about the money; it's about empowering your voice, amplifying your impact, and addressing violence together.

The application is designed with you in mind – short, sweet, and to the point. We know you've got ideas brewing, and we want to help you bring them to life. This isn't just about applying for a grant; it's about taking a stand, making a

mark, and being the change you want to see.

So, why wait? Click on the link <https://paceebene.org/changemaker-grants>, dive into the application, and let your vision shine. It's not just an application; it's your ticket to becoming a Changemaker.

As you navigate the questions, remember, this is your canvas. Paint it with your dreams, your passion, and your commitment to addressing violence. The world is waiting for your unique perspective and innovative solutions.

Seize this opportunity, young changemakers, because the power to make a difference is in your hands. Apply for the \$1000 Changemaker Grant and let's create a symphony of change together!

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## FINANCIAL FOCUS® How Can You Manage Student Loan Payments?

By Tony Shaw – Financial Advisor, Edward Jones Harlem

If you have student loans, you likely received a “payment vacation” over the past few years due to legislation related to COVID-19. But if you're like millions of other borrowers, you may have recently been required to resume your payments. How will this affect your overall financial situation?

Of course, the first thing that comes to mind is the effect on your monthly cash flow. But the amount of pressure you feel will depend on your income and the size of the required payments. If these payments do represent a real challenge, you may need

to adjust your budget and spending habits as best you can. However, there might be other steps you can take to help ease the burden or possibly reduce the repayment time.

Here are a few suggestions to consider:

- Sign up for autopay. Falling behind on your student loan payments can lead to late fees, and if you were to become truly delinquent, you could face even bigger troubles, such as wage garnishment. To avoid these problems, you can enroll in autopay, in which you move money automatically from a

checking or savings account to your student loan provider. In addition to staying current on your loan, you might earn a .25 percent rate reduction, which is offered by many lenders and loan services to those who enroll in autopay.

- Refinance your loan. With a steady income, a reasonably good credit score, and a manageable number of other debts, you might be able to refinance your student loan and reduce your interest rate. This will enable more of your monthly payments to go toward the principal.

- Look for employer benefits. Some employers — typically the larger ones — offer

student loan repayment help to employees, so check with your human resources department.

- Make extra payments. If you feel strapped just making your regular student loan payments, you may not be able to make extra ones. But if you can afford to add to your payments consistently, you could pay off your loan earlier than you had thought. But just because you make an extra payment, the money doesn't necessarily go toward reducing your principal — student loan services generally apply payments first to late fees and then to accrued interest. If you pay online, you should

have an option to apply extra payments to the principal. Your loan servicer could also provide you with other ways of paying more toward principal.

- Choose a payoff strategy. If you have multiple student loans, and you can make more than the minimum payments, you may want to be strategic in how you pay off your loans. You could choose the “snowball” method by getting rid of the smallest loans first — a technique that can give you feelings of momentum and satisfaction. Or you could take the “avalanche” approach by first going after the loans with the highest in-

terest rates. Either route could save you more money in the long run.

It can certainly be challenging to deal with student loan debt. But with patience and diligence, and by exploring all your repayment options, you may be able to help yourself make progress toward putting these loans to rest.

*This article was written by Edward Jones for use by Tony Shaw, your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Tony Shaw, Edward Jones Member SIPC, can be reached at (212) 531-8731 or via email [tony.shaw@edwardjones.com](mailto:tony.shaw@edwardjones.com).*

# Mayor Adams Lays Out Vision In State Of The City Address

Mayor Eric Adams outlined a future-focused vision for working-class New Yorkers in his third State of the City address, delivered at Hostos Community College's Hostos Center for the Arts & Culture in the Bronx last month.

After driving crime down and pushing job growth to historic highs — all while managing a once-in-a-generation asylum seeker humanitarian crisis — Mayor Adams outlined ambitious plans to continue to deliver for New York City across his priority areas that have been a part of his vision for New York City since day one:

- Making the country's safest big city even safer.
- Building a forward-looking economy that works for working-class New Yorkers.

- Making the city more livable for all New Yorkers.

“When we came into office two years ago, we had a clear vision: protect public safety, rebuild our economy, and make this city more livable,” said Mayor Adams. “Two years later, thanks to the hard work of this administration and millions of dedicated New Yorkers, the state of our city is strong — far stronger than it was when we came into office.

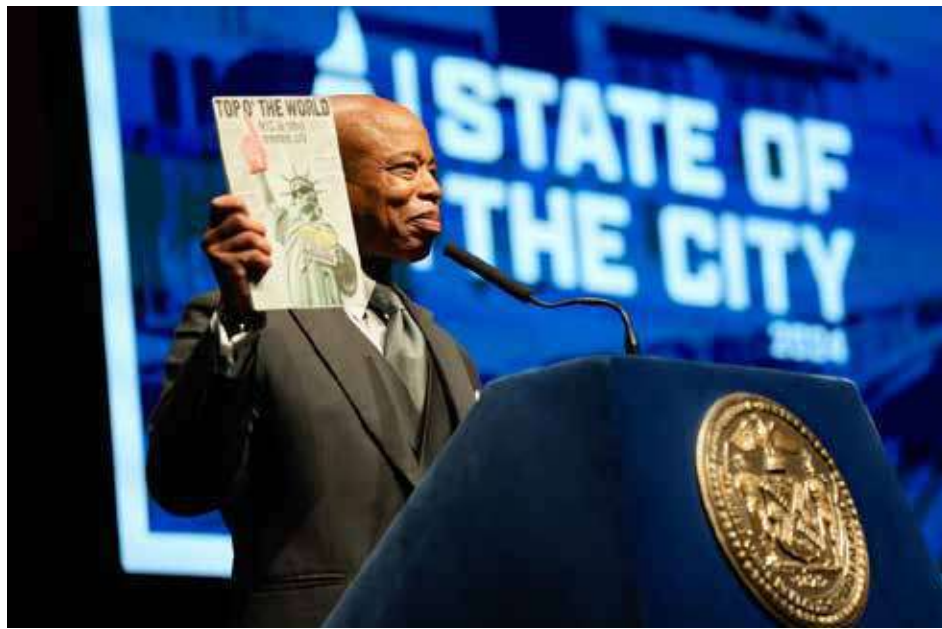
New York City is becoming a place where everyone has the opportunity to make it, and the future-focused vision we laid out today will build on all that we have delivered for New Yorkers by investing in public safety, public spaces, and the working people who make New York City the greatest city in the world. While our city

is still full of questions, history shows we can answer them and progress together when we work as one. The last two years have been a time of renewal and resetting — now, let's make the future together.”

## **Making the Safest Big City in the Country Even Safer**

New York City is the safest big city in the country. Mayor Adams entered City Hall with a mission to reduce crime and keep New Yorkers safe, and he has delivered on that commitment. Under Mayor Adams and New York City Police Department (NYPD) Commissioner Edward A. Caban's leadership, overall crime is down in New York City. Additionally, the NYPD has taken more than 14,000 illegal guns off New York City streets since the start of the Adams administration. Crime has fallen as a result of strong support for law enforcement as well as proactive strategies deployed by the administration, including plans to crack down on auto thefts, combat retail thefts, and launch a \$500 million blueprint to keep communities safe from gun violence.

Additionally, Mayor Adams continued to advocate for legislation in Albany to give New York City the authority to shut down illegal smoke shops and stop their proliferation across the city. Finally, recognizing the danger that social media poses to young people and mental health, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Commissioner Dr. Ashwin Vasan today issued a Health Commissioner's Advisory identifying unfettered access to and use of social media as a



public health hazard, just as past U.S. surgeons general have done with tobacco and firearms.

## **Building a Forward-Looking Economy That Works for Working-Class New Yorkers**

Mayor Adams has steered New York City through a new chapter of its economic recovery, officially regaining all of the private-sector jobs the city lost during the COVID-19 pandemic more than a year ahead of schedule. More than 270,000 private sector jobs and 44,000 businesses — the majority of which are small businesses — have been created since Mayor Adams took office. Through strategic investments and advocacy, the Adams administration reduced the out-of-pocket cost of subsidized child care, or per-child copayment, for a family earning \$55,000 a year from \$55 per week in 2022 to \$4.80 per week today. Led by New York City Office of Labor Relations Commissioner Renee Champion, the Adams administration has also delivered better wages and benefits to hundreds

of thousands of municipal workers, including 93 percent of the unionized workforce and 100 percent of the uniformed workforce, while setting a first-of-its-kind minimum pay rate for app-based restaurant delivery workers.

Additionally, building on the work the administration has done to create an economy that leaves no New Yorkers behind, the city will release “Women Forward NYC,” an approximately \$40 million action plan to make New York City a better place for women to live, work, and thrive. The plan will include funding to build pipelines toward higher wages in in-demand career pathways, improve financial literacy and access to financial resources, and dismantle barriers to work and education. Women Forward NYC will also address sexual, chronic, and reproductive health; reduce Black and Brown maternal mortality rates; improve access to comprehensive medical treatment; and enhance mental health education and outreach. Lastly, the plan will increase initiatives that reduce violence

toward women, particularly LGBTQ+ women, non-binary New Yorkers, and women of color; expand interventions to prevent domestic violence and support survivors; and provide a continuum of services for low-income families to keep them in their homes or accelerate their exit from shelter and back into their communities.

Finally, building on Mayor Adams' announcement earlier this week that the city will invest \$18 million to purchase and forgive more than \$2 billion in medical debt held by approximately 500,000 working-class New Yorkers, the city will embed additional financial counselors in New York City hospitals — helping New Yorkers in need understand the options available to them to avoid medical debt in the first place and stop the vicious cycle of excessive medical debt before it begins.

Additionally, to help New Yorkers stay in their homes, the Adams administration will create a Tenant Protection Cabinet, bringing together more than a dozen agencies and mayoral

offices focused on supporting tenants. Like the administration's Cabinet for Older New Yorkers, the Tenant Protection Cabinet will allow city agencies to seek coordination and efficiency across departments, leverage resources, and shape current and future services to protect tenants better and keep New Yorkers in their homes. To support New Yorkers at risk of being displaced from their homes in all five boroughs, the administration will also expand the Homeowner Help Desk, which will reach an estimated 160,000 New Yorkers through outreach and events, one-on-one assistance, and stabilization. Finally, for the first time in 15 years, the administration will reopen the NYCHA Section 8 voucher waitlist later this year, aiming to issue 1,000 vouchers per month.

Starting this school year, the city will bring New York City Reads' phonics-based methods and the science of reading to every early childhood and elementary school student in the city's public schools, building on the initial rollout completed last year to half of the city's school districts. In her State of the State Address earlier this month, New York Governor Kathy Hochul announced that the state will follow in New York City's footsteps and will bring a similar approach to literacy across New York State.

Finally, Mayor Adams will continue to advocate for four years of mayoral accountability over New York City public schools, which Governor Hochul announced her support for in both her State of the State and Executive Budget addresses.

# Understanding Eczema Triggers: How to Identify and Manage Them

By DeMario Easley

**E**czema, a skin condition affecting millions worldwide, can be challenging to manage. While it can be caused by a combination of genetic and environmental factors, identifying and managing specific triggers can significantly alleviate symptoms and improve your skin's health. Let's uncover the common eczema triggers and learn how to effectively manage them, offering you relief and comfort on your eczema journey.

## Allergens: The Invisible Culprits

Allergens like pollen, dust mites, pet dander, and mold can be invisible adversaries for eczema sufferers. Learn how to identify these common triggers,



use allergen-proof covers on pillows and mattresses, and consider air purifiers to minimize exposure.

## Irritants: Everyday Agitators

Everyday products like

soaps, detergents, fragrances, and even certain fabrics can irritate sensitive skin and exacerbate eczema symptoms. Discover which products to avoid or opt for gentle, fragrance-free alter-

natives. When doing laundry, choose hypoallergenic detergents to protect your skin.

## Climate and Weather: Nature's Influence

Climate plays a significant role in eczema flare-ups. Extreme temperatures, humidity levels, and cold, dry air can all trigger skin reactions. Learn how to adapt your skincare routine to different seasons and use humidifiers to maintain optimal indoor humidity levels.

Stress is a common eczema trigger, and managing it is crucial for symptom control. Explore stress-reduction techniques like meditation, deep breathing exercises, yoga, or mindfulness to calm both your mind and your skin.

## Food Allergies: Navigating Dietary Choices

While not a primary trigger for everyone, food allergies can worsen eczema symptoms in some individuals. Work with a healthcare provider to identify potential food triggers and develop a suitable diet plan.

## Skin Irritation: The Scratching Dilemma

It's a vicious cycle: eczema itches, you scratch, and scratching worsens the condition. Discover strategies to prevent the itch-scratch cycle, such as using moisturizers, wearing soft clothing, and keeping nails short to minimize skin damage.

## Skincare Products: Choose Wisely

The skincare products you use can either soothe or irritate your eczema-prone skin. Find out which ingredients to look for (like

ceramides and hyaluronic acid) and which ones to avoid (like fragrances and alcohol) in your skincare products.

Eczema management involves a multi-faceted approach, and understanding your specific triggers is crucial to achieving relief.

By identifying and effectively managing these triggers, whether they are allergens, irritants, climate-related, stress-induced, or related to your skincare routine, you can take control of your eczema and enjoy healthier, more comfortable skin.

Remember, you're not alone on this journey, and with the proper knowledge and strategies, you can manage your eczema and improve your quality of life.

*Photo Courtesy NNPA*

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## 9 Signs Your Immune System Is In Trouble



By Karen Heslop

There's a lot of advice about boosting your immune system, but how do you even know when it's in trouble? One way people usually identify that their immune system might not be at its best is that they get sick a lot. Unfortunately, more signs can be easier to miss. By watching for what's going on with your body, you'll know when to take action.

### 1. You're Tired All The Time

This one is significant if you're doing everything you can to get a good night's rest. If you're not well, your immune system has to put in extra work to fight off the infection. When your system is not at its best, this can take longer and more energy. The result is chronic fatigue you don't know how to eliminate. It will be more pronounced if you're dealing with chronic inflammation.

### 2. Your Hands Are Always Cold

If your immune system is struggling, you're likely to have inflammation throughout your body. When this swelling affects the blood vessels, the extremities, such as your hands and ears, don't get the needed blood flow.

### 3. You Have Headaches

Inflammation in the blood vessels can lead to vasculitis, which may result in chronic headaches. You should pay particular attention to these if they aren't caused by anything.

### 4. You Have Unexplained Rashes

Believe it or not, your skin is an important part of your immune system. It acts as a barrier to germs, so when it's not functioning well, you're likely to see irritation and breaks in the skin. This is most obvious as a recurring rash of unknown origin.

### 5. You Get Random Fevers

A fever is a natural reaction when your immune system is fighting an infection. However, if you keep getting high fevers or your temperature is consistently higher than normal, it could be a sign that your immune system is working too hard.

### 6. You Get White Patches On Your Skin

Sometimes, your immune system works in ways it shouldn't, and so it attacks healthy cells. If this happens to your skin cells, you'll see white patches all over your body. Your hair may also fall out if your system attacks hair cells.

### 7. You Have Digestive Issues

Another area that is often affected by a malfunctioning immune system is the stomach. If you find that you're visiting the bathroom too often or not often enough, then you should pay attention. Your immune system might be attacking your stomach's lining.

### 8. Your Joints Are Aching

Unless you have a condition that causes aching joints or you've been more physically active than usual, there shouldn't be chronic joint pain. If this is happening to you, it's a sign that the lining of your joints is inflamed, and your immune system might be the cause.

### 9. Your Wounds Take Forever To Heal

The immune system is integral to how quickly and how well wounds heal. Four different aspects are involved in the healing process, so a disruption in any of them can cause delays.

### How To Take Care Of Your Immune System

As you might expect, a robust immune system is built on taking care of yourself overall. If you're experiencing any of these signs, talk to your doctor as soon as possible.



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REV. WENDELL G. LANCASTER, PASTOR

# Urbanology: Carter Woodson--The Father of Black History



By W.A. Rogers

I am still surprised that a number of Black people, young and old, are not aware of the history of how Black History Month. I publish this article every year to make sure that as many Africans born in America and the Caribbean get to know its origins.

I was raised by my grandparents, Elizabeth and Joseph Woodson, in Williamston, South Carolina, until it was time to start school and every summer until I was about thirteen. My grandfather died in 1952, two years after his famous cousin Dr. Carter G. Woodson, known as the Father of Black History.

Carter G. Woodson was born in New Canton, Virginia, on December 19, 1875. His parents, James Woodson and Eliza Riddle Woodson had seven children. Carter was their fourth child. Young Carter worked as a sharecropper and a miner to help his family. As a result, he did not begin high school until his

late teens. He was a brilliant student and completed a four-year course of study in less than two years.

Woodson attended Berea College in Kentucky for about two years, leaving college to work for the United States in the Philippines as an education superintendent. After returning to the United States, he continued his studies at the University of Chicago, where he earned a bachelor's and master's degree. Woodson became the second African American to receive a Ph.D. from Harvard University (after W.E.B. Du Bois). Woodson became dedicated to the field of African American history.

In 1915, Woodson re-

turned to Chicago to participate in a national celebration of the 50th anniversary of emancipation. Exhibits highlighting the achievements of Black people since the abolition of slavery inspired Woodson to do more to celebrate Black history and heritage. Before leaving Chicago, he helped form the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH). A year later, in 1916, Woodson developed the Journal of Negro History.

In February 1924, Dr. Woodson began his campaign to create a week to celebrate Negro History. Dr. Woodson chose the third week in February in recognition of the birthdays of

Abraham Lincoln on February 12 and Frederick Douglass on February 14. Douglass was born into slavery, so his actual birthdate was unknown, but he chose the 14th as his birthday.

Negro History Week was officially launched in 1926. During the rise of the civil rights movement, younger members of ASNLH (which was changed to the Association for the Study of African American History) urged the organization to shift to a month-long celebration of Black history. In 1976 on the 50th anniversary of the first Negro History Week, the Association officially shifted to Black History Month.

Dr. Woodson, in his fa-

mous book "The Miseducation of the Negro" writes, "If you control a man's thinking, you do not have to worry about his actions. You do not have to tell him not to stand here or go yonder. He will find his proper place and will stay in it."

My mom, Anna Woodson-Rogers, often told me about her dad reading to her about Black history from the Negro History Bulletin, a mail-order bulletin published by his cousin Dr. Carter G. Woodson. Black history was not taught in schools at that time. Knowledge is power; perhaps that is why some would like to keep it out of schools to this day.

## Answers to Puzzle on page 17



## HERBS ARE NATURE'S MEDICINE

### PART I - Remedies for Intestinal Discomforts

By Zakiyyah

Whether you struggle with an occasional bout of acid reflux, the pains of IBS, or gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD)—all can cause extreme discomfort. The symptoms worsen if you consume the wrong foods/beverages. Coffee, alcohol, spicy/fatty foods, carbonated drinks, and chocolate are all common offenders.

Below are a few herbs/tea remedies.

**SLIPPERY ELM**, which has extremely high mucilage and nutritive value, makes a great tea for acid reflux. Mucilage is a gel-like substance produced by many herbs that forms a coating over irritated and inflamed tissues, helping to protect against damage from stomach acid.

**GINGER** has anti-inflam-

matory properties that help ease intestinal discomforts. This warming tea also reduces gastric contractions, which can help prevent acid flowing back into your esophagus.

**FENNEL**, like Ginger, reduces gastric contractions, though it is traditionally used to ease gassiness and bloating, which can make a soothing addition to your tea. A few Fennel seeds can also be chewed to relieve the bad breath that often accompanies reflux.

**LICORICE** has the benefits of soothing indigestion, heartburn, and acid reflux. Chewing a bit of the root increases the production of mucus to reduce stomach acidity, helps with nausea, and it also has anti-inflammatory properties.

To learn how to make your own formulas, send an email to inquire about upcoming herb courses launching in March 2024.

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*This information is to help balance your body's natural healing energies and is not intended as a diagnosis, treatment, or cure. Check with your doctor before changing your health regimen. Email: theherbalist1750@gmail.com, call 347-407-4312. ENERGETIC( NO-PAIN) PRANIC FACE LIFT: <https://tinyurl.com/y3aldpzv>; blog: [www.herbsarenaturesmedicine.blogspot.com](http://www.herbsarenaturesmedicine.blogspot.com). View my upcoming book: [booklaunch.io/Zakiyyah/theenergeticsofherbs](http://booklaunch.io/Zakiyyah/theenergeticsofherbs).*



# GAMES

# HARLEM COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS

See answers on page 16 and 18

**CROSSWORD**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13					14			15			
16					17			18			
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		4			1		
	3			9	4		8

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## THEME: SUPER BOWL

### ACROSS

- Desert bloomers
- Request for tailor
- Paul Bunyan's companion
- Delivered by plane
- Boiling emotion
- Match play result?
- Like the North vs. the South war
- Bag, à Paris
- Nymph of lakes and springs
- \*Team that never made it to Super Bowl
- \*Last year's Super Bowl winner
- \*Safety value
- Disfigure
- \*Birthplace of NFL
- Roofed colonnade
- Dr. Seuss' Yertle
- Auctioneer's final word
- Sea eagles
- Popular winter boot brand

- Largest ethnic group in Rwanda
- User's destination
- Like Twiggy's skirt
- Former anesthetic
- Not all
- Death notice
- Like r in American English
- Luau souvenirs
- Opposite of WSW
- Vatican's head
- Cattle prod
- \*AFC's top seed
- \*Host state of this year's Super Bowl
- Like allergy spray
- Second person of be
- Pleasant odor
- Fervent
- Grazing ground
- "When pigs fly!"
- Modeling material
- \*NFL Honors' announcement
- Trento's Council of \_\_\_\_\_

### DOWN

- Chlorofluorocarbon, abbr.
- Alight, past tense
- Boat mooring spot, e.g.
- Short for betwixt
- Wife's parents
- Serpentarium noise
- Time period
- Hajj destination
- Hillside, in Scotland
- "Dream on!" (2 words)
- Constricting snakes
- \*\_\_\_\_\_ zone
- Bad blood
- Post-it user
- Not miss
- Street opening
- \*Half-time show entertainer
- Compass point
- In spite of the fact, arch.
- Loads from lodes
- \*CBS announcer and former QB
- Native American group
- Famous Bolshevik

- \*Like the Super Bowl players
- Sonny & Cher, e.g.
- Ditto
- Neutral shade
- With mature appearance
- Bamboozle
- Learned one
- Religious song
- Defier
- Not top-shelf
- On the ocean
- Deviat
- Type of tide
- Peace symbol
- End of grace
- \*49ers' conference
- Short for one time around
- Short for Arthur

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**GO TO PAGE 19**

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# “Legacy: A Black Physician Reckons with Racism in Medicine” by Uché Blackstock, MD

REVIEW by Terri Schlichenmeyer,  
Harlem Community News contributor

Need a doctor who can address your needs? In the new book, “Legacy” by Uché Blackstock, MD, the author reckons with racism in medicine, presenting a feel-good story of her personal journey.

Her career choice seemed like the most natural thing in the world.

Uché Blackstock and her twin sister, Oni, practically grew up in a hospital, doing homework in a staff room while their physician-mother made her rounds. The girls got a front-row peek into what it was like to be a Black female doctor, and because of their mother’s influence, it never entered their minds to choose another career.

That inspiration lingered: after their mother died young of cancer, Blackstock chose to work as an ER doctor, caring for her Brooklyn and Bronx neighbors like her mother did. Blackstock knew the history: Black people had long been objects for experimentation, without painkillers and without their permission. Early in the last century, Black midwives were forbidden from practicing because of a testing matter. A document called the Flexner Report led to low numbers of Black doctors for nearly a century.

She also knew the statistics: Black patients are less likely to get pain medications than white patients. Black mothers are at a higher risk than white



author photo  
credit: Diane Zhao

mothers for maternal death, miscarriage, and problems at delivery. Half of all medical treatment in the U.S. today happens in an ER, and many of those patients are Black, poor, and without a safety net.

Knowing these things and working under those facts took its toll.

When she was small, Blackstock played with her mother’s leather medical bag and its treasures. She dreamed of carrying it to her own patients someday, but her job, meant to help people, left her exhausted, frustrated, and emotionally tangled.

It was time to try something else.

This year, if you’re average, you’ll spend roughly fifteen minutes face-to-face with your doctor at an appointment. You’ll come prepared, and so will your physician; bring “Legacy,” and you’ll come with alarming stats, although very little of it’s new.

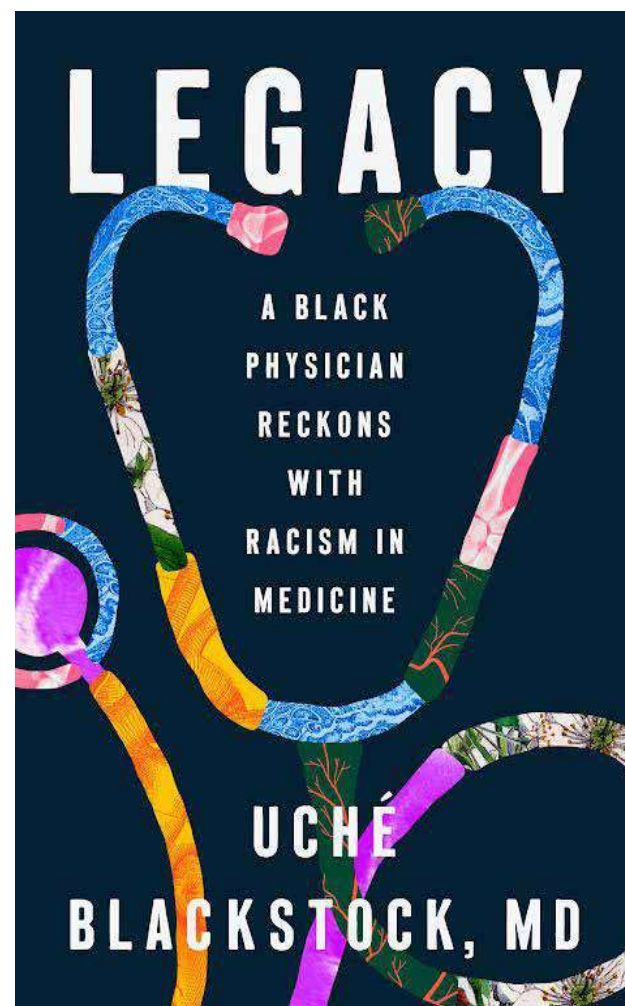
Indeed, the news lately has been full of stories of Black patients and sub-par care. Author Uché Blackstock underscores every bit of that news with personal experiences to support the facts, scattered inside a dual biography of her and her mother. Readers will enjoy the stories of

Blackstock women becoming physicians, and you’ll be dismayed at the generational and historical roadblocks they overcame. Read these triumphs, but don’t lose sight of the other important thing: remember, as Blackstock often urges, that advocating for oneself or a loved one is key to maintaining health and surviving.

Readers concerned about their well-being will be glad they read this book. Biography fans will love it for different reasons. Either way, getting what you want from “Legacy” is easy, and you’ll feel quite well about it.

“Legacy: A Black Physician Reckons with Racism in Medicine” by Uché Blackstock, MD

c.2024, Viking \$28.00  
304 pages



## SUDOKU ANSWERS

4	5	9	1	7	2	8	3	6
6	7	3	9	4	8	5	1	2
2	1	8	5	3	6	9	4	7
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7	8	1	2	6	5	3	9	4
9	2	4	3	8	1	6	7	5
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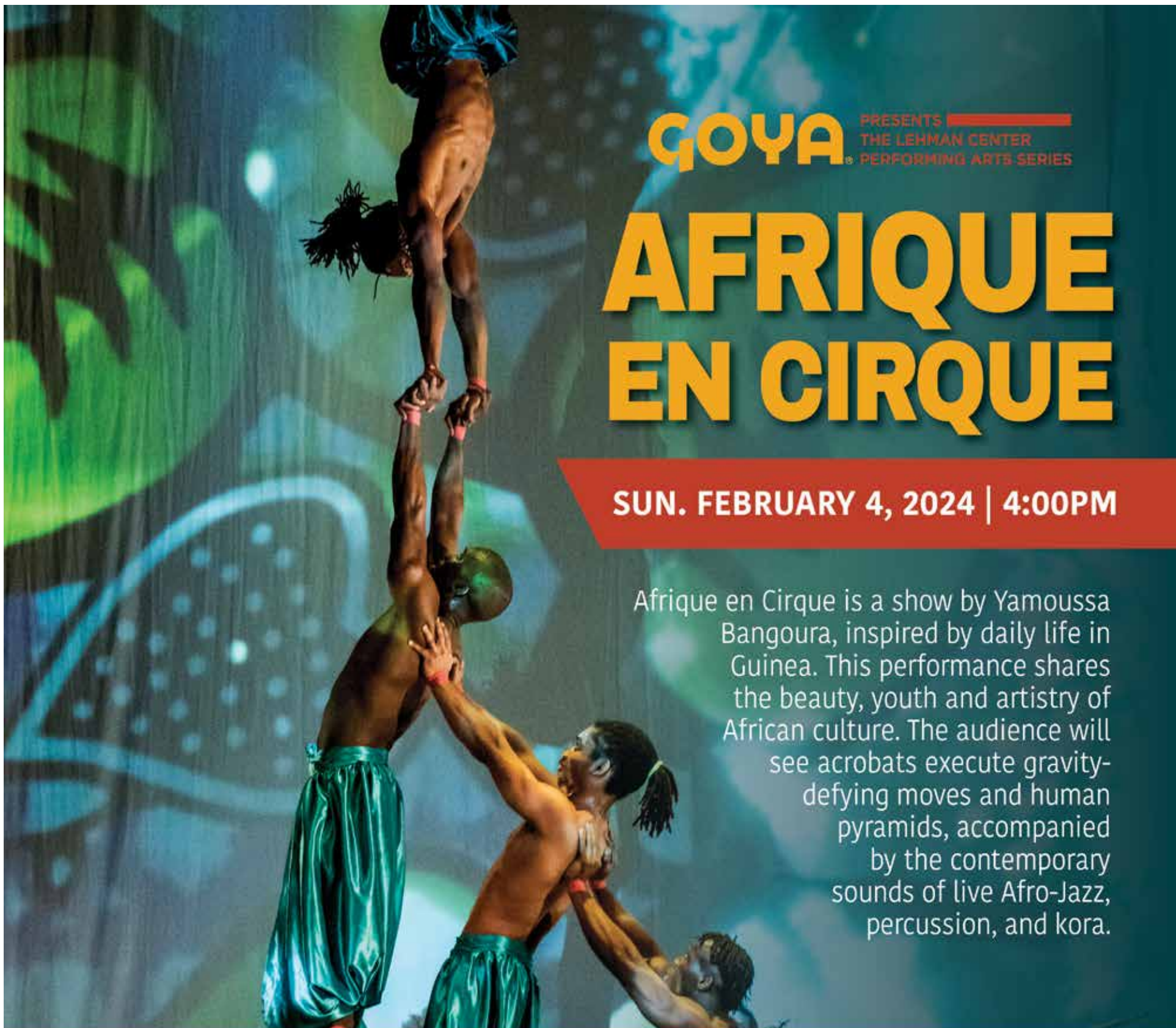
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