



KEYNOTE
SPEAKER

AMICIA RAMSEY
Multimedia Reporter
at WISH-TV
MCJ Scholarship
Recipient



Diamonds
**DISCOVERIES
& DESTINY**
MILWAUKEE COMMUNITY JOURNAL
47TH ANNIVERSARY



INTRODUCING

THE 2023
**DR. TERENCE N.
THOMAS
SCHOLARSHIP
RECIPIENTS**



Sheriff Denita Ball
Milwaukee County



Diane Beckley Milner
Alzheimer's Assoc.



Marci Boucher
Independence First



Janette Braverman
Leaders Leaving Legacies



Chytania Brown
Employ Milwaukee



Jackie Q. Carter
City of Milwaukee



Cnty. Exec. David Crowley
Milwaukee County



John Daniels III
MKE Fellows



Jasmine Deacon
PEARLS for Teen Girls



Natasha Dotson
MKE Fatherhood Initiative



Karen Dotson Owens
All of Us/MCW



Lynne Dixon-Speller
Edessa Scholl of Fashion



Jim Gaillard
Ezekiel CDC/Project Hope



Edna Hudson-Kinzey
MKE Natl Blk Nurses Assoc.



Joan Johnson
Milwaukee Public Library



Lynnea Katz-Petted
Revitalize Milwaukee



Tony Kearney
Northcott Neigh. House



Michele Le Bourgeois
MKE Health Services, Inc.



Chris Harris Morse
North Avenue Market



James Mosley
The Alma Center



Terry Murphy
Artworks for Milwaukee



Gerard Randall
Republican Natl. Con.



Sharon Robinson
Retired-City of Milwaukee



**MKE Mayor Cavalier
Johnson/TNT schol. rec.**



Stacia Thompson, EdD
Sherman Phoenix



Sandra Underwood, PhD
Healthy Eating/Active Living



Bridget Whitaker
Safe&Sound



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO US!

Milwaukee Community Journal Celebrates 47 years, the Dr. Thomas Fund 32 years!



PATRICIA O'FLYNN PATTILLO
MCJ FOUNDER/PUBLISHER

Press? We must SURVIVE and THRIVE.

For 47 years, we've witnessed the achievements in the community and the city in general. We have not only covered the changes, we've been part of the change! We've told the stories; shown the photos! We've chronicled our past, interpreted the present, and predicted how our futures can be more productive.

People are the legacy of the MCJ, of this we are MOST proud. Ultimately, the Community Journal—is about recording, sharing and inspiring YOUR STORIES, while building our community.

Celebrate with us these legacy honorees for 2023. They are our leaders, advocates, board members sitting at decision-making tables.

They are guiding thoughts, elections, and every system that makes our lives better, healthier, safer, more desirable.

We applaud their achievements and the role they continue to play in building Milwaukee!

It is incumbent upon us to give them support and encouragement as they continue to give generously of their time, talent and inspiration.

We've worked years to help them get to these ladders of success. Each 2023 honoree is a diamond: tested, cut, shaped and now mounted. And like the diamonds they are, they SHINE, GLOW AND GROW IN

We celebrate our 47th year as a small businesses! Ninety percent of small businesses last less than five years. So yes, 47 is a BIG number, thanks to you!

That knowledge has driven me, our staff, and the late Robert Thomas, co-founder, who passed this April, since September 1, 1976. Mr. Thomas was an entrepreneur at heart.

Our passion for economic independence and the intellectual, financial, spiritual and socialization of our families and readers was a shared mission.

His analytical and social justice prowess was respected. Through education, information, statistical data, letter-writing campaigns, even protesting, advertisers who ignored 'Quid pro Quo.' were subject to economic inquiry. 'We buy from you; you buy from us.' We support each other! This strategy was effective in the beginning and it must be revisited again.

Black Milwaukee retained a viable Black Press, through reciprocal respect and reciprocal participation. Imagine Milwaukee without a Black



VALUE as we acknowledge and salute them.

They provide the rungs on which the Dr. Thomas Scholars can 'step-up.' On Sunday, August 6, 2023, at the Italian Conference Center, 631 E. Chicago Street, Diamonds and Scholars will meet, greet, and be applauded.

The Scholars are from Milwaukee area schools. Ten have proven themselves college-worthy; and through the generosity of Sponsors like the MKE Fellows; Brewers Community Foundation, Northwest Funeral Chapel and Associated Bank, along with personal and individual donations, a total of \$20,000 will be awarded to the students just before their new Fall semester.

Meet them all within this Special Edition so beautifully crafted by MCJ Editor, Thomas Mitchell, with profiles written by Kathy Gaillard. Or, watch the videos produced by Contributor Jamila Benson.

The scholars were determined by the Dr. Thomas Scholarship Coordinator Mike Mullis, with input from the Dr. Thomas Board of Directors: Larry Waters, Speech Thomas, Jahi Thomas, and Rewa Durham of Northwest Funeral Chapel, to be the "best of the best."

Ninety eight percent of the Dr. Thomas scholars graduate college and 85 percent of them continue on to Post graduate status. The TNT

scholarship alumni include such stalwarts as Milwaukee Mayor Cavalier Johnson, and recipients who now work in many departments within the city, county and the state.

The alumni are professionally anchoring television shows and serving at-risk detainees who need legal support.

They are filling prescriptions and/or meeting social and psychological needs in hospitals and other institutions. They are prescribing medications and performing surgeries; and they are pastoring the flock as good shepherds.

We are proud of the Dr. Thomas grads. Every job description has been accomplished by one or more of them: engineers, lawyers, teachers, social workers, international business specialists. Milwaukee can be very proud as we congratulate every past honoree, donor, corporate-giver and those we shall need in the future to keep this ascent up the ladder of success going and growing.

We thank you Milwaukee. Keep reading us in PRINT, TWICE WEEKLY and Online via : www.milwaukeecommunityjournal.com; Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Learn more about the Dr. Thomas Fund, VISIT: www.drtntscholarship.org.

We are here to serve you and we promise to do all we can to continue

to 'SEED SUCCESS.' Let us know what you think. You matter! WE ARE BECAUSE YOU ARE!

Thank you MILWAUKEE.

HONOREE PROMENADE..... PROMPT 1:00 P.M with Video Profile

THE SILENT AUCTION
Bicycles by The WHITE BROTHERS
Ladies Caftans
Men's Golf Shirts
Television
Gift Cards,
Crystal candle sticks
Crystal wine glasses
Black art...including one renowned Charles Bibbs piece; plus local artist RAS' Legacy original.
Ladies jewelry. And more.

PLUS DOOR PRIZES and..... Swag from "All of Us" Research Milwaukee/MCW

THE DIAMOND RING TOSS.
The Highest (consecutive) TOTAL number with five tries...goes away with the prize.

PHOTOS BY YVONNE KEMP
PHOTOS BY KIM ROBINSON
Passed non/alcoholic Mimosa's as you Meet and Greet.....

ENROLL or learn more about "All of Us" Research

ENJOY: CHRISTOPHER'S PROJECTalso... TONY NEAL

MILWAUKEE COMMUNITY JOURNAL
WEEKEND EDITION

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drtntscholarshipfund.org.
"Milwaukee Black Legacy Families," retail site.

INTRODUCTION OF DIAMOND HONOREES

Atty. Truscenialyn Brooks

Attorney Truscenialyn Brooks returns to the Annual Jazz Brunch as a former 'Beacon of Light' recipient. A model student of the Dr. Terence N. Thomas Memorial Scholarship Fund, she epitomizes its motto: "We seed success."

'Successful' is an appropriate descriptor for Attorney Brooks, who typifies the majority of the Fund's scholar-alumni. Presently, Brooks is 'of counsel' at Stowell and Friedman, Ltd., a law firm specializing in civil rights. She is also a small business owner, operating a travel concierge company, 'We Stay Away.'

She's also a prolific community thought leader committed to "paying it forward."

Brooks joined the Dr. Thomas Fund family in 2002 as a graduate of Messmer High School. During the time of Brooks' relationship with Scholarship Fund as a scholarship recipient, she was awarded an annual stipend of \$1,000, thus receiving \$4,000 during her four year undergraduate career.

After graduating, she took a year off before applying for law school. When Brooks reapplied for the scholarship, the Education Committee enthusiastically approved her request and she began attending the University of Wisconsin Law School in Madison.

When she began law school in 2008, The Ernestine O'Bee Award provided a total three-year commitment of \$6,000 in stipends. Attorney



Brooks graduated with her J.D. in May 2011.

"One of the inspiring things about the Dr. Thomas Fund is the requirement that we come back and share what we are doing," she said. "I knew I had to study. The stipend helped me with books, travel, and sometimes monthly bills.

But most of all, it affirmed that people believed in me and supported what I was trying to accomplish. I wanted to 'show up' each year."

Brooks has enjoyed much success in her legal career. She helped secure meaningful access to the courts by litigating an inmate's right to scribe materials. She also represented an inmate who the state denied necessary mental health care.

In other cases, she helped enforce a Japanese civil judgment awarded to a foreign rape victim against a U.S. soldier and helped secure multi-million dollar settlements for employees

who were discriminated against by their employer.

However, Brooks' most rewarding representation was securing the release of a man who had served nearly 20 years in prison for a crime he didn't commit by successfully arguing that his previous lawyer was ineffective.

Brooks' notable success have earned her numerous accolades. In 2022, she concluded a four-year appointment to the Governor's Judicial Selection Advisory Committee. In 2019, she was honored as an up and coming lawyer by the Wisconsin Law Journal, and received Marian University's Distinguished Alumni Award. In 2018, she was included in a '40 Under 40' list by a business publication titled, InBusiness.

In 2017, she was inducted as a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation, and in 2016, she became a Fellow of the Wisconsin Law Foundation. In 2016, she was also named to the 'Top 40 Under 40' by the National Black Lawyers and as a 'Beacon of Light' by the Milwaukee Community Journal.

In 2013, Attorney Brooks was listed on the Lawyers of Color Inaugural Hotlist, and also received the Western District of Wisconsin Bar Association's 'Pro Bono Award' in 2012.

When she isn't litigating, she enjoys traveling with her husband, Attorney Sir Williams, and playing with their four dogs.



As the Milwaukee Community Journal celebrates its 47th Anniversary, we are reminded of the enduring brilliance of the African American community and the important role of this newspaper in our lives.

Through years of dedication, the Community Journal has been a beacon of truth, empowerment, and unity, standing the test of time and providing a platform for black voices to resonate across generations.

This year's theme, "Diamonds, Discoveries, and Destiny," captures the essence of our collective journey—a journey marked by the unyielding spirit of diamonds

'FIRST PERSON'-DIAMONDS OF DESTINY: A JOURNEY OF RESILIENCE

By Amicia Ramsey, multimedia reporter for WISH-TV • **Keynote Speaker** • MCJ scholarship recipient

under immense pressure, eventually emerging stronger and more radiant.

I, Amicia Ramsey, am humbled and honored to be this year's keynote speaker, it's a testament to the unwavering commitment to the pursuit of one's dreams.

My journey from a young teen to a seasoned TV broadcaster and current Vice President of the Indianapolis Association of Black Journalists has not been without its trials and tribulations.

Like a diamond in the rough, I underwent moments of intense pressure, experiencing job losses and taking leaps of faith into the unknown in pursuit of my dreams. But as diamonds endure the forces of nature to reveal their true brilliance, so did I overcome adversity and embrace each challenge as an opportunity for growth.

The Community Journal, in its enduring presence, has been an instrumental force in supporting individuals like me through its scholarship program and dedication to showcasing leaders, activists, educators, and business owners who uplift and build our

community. This newspaper has kept us informed and connected throughout the decades, reminding us of the vital role black media outlets play in shaping our collective narrative.

As we prepare to gather and honor the pioneers and visionaries who have shaped our community's destiny, we must also celebrate the resilience of this newspaper and its unwavering commitment to our shared growth. The Milwaukee Community Journal has been the nurturing soil that allowed countless diamonds to emerge, contributing their brilliance to the world.

The upcoming event marks a special moment in my own journey, where I have come full circle, returning to the Community Journal as a keynote speaker after years of personal and professional development. My story, though unique, mirrors the collective spirit of our community—a story of determination, courage, and the pursuit of excellence. I am a living testament to the power of believing in our youth, and the impact that a community's support can have when nurturing dreams.

As we gear up to celebrate this anniversary and honor those who make a difference, let us remember that the journey towards destiny is not a solitary one.

It is a shared expedition, where the collective efforts of the community, along with the steady support of the Milwaukee Community Journal, empower us to rise above challenges and reach new heights.

Let us cherish and never take for granted the significance of black media outlets like the Community Journal, as it continues to serve as the backbone of our community's progress.

With each article published, scholarship granted, and voice amplified, the legacy of the Journal strengthens and illuminates the path for future generations.

So, as we embark on this year's celebration, let us remember the beauty of diamonds formed under pressure—the brilliance of our community's resolve and the collective destiny that awaits us.

Together, we shall continue to shine brightly as a diamond and inspire others to seek their own path towards greatness.

"The Milwaukee Community Journal has been the nurturing soil that allowed countless diamonds to emerge, contributing their brilliance to the world."

ANNIVERSARY EVENT EMCEE

Lauren Fields-Bowers

Lauren Fields-Bowers is an accomplished communications professional with over a decade of proposal writing experience.

Currently, Lauren serves as a Senior Proposal and Presentation Manager at Beacon Hill Staffing Group. She plays a pivotal role in managing and overseeing the proposal writing process while collaborating with sales leadership.

Her extensive knowledge and expertise ensure that the company's proposals are not only competitive but also compelling and, contribute to the acquisition of new business for the company.

Prior to joining Beacon Hill, Lauren served as a Senior Proposal Manager at ManpowerGroup for over eight years.

This role equipped her with a deep understanding of proposal management, further honing her skills within this domain.

With over fifteen years of experience in various communication-related roles, she has demonstrated exceptional proficiency in this field.

Beyond her professional responsibilities, Lauren is committed to promoting diversity initiatives within her organization. Her commitment is evident through her involvement as one of the founding Co-Chairs for Beacon Hill Staffing Group's Mosaic Employee Resource Network for Professionals of Color.

Her passion for fostering inclusivity and creating an equitable work environment reflects her dedication to cultivating a diverse and dynamic workforce.

Lauren holds a Master of Science degree in Communications from Illinois State University.

Additionally, she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Broadcast Journalism from Hampton University in Hampton, Virginia.

She is also a proud alumna and six-time recipient of the prestigious Dr. Terence N. Thomas Scholarship Award. This scholarship was integral to her collegiate success.

In her leisure time, Lauren enjoys spending quality time with her husband, James, and their two daughters, Karis (4) and Khloe (1). She also has a keen interest in traveling, embracing new experiences, and broadening her horizons.



"Prior to joining Beacon Hill, Lauren served as a Senior Proposal Manager at ManpowerGroup for over eight years. This role equipped her with a deep understanding of proposal management, further honing her skills within this domain."

ENTERTAINMENT

Christopher's Project



Once again, attendees of this year's 47th annual Milwaukee Community Journal anniversary event honoring 'Diamonds, Discoveries, and Destiny' will hear the jazzy, energetic sounds of a local musical 'gem,' 'Christopher Project,' led by saxophonist Christopher Pipkins.

Since the Community Journal started its anniversary events—especially its jazz brunches—'Christopher's Project' has been the signature musical highlight of the event.

'Christopher's Project' has performed at many of Milwaukee's premiere summertime music festivals: Riversplash, Rainbow Summer, Bastille Days, and the biggest of them all, Summerfest.

A smooth, melodic infusion of upbeat keyboards, drum, bass and sax, 'Christopher's Project' performs a wide variety of styles for listeners, young and old. This funky jazz ensemble will definitely get the crowd at the MCJ event on their feet!

Since its inception, the three-time 'Showtime at the Apollo' winning group has put together quite an impressive resume.

The group has opened for national and legendary acts as diverse as The Temptations, George Benson, David Sandborn, The Supremes and Jennifer Holiday.

'Christopher's Project' has also performed at corporate functions for notable local corporations such as Northwestern Mutual, Johnson Wax, Quad Graphics, and Spectrum.

The group's best asset is its ability to perform a wide variety of music for a wide age group, from classics like, "It Had To Be You," "Unforgettable," "Wonderful Tonight," to "Black Cow," "Celebration," and "I'll Take You There."



Christopher Pipkins

THE HONOREES • OUR COMMUNITY DIAMONDS!

DIANE BECKLEY MILNER

Alzheimer's disease and dementia can be heartbreaking and difficult for individuals and their families. Brilliant minds are lost to it. Families are fractured because of it. And many caregivers are exhausted from it.

While researchers scramble to discover cures for this disease, the Alzheimer's Association- Wisconsin Chapter offers a myriad of free resources and programs to educate, help, and lend support. Spearheading many of those efforts in our community is the Alzheimer's Association's not-so-secret weapon: Diane Beckley Milner, Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Milner's title does not do justice to the critical role she plays with Alzheimer's Association. She is a staple and a diamond in our community—especially Milwaukee's African American community.

With a resume brimming with a long career working with and around senior citizens and Alzheimer's, Milner is the perfect candidate to educate and rally Milwaukee's community to seek available help, information, and resources related to aging, dementia, and Alzheimer's disease.

She is not only dedicated to working with and advocating for senior citizens, but her life experiences also fuel her passion and compassion to help make life better for all citizens in Milwaukee.

"Alzheimer's disease is not a nor-



mal part of aging. It is also not a disease that just impacts older adults. People in the prime of their lives can also develop mild cognitive impairment (MCI) and early-onset dementia.

"We really need to dispel that misconception. I have an affinity for older adults because I have always been surrounded by them. They were my village. My parents fostered children for several years before they adopted me when they were in their forties. Their circle of friends were older, so I grew up around older adults," said Milner.

Inspired by her husband to enhance her career as an employee with the Alzheimer's Association, Milner is determined to make life easier not only for those individuals living with Alzheimer's, but she also recognizes the importance of service delivery to caregivers.

"If caregivers do not take care of themselves, they will not be around to help take care of their loved ones," she said.

BECKUM-STAPLETON LITTLE LEAGUE

In 1964 Rev. E. B. Philips (deceased), pastor of Greater Galilee Baptist Church asked James Beckum, a former Negro League player, to help get the neighborhood youth out of the alleys and streets, and into an organized youth program.

Starting with four teams sponsored by four central city churches, the Beckum Stapleton Little League has grown to more than 20

teams, and over the years has served more than 25,000 boys and girls.

Beckum Stapleton Little League's mission is to provide safe, challenging recreational baseball experiences for Milwaukee central city youth.

The League is supported by thousands of volunteer hours from coaches, board members, umpires, scorekeepers, and concession workers. About 50 percent of the parents with children involved in the League volunteer in some capacity.

Together they continue to make a positive difference in the lives of youth as is evidenced by the League's alumni, which includes local political figures, professionals, business leaders, and National Basketball Association (NBA) players.

Girls and boys, 4 to 16 years old, participate in two games and at least one practice a week for eight weeks throughout May and June. The League also competes in the International Little League tournament, with the ultimate goal of one day playing in the Little League World Series in Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

One long-time volunteer, Jim Brey, who serves as the League's president and has been involved since 1986, personally understands the benefits of youth being involved in the League.

"First and foremost, the League gets kids off the streets and provides them with a safe place. It teaches skills such as teamwork, conflict resolution, and respect for the game. These life skills prepare youth for the future."

In addition to team and leadership skills, the League provides opportunities for youth to travel outside their neighborhoods when they go into various communities to compete.



James Beckum

DR. CHARLES ROGERS

As a behavioral scientist and master certified health education specialist (MCHES®), Dr. Charles R. Rogers currently serves as an Associate Professor of Epidemiology & Social Sciences in the Institute for Health & Equity at the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW).

He is also an MCW Cancer Center Research Scholar Endowed Chair and the inaugural Associate Director of Community Outreach & Engagement for MCW's Cancer Center.

In addition to being the Founding Director of his Men's Health Inequities Research Lab since 2014, Dr. Rogers is also an Associate Member of the University of Michigan-Mixed Methods Program.

His career has permitted him to study, partner with, and/or be a vociferous advocate for various underserved and socially vulnerable groups including community-dwelling older adult, African American, homeless, Somali, adolescent and young adult, Hispanic, rural, Indigenous, and sexual minority populations.

Dr. Rogers is committed to dismantling systems of oppression to ensure equitable health for all.

His transdisciplinary training in applied mathematics & statistics, health education, public health administration & policy, community-based participatory research, and cancer-related health disparities, provide a unique perspective for translating research findings into prevention methods among government agencies, policy makers, private health care organizations, and communities.

Dr. Rogers' capabilities and potential have been recognized locally and nationally by the receipt of several competitive scholarships, grant awards, and fellowships aimed at strengthening his knowledge and skills for a life-long career in health equity research.



SHERMAN PHOENIX

Since its founding in 2018, Sherman Phoenix has become a place of pride, promise, and fulfilled dreams. Thanks to community, faith, and business leaders coming together and listening to residents in the aftermath of a civil uprising, Sherman Phoenix is serving the community and helping more than 29 small businesses succeed.

In 2022 Dr. Stacia Thompson was named Executive Director of Sherman Phoenix Foundation and she could not be prouder or more committed to the growth of this entrepreneurial hub and marketplace. In addition to running the Foundation, Thompson oversees the daily operations of the facility, coordinates workshops, and events.

"Sherman Phoenix is a national model. We support our tenants by providing wraparound services to help them succeed. We share funding opportunities with them, produce a newsletter to engage them and advertise their events and wares, and support them however we can," said Thompson. Currently, Sherman Phoenix has three levels.

All three levels include businesses and community spaces. And, as of December 2022 there are no vacancies, pointing to the success of this collective.

Unique to Sherman Phoenix is its Phoenix Rising Entrepreneur Program which provides information and resources on technical assistance, mentoring, skills training, pro-



Dr. Stacia Thompson

fessional development, and grant funding.

"We recently celebrated our four-year anniversary. Sherman Phoenix is a space where entrepreneurial dreams can come to fruition. It is part of the city's entrepreneurial ecosystem. People come here looking to us to help them grow their businesses so hiring more employees will help us meet those needs," said Thompson.

Thompson's advice to would-be entrepreneurs is that no idea should ever go without exploring it.

"Make sure you connect with someone like Sherman Phoenix's Rising Entrepreneur Program to ensure you receive the proper support and information.

"Sometimes people have valid ideas, but they either fail or don't proceed because they didn't ask the right questions or know about the resources available to them.

"If caregivers do not take care of themselves, they will not be around to help take care of their loved ones"

—Diane Beckley Milner

"Dr. Rogers is committed to dismantling systems of oppression to ensure equitable health for all."

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—Dr. Stacia Thompson

Honoree profiles continued on page 7

SALUTATIONS • SALUTATIONS • SALUTATIONS

Office of the Mayor
CITY OF MILWAUKEE



Proclamation



Whereas: The City of Milwaukee proudly joins family, friends, and community members in celebrating the 47th annual Dr. Terence N. Thomas Scholarship Brunch on Sunday, August 6, 2023; and,

WHEREAS, Dr. Terence N. Thomas Scholarship was started in 1992 by Mrs. Patricia O'Flynn Pattillo after the death of her son Dr. Terence N. Thomas to help low-income students and students of color in Milwaukee pursue higher education; and,

WHEREAS, Dr. Terence N. Thomas Scholarship is unique as it offers a continuing stipend each year until the recipient graduates as long as they maintain a 3.0 GPA, the scholarship continues past undergraduate degrees and supports students all the way through doctorate programs; and,

WHEREAS, Dr. Terence N. Thomas Scholarship recipients are highly successful with 98% graduating from college and 85% continuing on for post-graduate studies, some notable past recipients include Dr. Dominique Weathers and Milwaukee Mayor Cavalier Johnson; and,

WHEREAS, Dr. Terence N. Thomas Scholarship hosts a brunch each year to help fund the scholarship with this year's focus being the "Year of Positivity"; and,

WHEREAS, The City of Milwaukee commends Dr. Terence N. Thomas Scholarship for its dedicated service, recognizes its outstanding contributions to the community, and wishes it many more years of success; and,

NOW, THEREFORE, I, CAVALIER JOHNSON, Mayor of the City of Milwaukee, do hereby proclaim Sunday, August 6, 2023, to be

DR. TERENCE N. THOMAS SCHOLARSHIP BRUNCH DAY

throughout the City of Milwaukee.

CAVALIER JOHNSON
Mayor



Executive Proclamation

WHEREAS, the Milwaukee Community Journal is the largest circulated minority newspaper in the County of Milwaukee and, since 1976, has been the largest African-American newspaper in the State of Wisconsin. The mission of the Milwaukee Community Journal is to be the official journal for Milwaukee's diverse black community; and

WHEREAS, the Milwaukee Community Journal aims to highlight individuals from Milwaukee County who have made significant contributions to community using their services, talents, or resources, bestowing the title "Community Diamond" onto these individuals; and

WHEREAS, the Milwaukee Community Journal and the Dr. Terence N. Thomas Scholarship Fund gathered to celebrate the 47th Annual Scholarship Brunch on August 6, 2023 alongside many of Milwaukee's Community Diamonds; and

WHEREAS, with support from the Milwaukee Community Journal, the Dr. Thomas Scholarship Fund has awarded over one million dollars in scholarships to students who excel academically, including ten students who will receive \$20,000 in college scholarships this year; and

WHEREAS, sponsors and donors to this fund have helped distribute more than \$1 million in scholarships since 1992, helping countless young people across Milwaukee County receive their education and truly putting into action the meaning of the term "community"; now, therefore

I, DAVID CROWLEY, County Executive of Milwaukee County, on August 6, 2023, do hereby acknowledge and commend

The Milwaukee Community Journal
and
47th Annual Dr. Terence N. Thomas Scholarship

for their many contributions to and their dedication to the Milwaukee County community in the past, present, and in the years to come.

David Crowley
Milwaukee County Executive

State of Wisconsin



KNOW YOU BY THESE PRESENTS:

Natasha Dotson

WHEREAS, Natasha Dotson is being honored at the 47th Annual Dr. Terence Thomas Scholarship Brunch for receiving the Dr. Terence N. Thomas Memorial Scholarship, an award given to extraordinary Milwaukee youth, who strive for success in all facets of their life, never settling for less and always working to reach their full potential; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Terence N. Thomas, who had a passion for both education and medicine, achieved his goal of becoming a Physician, specializing in Obstetrics and Gynecology, was raised to be a man of his community, committed to its residents, and invested in their success; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Terence N. Thomas, passed away unexpectedly at the age of 29, had the Dr. Terence N. Thomas Memorial Scholarship Fund created in honor of his legacy, to ensure that his desire to help his community would live on, has uplifted and supported students in their pursuit of higher education; and

WHEREAS, The Dr. Terence N. Thomas Memorial Scholarship Fund, which has been recognized by The Milwaukee Community Journal for the impact it's had on the community, has awarded over \$1 Million to low-income students and students of color, helping to reduce financial barriers and fuel future dreams; and

WHEREAS, Natasha Dotson will join notable past recipients and exceptional community leaders to include Milwaukee Mayor Cavalier Johnson, Great Impressions Print & Graphics owner Carolyn Walker, and Dr. Dominique Weathers; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, on behalf of the Wisconsin Senate, by the motion of Senator Lena C. Taylor, and the State of Wisconsin, hereby congratulates Natasha Dotson, for her perseverance, commitment to academic excellence, and selection for the Dr. Terence N. Thomas Memorial Scholarship award.

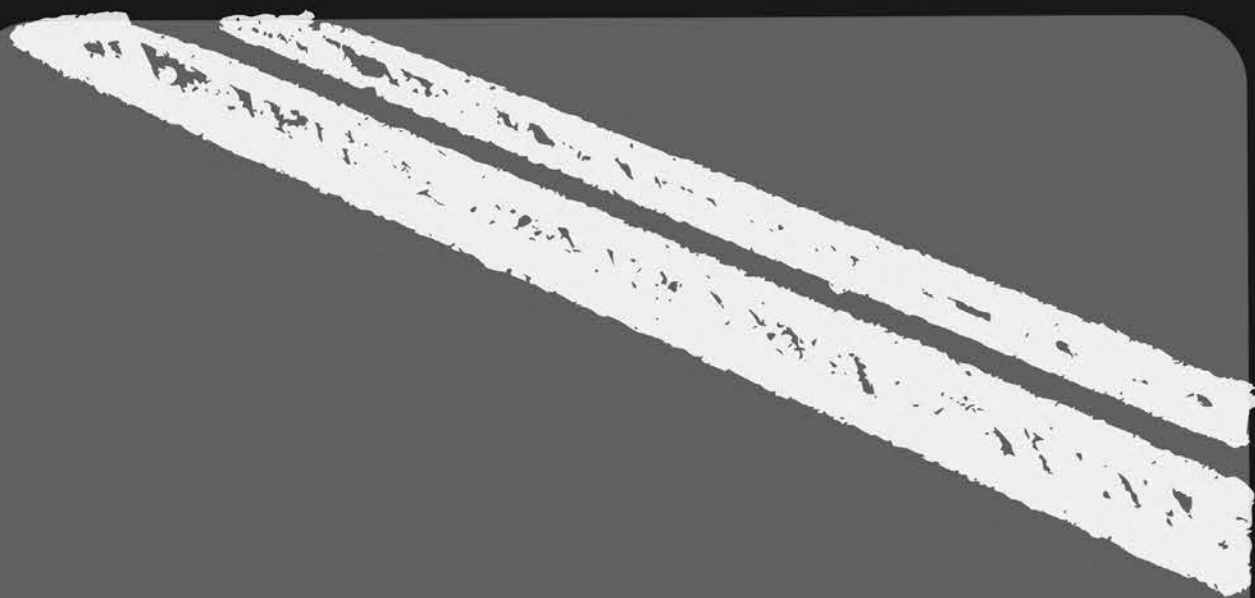
LENA C. TAYLOR
Wisconsin State Senator, 4th Senate District

August 6, 2023
DATE

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GERARD RANDALL

From attending Dunbar High School with actor “Mr. T,” to growing up on Southside Chicago surrounded by history makers like gospel musician Thomas Dorsey and Dr. Margaret Burroughs, founder of the DuSable Museum, to attending seminary to become a Jesuit priest, Gerard Randall is a fascinating trailblazer and somewhat of a conundrum.

His latest claim to fame is being one of the key individuals responsible for bringing the 2024 Republican National Convention (RNC) to Milwaukee—an event that is anticipated to have a \$275 million regional economic impact and, simultaneously, put Milwaukee on the national and international stage.

And while wooing the RNC was a monumental feat, what’s even more interesting is that Randall is an African American and a resolute Republican.

“There are two people that I grew up admiring who happened to be Republicans—one was (deceased) Senator Everett McKinley Dirksen (R-Illinois), for his role in marshaling the two-thirds votes needed to pass the 1964 Civil Rights Bill.

The other was (deceased) Senator Ed Brooke (R-Massachusetts, 1967-1973), who was the lone Black Republican to serve in the Senate since Reconstruction.

“While Black Republicans are not perceived as the norm, many people do not realize that most Blacks were Republican—even in Wisconsin—until the tide shifted under President Franklin D. Roosevelt.



Currently serving as Vice Chair of the Republican State Party and the Secretary of the Host Committee for the RNC, Randall and Peggy Williams-Smith, President and CEO of Visit Milwaukee, created and presented the bid package to host the RNC.

After the initial presentation which included 10 cities, Milwaukee was selected as one of four cities to compete for the RNC.

“We have a lot to do between now and 2024, but we will get there. We’ve got great partnerships like Northwestern Mutual, who has hosted every RNC meeting to date.

Northwestern Mutual’s CEO, John Schlifske, is rallying the corporate community and Mayor Cavalier Johnson is garnering political support,” Randall said enthusiastically.

Randall is busy touting the merits of the convention, pursuing supporters, and working to ensure that Milwaukee is a diamond, sparkling brightly and boldly to the nation and, indeed, the world.

HEALTHY EATING AND ACTIVE LIVING

Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL) is an initiative founded by Sandra Millon Underwood, PhD, that has gained momentum and is flourishing in our community, thanks to its dedicated members and committed organizations. HEAL’s goal is simple: to educate people about the positive benefits of eating healthy, nutritious meals and finding the time and ways to intentionally be more active.



Sandra Millon Underwood

The group’s flexibility and ability to pivot to an online format during the covid-19 pandemic helped it gain even more momentum.

During the almost two-year pandemic, HEAL members met virtually—twice a week—touching bases with one another, encouraging each other, and watching ‘live’ food demonstrations, courtesy of Chef Marvin Jones, who is known for cooking tasty food—without salt—but still packed with flavor.

“Our project was challenged by the pandemic, but we faced those challenges and were able to expand our work and reach broader audiences by delivering pandemic-related supplies such as facial masks, sanitizer, and tissues. Initially HEAL provided education related to healthy living and active living. We wanted to incorporate healthy eating into lifestyles and prevent diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, cancer and heart disease.

“As we sheltered in place, we were not able to go out into the community, but since so much of our work focuses on education, we used virtual media to continue to interact with and educate the community, including educating and responding to covid-19 mandates and concerns. It’s amazing what we have been able to do using Zoom and Facebook to continue to engage with our community,” said Dr. Underwood.

Now that shelter in place mandates have expired, HEAL has started taking its education initiatives ‘on the road’ again. The group works with nursing homes, community centers, and senior citizen organizations. This is especially significant to Milwaukee’s senior citizen population because many of them receive Stockboxes. A Stockbox is a box of healthy foods that Hunger Task Force delivers to low-income seniors free of charge.

“While Black Republicans are not perceived as the norm, many people do not realize that most Blacks were Republican—even in Wisconsin—until the tide shifted under President Franklin D. Roosevelt.”
—Gerard Randall

“Our project was challenged by the pandemic, but we faced those challenges and were able to expand our work and reach broader audiences by delivering pandemic-related supplies such as facial masks, sanitizer, and tissues.”
—Sandra Millon

“Our project was challenged by the pandemic, but we faced those challenges and were able to expand our work and reach broader audiences by delivering pandemic-related supplies such as facial masks, sanitizer, and tissues.”
—Sandra Millon Underwood

“I love helping people become their best selves, and helping them find their place in the world.”
—Chyntania Brown

SAFE & SOUND

More than 25 years ago Safe & Sound was founded under the premise that achieving safe neighborhoods involves residents, youth, and law enforcement working together. Safe & Sound is preparing to celebrate its Jubilee Anniversary this September.

“We’re not the experts in any one area but when all players are involved, we really can achieve a safe community. Sometimes when we think of creating a safer Milwaukee, we assume it takes a big organization to get the job done. What I find is that it is really a matter of neighbors individually and collectively feeling empowered to be the change they want to see.

“At Safe & Sound, we host many ‘front porch’ meetings where we talk with residents about getting involved, becoming mentors, attending crime meetings, or starting a neighborhood watch. I believe it takes a creative effort to become a city where there are not so many violent crimes. We must change the climate of having so many fatalities and reckless driving incidents. It takes more engagement from every resident. We are not there yet, but we are making headway,” said Bridget Whitaker, Executive Director.

While Safe & Sound offers a number of initiatives and resources aimed at fostering safer neighborhoods, one of its more popular initiatives is Barber-shop Monday, where youth 12-18 years of age meet at different locations throughout the city for intergenerational conversations about gun violence, bullying and drug prevention. The youth receive free haircuts at each event as an incentive to attend. According to Whitaker, they usually have been 20-25 youth at each event.

Whitaker is hopeful about Milwaukee’s future and remains undeterred by some of the negativity heard too frequently in mainstream media. “I try to be thoughtful and focused on the great work that is happening across our community.

Sometimes we lean in too much on the negative issues and stories. I am so proud to be part of Safe & Sound, an organization that values and recognizes that partnerships are the key ingredient to safe neighborhoods.



Bridget Whitaker

is that it is really a matter of neighbors individually and collectively feeling empowered to be the change they want to see.

CHYNTANIA BROWN

Life has come full circle for Chyntania Brown who in 2020 became the first African American female to be appointed President and CEO of Employ Milwaukee, Inc., an organization she worked at on two different occasions.

Brown began her career as a parole agent followed by advancement into numerous senior and executive leadership roles in workforce development, including 18 years at Employ Milwaukee, which was previously known as both the Private Industry Council (PIC) and Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board (MAWIB).

Prior to rejoining Employ Milwaukee in 2020, she was the Administrator of the Division of Employment and Training at the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) under two gubernatorial administrations.

As president and CEO of Employ Milwaukee, Brown is responsible for overseeing the administration of federal, state, county, city and philanthropic funds and creating effective programs that ensure alignment between the skills demanded by a changing economy and those offered by the region’s labor force.

Brown has the degrees and professional experience to meet and exceed those responsibilities, but she also has a not-to-secret advantage and



gift—a servant attitude.

“This is my purpose and I know that I am capable of doing it. I was born to be a servant. I love serving, starting out with the Department of Corrections. Instead of sending people to jail, I wanted to be on the prevention end.

“That’s where I found my niche. I love helping people become their best selves, and helping them find their place in the world,” she said.

Brown also believes that Employ Milwaukee must become more ‘outward facing’ and she is committed to doing just that with new initiatives and activities.

Milwaukee can be assured that Employ Milwaukee, under Brown’s capable, servant leadership, is doing its part to help make Milwaukee shine even brighter.

REVITALIZE MILWAUKEE

When Lynnea Katz-Petted left a corporate job, she wanted to do something more meaningful. Apparently she found her niche in 2005 when she took the reins of a small nonprofit called Rebuilding Together, a volunteer organization that repaired about four homes a year. Her charge was to double the number of homes the organization was repairing annually.

Working from home for five years along with a part-time contractor, that organization has now rebranded itself as Revitalize Milwaukee, has 22 employees, a 6,000-square foot office/warehouse space, and repairs between 600 and 800 homes a year.

“When I started working here, it became obvious that the community needed more help. I was able to utilize some of the skills and connections from corporate to take this organization to the next level,” said Katz-Petted.

Revitalize Milwaukee is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization whose goal is to reduce social, economic, and environmental disparities by providing FREE home repairs throughout Milwaukee and Waukesha counties.

Revitalize Milwaukee is the largest provider of home repairs to eligible homeowners in Southeast Wisconsin and the only one that provides them for free. Keeping existing homeowners in their homes helps stabilize neighborhoods and the tax base paid to the city.

“Revitalize Milwaukee provides opportunities to change people’s lives in a way that allows them to live their best lives. There is so much judgement and racism in our community and I just want people to know that all people—from all



Lynnea Katz-Petted

walks of life—are integral to our community. I want to let residents know that they are not alone and they have someone here to help them,” said Katz-Petted.

To help fund its program, Revitalize Milwaukee hosts three fundraising events a year. Among them are an annual golf outing, which will be held this year on July 12 and its Block Build, where residents and volunteers repair 30 homes in 36 hours.

“During our Block Build, we identify sponsors for each of the homes to do repairs, get permits and we rehab the neighborhood, which changes its trajectory. This event is always held in August and this year it will occur on August 18 and 19,” said Katz-Petted.

The organization also hosts a gala at the Wisconsin Club every October, which is a celebratory event known for the incredible food that is served.

During the pandemic, Katz-Petted was proud of how Revitalize Milwaukee staff rose to the occasion to serve residents, never shutting its doors.

MICHELE LEBOURGEOIS

Michele LeBourgeois, Chief Operating Officer at Milwaukee Health Services Inc. (MHSI), is a self-proclaimed overachiever. In addition to earning undergraduate degrees in Healthcare Administration/Management and Communications, she has also earned three master’s degrees—in Business Administration, Public Administration, and Human Resources Management.

Born on an Army base, LeBourgeois’ father brought her to Milwaukee to live with her grandmother. After attending Milwaukee public schools, she went on to earn her first undergraduate degree at Concordia University.

Initially LeBourgeois planned to pursue a career in nursing. After enlisting in the Army reserves where she served for six years, for a time she was stationed at Milwaukee’s Veteran Affairs Hospital.

LeBourgeois continued her education and ultimately landed at Milwaukee Health Services, Inc. (MHSI), as the organization’s Chief Operating Officer, a position she has held for 6 years.

MHSI is an independent, not for profit Federally Qualified Health Center with a mission of providing accessible, quality primary and related health care services to Milwaukee residents, with continuing emphasis on medicare underserved families and individuals. MHSI, since 1989, has been providing medical, dental, podiatry, and behavioral healthcare, in addition to a limited number of specialty services.

With experience serving low-income populations, MHSI is committed to removing barriers and improving health outcomes to promote quality of life and reduce disparities among racial and ethnic communities.

“Working in my community is fulfilling. I like making things better for people and working to ensure that our patients receive quality services, good customer care and are treated like anyone else, no matter their economic status or race.

“I actually get to see the positive outcomes of the work we do at MHSI. The people who come to our facility are not strangers; they are our neighbors and community residents. We know them and they know us,” said LeBourgeois.



COUNTY EXECUTIVE DAVID CROWLEY

David Crowley is the youngest person to be elected County Executive and the first elected African American to serve in that position. From all accounts, he’s got the compassion, leadership, tenacity and vision to make a positive difference.

Growing up in Milwaukee’s 53206 zip code—the city’s most disparate area in terms of education, health, unemployment and crime—County Executive Crowley knows firsthand of those perils. His family was evicted three times, they moved a lot so he attended several different schools, and he lived with relatives who had mental illness and drug addictions. Thankfully, those difficulties served to make him better, not bitter, largely because he had opportunities to experience another side of Milwaukee that gave him hope and offered him a way out.

County Executive Crowley credits a youth organization—Urban Underground—for helping him escape a less than desirable environment to become one of the most powerful elected officials in the county.

Because of Urban Underground and other organizations, the County Executive said that he was given the opportunity to venture outside of Milwaukee to places like Madison and Lake Geneva, which showed him other possibilities. In addition to Urban Underground, County Executive Crowley was also involved with AmeriCorps and was a teen coordinator for Children’s Outing Association (now called COA).

County Executive Crowley said that while it is difficult to touch on one thing in particular, one accomplishment that is near and dear to him is his ability to address housing insecurity.

“Milwaukee County’s investment in the Housing First Program means a lot. We’ve been able to double down on that for two consecutive years and now Milwaukee County has the lowest homeless population per capita in the entire nation. I want to make sure that our communities have access to affordable housing. We are also investing in rehabbing foreclosed properties and building homes. That has to be at the top of the list of my greatest achievements,” said County Executive Crowley.

“There is an old saying by Confucius, ‘People often say that motivation doesn’t last. Well, neither does bathing, that’s why we recommend it daily.’ We are talking about improving outcomes after generations of disparities. We must motivate ourselves daily. First, self-care is key. We have to take care of ourselves in order to be in this work for the long haul. It is important to understand that there will be some hard days and some beautiful days, but we need people to be involved and motivated daily.



JACKIE Q. CARTER

Growing up in Milwaukee, Jackie Q. Carter was primarily raised by her maternal grandmother and credits her for the sacrifices she made to raise her and her siblings. Now, the first African American director of the City of Milwaukee Port, Carter acknowledges how much those sacrifices positively impacted her life.

“My grandmother introduced us to possibilities and made sure we were exposed to various options and people. For example, money was always tight so when my Spanish class planned a trip to Mexico, I didn’t even mention it to my grandmother. Somehow she found out about the trip and made a way for me to go. She raised eight children of her own, but she also sacrificed to raise me and my two siblings.

“I learned from her—she had a revolving door, with cousins, relatives and friends coming through. Growing up, we didn’t have a lot but there were people in my family and our community who nurtured the spark they saw in me,” Carter said proudly.

Not sure of a career path, Carter spent time working as a teen mentor at Rosalie Manor and for a time entertained the idea of becoming a teacher. A staff member noticed how nurturing she was and created a position for her to become Mentoring Coordinator where she helped develop and launch the nonprofit’s



school-based program. Carter admits that, as a first-generation college graduate, she struggled during her first year of college until her then mentor introduced her to college graduates who helped her successfully matriculate through school.

In addition to working for nonprofit organizations for more than 20 years prior to her appointment as Port Director, Carter was the finance and administration officer for Port Milwaukee where she oversaw business operations, including financial, human resource and administrative operations. She is grateful to mentors who helped her along the way, which ultimately led to her recent appointment as Port Director.

“Sometimes it is those little things that you don’t know that you need help with that help you the most. I was fortunate to have people in my life who embraced me and helped me with little nuances that put me on my path to success,” said Carter.

“Revitalize Milwaukee provides opportunities to change people’s lives in a way that allows them to live their best lives. There is so much judgement and racism in our community and I just want people to know that all people—from all walks of life—are integral to our community.” — Lynnea Katz-Petted

“Many of today’s youth have never been introduced to another world. Youth need to be exposed to things other than what they see and experience in their neighborhoods...” —David Crowley

“Working in my community is fulfilling. I like making things better for people and working to ensure that our patients receive quality services, good customer care and are treated like anyone else, no matter their economic status or race.” —Michele LeBourgeois

“Sometimes it is those little things that you don’t know that you need help with that help you the most. I was fortunate to have people in my life who embraced me and helped me with little nuances that put me on my path to success.” —Jackie Q. Carter

MILWAUKEE MAYOR CAVALIER JOHNSON

Mayor Cavalier Johnson is proof that you don't have to be a product of your environment. Growing up in Milwaukee's most disparate 53206 zip code, Mayor Johnson is empathetic and all too familiar with the plight of many of the residents living in that area because he has walked in their shoes.

"We moved a lot. I attended six different elementary schools. I have family members who have gotten into trouble with the law. I know firsthand about poverty, but I also know that there is a way out," said Mayor Johnson.

That pathway out came for Mayor Johnson by getting involved with organizations like the YMCA, the City of Milwaukee's Earn & Learn Summer Program, and other programs that ultimately led him to college.

Mayor Johnson attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison and became a first-generation college graduate.

In addition, he graduated debt-free because of scholarships he received, including a scholarship from the Dr. Terence N. Thomas Scholarship Foundation, founded by this newspaper's publisher, Patricia Pattillo.

Moreover, while some students switch majors as they matriculate through college, Mayor Johnson was laser focused on earning a degree in political science.

"From the time I was 14 years old, I was interested in politics. I participated in several public service events throughout my youth.

His political aspirations came to fruition, first serving as staff assistant in the Mayor's office, then run-



ning for and being elected 2nd District Alderman, and eventually becoming Common Council President. Now Mayor Johnson is the city's first Black elected Mayor of Milwaukee.

These days Mayor Johnson is committed to finding ways to help stabilize Milwaukee families—whether it's fighting for family-supporting career opportunities or pursuing higher education.

While there are many job opportunities in Milwaukee, Mayor Cavalier is keenly aware of the challenges, particularly those related to gun violence and reckless driving.

"Unfortunately, people think I have a magic wand when it comes to gun violence.

"We (the city) do not pass laws that control guns; that's done at the state and federal levels.

If I had that power, it would be different but I don't. We try to create scenarios where people don't have to pick up guns," said Mayor Cavalier.

With the Republican National Convention (RNC) coming to Milwaukee in 2024, Mayor Johnson is looking forward to offering even more opportunities for residents and businesses.

SHARON ROBINSON

Sharon Robinson recently retired from the City of Milwaukee as Director of Administration.

Still not weary from this journey we call life, she plans to continue doing what she believes is her life's calling—serving!

"I think serving is in my blood. Even as a young girl, I had the heart of a public servant and wanted to make an impact in people's lives.

"My grandmother had patients from the Veterans Administration who were boarders in her home.

"I always had a desire to go above and beyond to ensure their rooms were clean. And later, when I first arrived in Washington, DC, I wasn't that well versed on some of the political issues like apartheid.

"As I learned more about it, my moral conscious was awakened and I was compelled to march outside the South African Embassy," said Robinson.

Even while working on Capitol Hill, Robinson volunteered during the early years of the AIDS epidemic. She would decline fancy Capitol Hill social engagements to serve with a program called Food for Friends, where she performed housekeeping duties and dropped off meals to people who were in the final stages of AIDS.

Born and raised in Battle Creek, Michigan, Robinson graduated from Michigan State University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications.

Prepared to pursue a career in public relations, she listened instead to a higher calling.

"God called me to public service. I initially envisioned myself working in marketing or public relations.

"God has navigated this path for me and it's (public service) in my heart.

An internship with a Michigan Congressman ultimately led him to offer me a position in Washington, DC working as his receptionist," said Robinson.

One day the Congressman was in a bind and needed talking points so Robinson offered to write them.

She did such a good job that he took her off the front desk and promoted her, first as a legislative correspondent, then as legislative director.

Shortly after Tom Barrett was elected to Congress, he hired Robinson to be his legislative director because of her good reputation on Capitol Hill.

After receiving a call from Barrett's transition team with an offer to become the administration director, Robinson accepted the challenge and moved to Milwaukee.

"I don't believe it was a coincidence that God put me on a path where He fulfilled my desire to serve.



"From the time I was 14-years-old, I was interested in politics. I participated in several public service events throughout my youth. While performing tasks such as raking leaves and neighborhood clean up, I fell in love with public service."

—Cavalier Johnson

"I think serving is in my blood. Even as a young girl, I had the heart of a public servant and wanted to make an impact in people's lives."

—Sharon Robinson

"I was frustrated by the large number of people of color experiencing health disparities, not participating in health research and impacting the reports."

—Karen Dotson

KAREN DOTSON

Figuratively and literally, Karen Dotson, Program Director for the All of Us Research Program at the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW), has reaffirmed her purpose and her passion.

All of Us at MCW, in collaboration with partners throughout the state and country, is laying the groundwork for research that may help eliminate health disparities, particularly in Black and Brown communities. Historically, Black and Brown communities have been under-represented in biomedical research and experience the greatest disparities in healthcare access and health outcomes. Dotson and her All of Us team at MCW want to lead the region in program enrollments from communities of color.

Born in Milwaukee, Dotson grew up with both loving parents in Milwaukee's inner city. Family, church, school, community, and volunteerism were shared values in the Dotson household.

"I'd been working on various medical review panels for local and federal grants in different areas of medical services for many years. I was frustrated by the large number of people of color experiencing health disparities, not participating in health research and impacting the reports.

"When I saw the opening for Program Director for the All of Us Research Program at the Medical College of Wisconsin, I thought, 'Here is an opportunity to be at the front end of education, of guiding people from the community into the future of medicine – for themselves, their heirs, and future generations.'" All of Us is the future today!

"The information collected goes into a secure health research database managed by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Researchers may use it to conduct thousands of studies. What they learn might help target medicine to individuals, make it more precise, what we call 'precision medicine.' It's really cutting-edge," said Dotson.

Dotson believes in the words of Maya Angelou: "When we know better, we do better."



MIKE FELLOWS

John Daniels III, President and Director of MKE Fellows, is committed to exposing young men to opportunities and instilling pride and self-respect in them to help set them on the path to success. Apparently his efforts are paying off because the organization is growing in leaps and bounds and is reaping positive outcomes because of those efforts.

"As a young man growing up in Milwaukee and attending Milwaukee Public Schools, I had some amazing opportunities, including becoming the state debate champion.

"After graduating from the University of Michigan, I was not looking to return to Milwaukee because there were so many opportunities away from here, but I received an invite to return. At that point, I began to understand and appreciate how much my community wanted to grow, so I wanted to become part of that growth by giving back," said Daniels.

MKE Fellows is grooming cohorts of young men to become leaders through a comprehensive program that provides scholarships, mentors, community engagement, and internships from high school to college, and to their career path.

The MKE Fellows initiative started in 2012 to encourage talented, young students from Milwau-



**John Daniels III
MKE Fellows**

kee to pursue and complete their college education and serves as a vehicle to attract African American college graduates to return to the Greater Milwaukee area. Over the years, MKE has received support and funding from several corporate sponsors and foundations, including a recent donation from the National Basketball Association (NBA) Foundation.

"MKE Fellows has allowed me to build a program that takes a holistic approach to offering mentorships, professional development and scholarships.

"Initially, our small pool of students came from Historically Black Colleges, and now we have grown to institutions across the country, from Berkely to Princeton, while still anchored in power partnerships with HBCU's," said Daniels.

"MKE Fellows has allowed me to build a program that takes a holistic approach to offering mentorships, professional development and scholarships. Initially, our small pool of students came from Historically Black Colleges, and now we have grown to institutions across the country, from Berkely to Princeton, while still anchored in power partnerships with HBCU's"

—John Daniels III



Tony Kearney

NORTHCOTT NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE

While Northcott Neighborhood House (Northcott) may be best known for organizing Milwaukee's Juneteenth Day celebration and parade, it is so much more than that. For more than 60 years, Northcott staff have been catering to the needs of the community by operating a food pantry, addressing health

disparities, and providing employment training and job opportunities, while instilling hope to residents.

Tony Kearney, Executive Director, is committed to growing Northcott and has empowered his staff to bring ideas to the table to further increase its programs and resources.

Elizabeth Coggs, Director of Op-

erations for Northcott, works to ensure that all the organization's services and programs are running according to protocol. She brings family legacy and years of passion for the community and commitment to serving to the Northcott team.

"All of our services are free. Annually, we provide families, children, and seniors with almost \$2 million in food, working in partnership with the Hunger Task Force and Feeding America, and individual grocers. In partnership with Health Connections, we also offer Covid-19 testing, vaccinations, and booster shots, including influenza.

"Annually, we serve some 1,000 youth through our hydroponic program, arborist program, and other on-the-job training initiatives that we have created through partnerships with MATC and Employ Milwaukee," said Coggs.

Key to Northcott's successful initiatives is partnerships. For example, through Northcott's partnership

with Health Connections, issues such as diabetes and hypertension are proactively addressed. Northcott's food pantry which promotes healthier eating habits and lifestyles, and includes fresh vegetables and fruits, exists because of partnerships with Hunger Task Force, Feed America, and privately owned grocers. And, residents that engage with Northcott's job training programs, such as its MATC partnership, enable participants to learn skills and earn certificate programs in areas such as construction and nursing assistants.

Northcott serves the entire Milwaukee County, and residents come from as far away as Cudahy and Brown Deer to access its services. The organization has been creative in its service delivery. For example, during the covid-19 pandemic, Kearney established a partnership with Door Dash delivery service to ensure senior citizens did not have to venture out for food.

"Tony Kearney, Executive Director, is committed to growing Northcott and has empowered his staff to bring ideas to the table to further increase its programs and resources."

"The people that I work with are doing a lot of great work behind the scenes that we don't hear or know about. I like the dedication and commitment to the community that I see on a daily basis."
— Sheriff Ball

SHERIFF DENITA BALL



Denita Ball is the first African American female to serve as Milwaukee County Sheriff and while she has earned a prestigious career in law enforcement, she veered away from the careers she initially

considered.

"I wanted to become a scientist, but I did not want to take all the science courses required to become one. Then, growing up my brother kept getting into trouble with the law, so I thought I would help my mother with some of the legal fees he was accruing by becoming a lawyer and representing him," said Ball.

Born to a single mom in a small town in Arkansas, Sheriff Ball was raised by her grandmother from a young age, after her mother moved to Milwaukee. Her grandmother stressed the importance of faith

and education.

As a result, Denita's strong faith became a central point in her life and she became a lifelong learner.

When her grandmother tragically passed away, she was placed in foster care, eventually living in two different foster homes. She remained focused on her education and graduated high school with honors.

She was then awarded an academic scholarship to the University of Arkansas where she excelled academically and received numerous awards and honors.

Sheriff Ball has steadily risen through the ranks of law enforcement and, along the way, continued her thirst for education by earning academic degrees that put her in a class all by herself.

With over 35 years of experience in law enforcement and criminal justice education, Dr. Ball is pre-

pared to take the Milwaukee County Sheriff's office to the next level.

"Meeting people and working with staff are the most fulfilling aspects of my job. There are so many people that care about this community.

"The people that I work with are doing a lot of great work behind the scenes that we don't hear or know about. I like the dedication and commitment to the community that I see on a daily basis," said Sheriff Ball.

The driving force behind Sheriff Ball's rise in rank has been her passion for improving the daily interactions people have with law enforcement.

She is also committed to ensuring that people, particularly those in crisis, are connected to resources that are available.

NAT'L BLACK NURSES ASSOC. MKE CHAPTER

The National Black Nurses Association-Milwaukee Chapter is on a mission to reenergize the chapter and recruit more members. The Milwaukee Chapter affiliated with the National Chapter in 1981. The Milwaukee Chapter's President Edna Hudson-Kinzey joined in 1993.

"I was a young nursing student when I first became a member, as part of the chapter's scholarship program. I've lived in Milwaukee and been involved with the Black Nurses Association for 33 years so when I was asked to take over as president, I said yes," said Edna Hudson-Kinzey.

She has worked in nursing for 27 years, primarily in the area of obstetrics. She now works as a traveling nurse where she is able to meet all types of people, from all walks of life.

"Being a traveling nurse gives me such a diverse experience. I also teach nursing in obstetrics, pediatrics, theory for clinical settings, caregiving, coaching, mentoring and pre-licensing classes," said Hudson-Kinzey.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, Hudson-Kinzey worked in three different states. She saw, first-hand, that exhaustion and perseverance became the norm for nurses and first responders across the United States.



Edna Hudson-Kinzey

"As a traveling nurse, I was there to assist on behalf of all nurses out there on the front lines. All of us (nurses) came to work every day and did what we needed to do," said Hudson-Kinzey.

The Covid-19 pandemic is not the first time that nurses stepped up to serve the community during a pandemic, particularly black and brown communities. In the 1800s there was a tuberculosis pandemic (sometimes referred to as 'consumption') that disproportionately affected Blacks in the United States. Under Marcus Garvey's leadership, the Black Cross Nurses were founded to take care of and educate sick people in the community because white nurses and doctors refused to care for them.

"The National Black Nurses Association is an integral part of this community, and after we care for ourselves internally, my goal is for the chapter to work feverishly to get our members ready for 2024.

JANETTE BRAVERMAN

Janette Braverman's 'ha-ha' moment for a career aspiration came when she fell in love with technology after writing her first program on an Apple computer in high school.

Over the years, she has managed to merge her technological savvy with her leadership acumen to create a successful business that has attracted corporations, small businesses and the faith-based community to help them grow and transform.

As Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and founder of Leaders Leaving Legacies, Braverman who has enjoyed careers in Fortune 500 companies, the nonprofit arena, and academia, has successfully melded her executive leadership skills into a platform that enables her to give back to others who want to grow strategically, change, and stay relevant.

"I love empowering leaders, so when God dropped Leaders Leaving Legacies into my spirit back in 2011, that was my goal.

"I've been given so many opportunities in the corporate world and wanted to share my experiences and skills with others," said Braverman.

Initially Braverman and her husband, Mitchell, led the leadership and ministry training program at



Christian Faith Fellowship Church. Developing this leadership program inspired her to launch Leaders Leaving Legacies, LLC.

Since Braverman frequently works remotely with global clients, she didn't miss a beat during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"During the pandemic, my business actually grew, especially with serving small businesses. Some clients were seeking to pivot to online services because of COVID-19 mandates, so I was able to help them navigate technological options to keep them viable and solvent," said Braverman.

Braverman has expanded her business to include "Leaders Lead Up™," which is an online social community and learning platform. It was designed to connect women of color with some of the most successful C-Suite executives, business leaders and entrepreneurs around the world.

"As a traveling nurse, I was there to assist on behalf of all nurses out there on the front lines. All of us (nurses) came to work every day and did what we needed to do."

—Hudson-Kinzey.

"As Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and founder of Leaders Leaving Legacies, Braverman who has enjoyed careers in Fortune 500 companies, the nonprofit arena, and academia, has successfully melded her executive leadership skills into a platform that enables her to give back to others who want to grow strategically, change, and stay relevant."



Clayborn Benson and daughter Jamila Benson

WIS. BLK HISTORICAL SOCIETY/MUSEUM

Anyone claiming to be a history buff who has not visited the Wisconsin Black Historical Society/Museum (WBHS/M), located at 2620 W. Center Street, is missing a real treat. As we celebrate Black History Month, one would remiss not to schedule a tour with the museum's

founder Clayborn Benson.

A retired, award-winning photo-journalist, Benson founded the Museum more than 36 years ago to ensure the documentation and preservation of the history of African Americans in Wisconsin. Benson believes that it's important that future

generations know the history of previous generations.

"Black History is American history. Our intent is never to make people feel guilty or bad about things that have happened to Blacks. We just want to share the facts—the good and bad—because it is our history," said Benson.

As a photographer with WTMJ4 Benson traveled to faraway places like Majorca in the Mediterranean, Egypt, Somalia, and Ukraine, fueling his love and appreciation of history.

"I've always been intrigued with history, partly because my family—the Moore's—shared so much history with patrons of the barbershops they owned in Milwaukee and Racine.

"I also had a burning desire to research my family history because I knew so little about my relatives," said Benson.

In the 1980s, Benson discovered that there was no statewide effort to collect artifacts or document the oral

histories of an aging population.

After receiving a grant from the National Endowment of the Arts to produce a documentary called Black Communities, he began capturing those stories.

This inspired him to establish a place to house this important history. In 1987, he purchased two buildings from the City of Milwaukee and renovated them into one facility. He has never hesitated to use his own money to sustain the museum. In 1988, the WBHS/M became an affiliated member of The Wisconsin State Historical Society.

Since opening its doors, the WBHS/M has become an archival repository. Benson's daughter, Jamila, who has worked alongside him for 20 years, develops programming and assists with exhibits.

Last year two archivists were onboarded and they are working feverishly to digitalize and catalogue a plethora of artifacts and historical documents.

"Black History is American history. Our intent is never to make people feel guilty or bad about things that have happened to Blacks. We just want to share the facts—the good and bad—because it is our history,"
—Clayborn Benson



ARTWORKS FOR MILWAUKEE

Artworks for Milwaukee for Milwaukee is a unique program, founded 22 years ago, that provides youth paid internships and job experiences through the arts.

From interviewing, to onboarding, to problem solving and creativity,

every aspect of Artworks for Milwaukee is designed to groom youth's soft skills and development.

Artworks for Milwaukee is the brainchild of Laura Owens, Professor Emeritus at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Terry Murphy has served as Artworks for Milwaukee Executive Director for the past 11 years and she could not be more passionate about the organization's mission of "preparing youth for tomorrow by providing transferable career skills through art internships today."

"I previously worked in nonprofit and corporate management, and communication positions. When I moved to Milwaukee, I wanted to be connected to the arts and engage with youth. This position is a match made in heaven," said Murphy.

Artworks for Milwaukee provides year-long, paid internships for high school students to promote growth and practice in art and job skills.

The program also offers lead artist assistant opportunities to students who complete their internships. All Milwaukee area high school students are eligible to apply to ArtWorks for Milwaukee's internships regardless of art ability.

"It is essentially a workforce development program in the arts. Artworks for Milwaukee provides students a chance to express themselves creatively. What's more, students do not have to be artists to participate," said Murphy.

Since the pandemic, many people are experiencing trauma and isolation in different ways. Murphy believes that Artworks for Milwaukee gives youth opportunities to express their anxiety in a safe environment post-pandemic.

"We started our mental advocacy graphic design program specifically to address this issue. Working with the Wisconsin State Office of Children's Mental Health (OCMH), each student contributed a design for Children's Mental Health Awareness Day in May 2022.

"The OCMH has invited us to work with them again in September on a suicide prevention campaign," said Murphy.

"Artworks for Milwaukee provides year-long, paid internships for high school students to promote growth and practice in art and job skills."

"I want our men to know that they have support and help connect them to the resources they need so they can take care of their children..."
—Natasha Dotson



Natasha Dotson of Milwaukee Fatherhood Initiative

MKE FATHERHOOD INITIATIVE

After watching her brother navigate obstacles to gain custody of his children Natasha Dotson felt his frustration. Angrily, she called the Milwaukee Fatherhood Initiative's office to vent. As she shared her own frustration, Dotson was told by then-director, Terence Ray, that the organization could use her passion and fire.

Today Dotson is employed as Project Director of the Milwaukee Fatherhood Initiative (MFI).

In the case of Dotson's brother who had gotten in trouble with the law and served his time, the mother of his children was not in the picture and he was trying to gain custody of his children who were in the foster care system.

He was working two jobs, but ninety percent of his paycheck was taken for back child support so he could not get ahead.

Dotson's brother's scenario is a

common, circuitous cycle for many of the men involved with the MFI and now Dotson is determined to provide the help, support and resources they need to overcome those barriers.

"I wanted to be part of the change that is needed to help these men. I want our men to know that they have support and help connect them to the resources they need so they can take care of their children," said Dotson.

Since its inception in 2005, the MFI has connected more than 12,000 Milwaukee men to resources to help them better meet the social, emotional and financial needs of their children and families.

MFI services include parenting, child support interest debt relief, driver's license recovery, employment, education, health, and more.

Over 95% of program participants are African American and other males on color.



Jim Gaillard - Left and Don Utech - Right

EZEKIEL CDC

Don Utech, a retired successful businessman, and Jim Gaillard, a master electrician, are an unlikely duo, in more ways than one. Don is White and Jim is Black, but the differences don't stop there. Gaillard and Utech co-founded and operate the nonprofit organization called Ezekiel Community Development Corporation (CDC)—Project HOPE. Don is the 'brains' behind Ezekiel / Project Hope (Ezekiel) and Jim is the 'brawn.' Utech handles all the administrative aspects of this 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, and Gaillard leads the training component.

Ezekiel trains workers in the construction trades, including electrical, plumbing, and carpentry, and pays trainees while they are learning. They rehab boarded-up, central city homes which are sold to first-time homeowners. Profits from the home sales are used to purchase other homes to rehab.

An important component of the program is that many of the workers

are or have been incarcerated and receive training through a work release partnership with the Milwaukee County Department of Corrections. Inmates receive job skills that, once released, enable them to seek employment that pays family-sustaining wages.

"Everyone deserves a second chance. That's what we do at Ezekiel; we don't just train workers, we encourage and empower them," said Gaillard.

Ezekiel also partners with Northwestern Mutual who has invested into its Block-by-Block revitalization of the Amani neighborhood (Zip Code 53206).

Going door-to-door, Ezekiel has developed positive relationships with the residents and, with Northwestern Mutual's investment and commitment, are making a difference by instilling pride and hope among its residents. Residents have participated in the training program and some have been hired by contractors.

"An important component of the program is that many of the workers are or have been incarcerated and receive training through a work release partnership with the Milwaukee County Department of Corrections."



JOAN JOHNSON JASMINE DEACON



Jasmine Deacon, Program Manager at PEARLS for Teen Girls (PEARLS), exudes passion when she talks about ‘her girls.’ When lis-

CHRIS HARRIS MORSE

Opening the North Avenue Market has enabled Chris Harris Morse to cross a desire off his bucket list. While he’s enjoyed careers in academia, manufacturing and within the nonprofit industry, opening the doors of the North Avenue Market fulfills his vision of bringing people together to “build bridges and not walls.”

The North Avenue Market (the Market), located at 5900 W. North Avenue, is housed in a 1940s, 10,000-square foot space that includes food vendors (with drive-thru access), meeting rooms and private spaces that can be rented on an hourly, day, weekly or monthly basis. Among the vendors are 4 Corners Café (combining what was formerly A Taste of Java, SAM’s Deli, and A&B Desserts into one station), Dawg City, Plant Joy, Bitercube, Mosler’s Vault, and Puseria Los Angeles.

Originally from North Carolina, Harris Morris brings years of experience and business acumen to the table, including his experience as a military officer (disabled veteran), several years of corporate management experience in Fortune 500 companies, serving as an administrator and educator on college campuses, and as the CEO of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Kalamazoo Michigan.

“Milwaukee is a great city and

Joan Johnson is the first African American woman and the fourth woman to be named City Librarian in Milwaukee. Her route to become City Librarian was circuitous and has come full circle.

Growing up, she enjoyed weekly visits to the neighborhood library and has always been an avid reader. She also spent a lot of time in the library as a student at West Division High School (now Milwaukee School of the Arts), where she was a library monitor.

After graduating from the University of Wisconsin-Madison with a degree in interior design and art, Johnson worked on set designs in

Buffalo, New York before returning to Milwaukee to further her career as a designer. She lived in Chicago for a time, working on the “The Untouchables” film and eventually moved to Seattle.

There, she worked in politics and arts administration, and freelanced as a researcher for other designers. Johnson’s research soon led her back to the library working part-time and, at the nudging of her employer, she returned to school to earn a master’s degree in library sciences, specializing in bibliographic instruction and government information.

“Being in the library felt like home. I spent a lot of time in libraries researching for the political campaign and for design projects I worked on before taking a part time position with the Seattle library system.

My supervisor encouraged me to get a degree in Library Science and provided me with a full scholarship

to attend the University of Washington where I earned a master’s degree in Library Science,” said Johnson.

During her 15-year tenure with Seattle’s library system, Johnson spent much of her time rebuilding libraries.

These days Johnson, who labels herself as a ‘people person’ spends a great deal of her time communicating with various library stakeholders, including more than 300 employees, board members, volunteers, patrons, and public officials.

“I started hosting all-staff town hall meetings via Zoom so that staff can have time with me. I need to be available to my employees, as well as constituents.

This approach helps streamline the process and has been well received,” said Johnson.

Johnson is hopeful that as long as libraries keep up with changing times—especially technology— they will always be relevant.

cal. It’s gratifying to know that their future is so bright. These young ladies are unapologetically themselves. Their self-discovery is much sooner than mine. Growing up, I felt like I had to shrink. These young ladies carry themselves with such confidence and watching them peak when they are facing so many different challenges is gratifying,” said Deacon.

“Today’s youth are incredible and they crave structure. PEARLS always need good mentors. There is a child out there that would love to know more about what you’re doing. One day these young women will take the city—the world—by storm. I encourage others to be a part of that,” said Deacon.

For more information about PEARLS for Teen Girls visit www.newpearlssite.squarespace.com/team

tening to her speak about PEARLS, you know that she has found her purpose.

A Milwaukee native whose family (mom, aunts, uncles and husband) legacy is being proud graduates of Riverside University High School (Go Tigers!), Deacon said that she tested the waters searching for a viable career path, but always knew that it had to involve giving back.

“I experimented and listened to others about career choices as I emerged to adulthood but I finally listened to my gut and enrolled in Mount Mary University. I found my tribe there, graduated in 2016 and have been running ever since,” said Deacon.

While pursuing a degree as a so-

cial worker, Deacon completed an internship with PEARLS during her junior year. PEARLS for Teen Girls whose mission is to improve the quality of life and strengthen the community one girl at a time by empowering young women with self-development tools, guidance and support to strive for better, brighter futures by living out the PEARLS values: Personal Responsibility, Empathy, Awareness, Respect, Leadership and Support.

Deacon acknowledges that she is not a ‘fixer,’ rather she enjoys guiding the girls on their self-discovery journeys.

“I don’t have to be the expert. The learning and pouring into each other that takes place is fluid and recipro-



has been very welcoming to me. It has historical components that still impact us today, but I want to be here and become part of the solution. I wanted to create a neighborhood hub, where people from all walks of life come together, enjoy life, learn, and break bread. That’s what the North Avenue Market is—a meeting place where we can build bridges of hope, understanding, diversity, and acceptance,” said Harris Morse.

North Avenue Market opened last September and has two levels of space. It is open Tuesdays through Saturday from 7 a.m. until 10 p.m. and closes at 11 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. It is also open on Sundays from 9a.m. to 6 p.m., and food tenants close each day, one hour before the building closes.

“We try to incorporate diversity in every aspect of what we do. For example, the north end of the bar is countertop height so that people with accessibility challenges can come up to the bar. We installed an elevator so that people with disabilities or individuals with babies in strollers can easily access both levels. When people come here, the hope is that they feel welcomed. throughout the building to celebrate diversity and inclusivity so that we can help build bridges, not walls,” said Harris Morse.

JAMES MOSELY

James Mosley, Senior Facilitator at the Alma Center, is continuing his family’s legacy of service. Over the last 50 years he has served with a number of church and community organizations, primarily working with youth.

He also spent about five years in Chicago, right after the riots, helping to rebuild neighborhoods on Chicago’s west side, one of the city’s poorest areas.

“My family has always been involved in the community and the inner city church network. My grandmother was part of St. Mark AME Church in the 1920s and 30s when they were located on Walnut Street, and my family was involved with St. Benedict the Moor Parish, which was across the street from where we lived. My learning about service began in 1961 as an altar boys at St. Francis Church,” said Mosley.

These days Mosley’s service continues as he facilitates court mandated education at the Alma Center, which provides an evidence-based trauma-informed approach of working with domestic violence offenders.

Founded by Terri Strodthoff, PhD, the organization uses an innovative healing approach that recognizes domestic violence is a cycle that can be broken.

The fatherhood education program helps men who have been abusive recognize, acknowledge and, when safe and possible, amend the trauma they have caused their own children.



The program focuses on exploring personal experiences of fathering to learn compassion, forgiveness, and responsibility, and to build positive, trauma-informed and developmentally appropriate nurturing fathering and co-parenting values, attitudes, and skills.

“Our program is powerful and transformative. I’ve been facilitating these six-month cohorts for 15 years now.

“The challenge is always helping men see themselves and understand the value of connecting with their emotions. When a person is able to take that inner journey it is rewarding.

“Getting men to understand that there is nothing shameful about their feelings is challenging. We teach men that feelings are a sign of emotional intelligence if used correctly. Many of our men of color are just angry.

Helping them step out of their anger is our goal,” said Mosley.

Mosley believes that if men improve themselves, it translates to helping them become better fathers and raising their children.

“Being in the library felt like home. I spent a lot of time in libraries researching for the political campaign and for design projects I worked on before taking a part time position with the Seattle library system.”

—Joan Johnson

“Today’s youth are incredible and they crave structure. PEARLS always need good mentors. There is a child out there that would love to know more about what you’re doing. One day these young women will take the city—the world—by storm. I encourage others to be a part of that.”

—Jasmine Deacon

“Originally from North Carolina, Harris Morris brings years of experience and business acumen to the table, including his experience as a military officer (disabled veteran), several years of corporate management experience in Fortune 500 companies, serving as an administrator and educator on college campuses, and as the CEO of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Kalamazoo Michigan.”

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—James Mosley.



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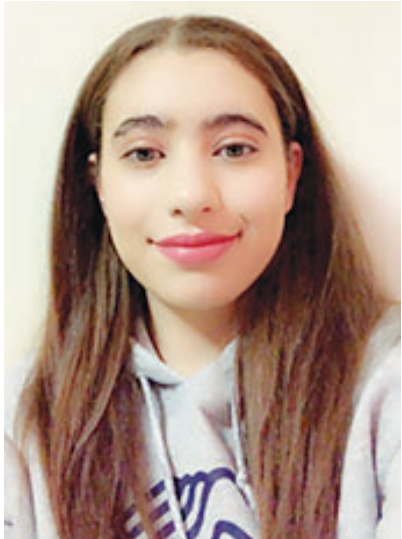
Drew Wilson
University of Minnesota
1st Year Undergraduate



Claudia York
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
1st Year Undergraduate



Kayla Jimenez
Marquette University
2nd Year Undergraduate



Aya Mahmoud
University of Buffalo
3rd Year Undergraduate



Indya Townsend-Owens
Tennessee State University
3rd Year Undergraduate



Tyler Baldwin
University of Wisconsin-Parkside
4th Year Undergraduate



Autumn Mays
DePaul University
4th Year Undergraduate



Jarrell Lovett
Medical College of Wisconsin
5th year Graduate

EDESSA SCHOOL OF FASHION

Lynne Dixon-Speller has been sewing since she was nine years old, thanks to her paternal grandmother's teaching. Even though she once aspired to become a dentist, she found her niche in the world of fashion and has never looked back.

Crediting her grandmother for her love of fashion, sewing and entrepreneurial spirit, Dixon-Speller earned a B.S. in Interior Design and Architectural Planning as well as a M.S. in Textiles and Clothing. Since then, she has taught at five institutions of higher learning: the University of Delaware, Mount Mary College, MATC, Art Institute of Wisconsin (Ai), and Edessa School of Fashion.

The founder, Academic Dean and Chair of Apparel Design Department of Edessa School of Fashion (named after her grandmother, Edessa Meek-Dixon), Dixon-Speller is a history maker, not just in Wisconsin, but the nation. In fact, three dresses she designed are housed and preserved within the Smithsonian Museum's permanent collection in Washington, D.C.

"All other colleges in the state have been grandfathered in and did not go through the rigorous application that we completed.

"It took more than three years to complete the application, write the curriculum, and ultimately receive state approval.

"Since our initial approval, we have gone through this annual ap-



Lynne Dixon-Speller

proval process three times, so we have become proficient at it," said Dixon-Speller.

"When the Art Institute (Ai) closed I was basically running it, so a few dedicated faculty members and I began creating Edessa. It was a tedious process and not for the faint at heart, but we had so many supporters—librarians, financial aid professionals, attorneys, and other professionals—supporting and helping us overcome barriers, that we just kept moving forward," said Dixon-Speller.

"Not only is Edessa School of Fashion open and functioning in Milwaukee's Third Ward, but recently we became the only fashion school to take students to show during New York's Fashion Week and Chicago's Fashion Week. We have been asked to continue in these shows," said an elated Dixon-Speller.

INDEPENDENCE FIRST

Independence First is a diamond in the heart of the Milwaukee community that serves people with disabilities. President and CEO Marci Boucher said that Independence First provides programs, services, and resources to help people live independently in the community.

"Independence First is the only place you need to remember if you or someone you know has a disability. We are unique because we don't tell our clients what they should do. We ask people what their goals are and expose them to programs, resources, and services aimed at helping them achieve their goals. Even if we don't offer a particular service, we can connect clients to the resources they need," said Boucher.

One of the programs Independence First offers is an assistive technology assistance department. They have more than 2,000 adaptive equipment devices that you can demo to see if it works for you. Although they do not sell the equipment, they can help you find the right equipment and any funding that may be available.

Another unique program at Independence First that is available to people with disabilities, is a loan program.

"If individuals or family members with disabilities cannot afford adaptive equipment or technology (for example an accessible van), through our partnership with Milwaukee Economic Development Department, they may qualify for a low interest loan (about 4%)," said Boucher.

Advocacy is another important part of Independence First's mission. Staff regularly work with city, state, and federal legislators to help make or change laws to improve the lives of people with disabilities. For example, if a landlord refuses to put in a ramp, Independence First teaches people with disabilities how to advocate for themselves to get what they need.



Marci Boucher

"When the Art Institute (Ai) closed I was basically running it, so a few dedicated faculty members and I began creating Edessa. It was a tedious process and not for the faint at heart, but we had so many supporters—librarians, financial aid professionals, attorneys, and other professionals—supporting and helping us overcome barriers, that we just kept moving forward..." —Lynne Dixon-Speller

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THE MILNER FAMILY

WOULD LIKE TO RECOGNIZE ALL OF THE 'DIAMONDS, DISCOVERY AND DESTINY' HONOREES AND MCJ SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS.

"CONGRATULATIONS!" JIM AND DIANE

One hundred and fifty-four years ago, a Black minister and the first Black man to graduate from an American college laid the foundation for what was to become the Black Press of America.

John Russwurm's and Samuel Cornish's first edition of Freedom's Journal carried a strong message on its front page that has since become the tenet of the Black Press. Said the Black pioneers:

"We wish to plead our own cause. Too long have others spoken for us. From the press and the pulpit we have suffered much by being incorrectly represented."

Traditionally, each March, members of the National Publishers Association/Black Press of America meet to reflect upon the words and goals of Russwurm and Cornish.

They also rededicate themselves to the challenges that lie ahead and analyze their individual and collective impact on the communities they serve.

Two items of conflicting divergence highlighted this year's conference.

Readership of the Black Press, specifically among white supporters of the Black cause, climbed drastically during the past year.

This reality was to be expected by most, as support for equal rights has historically coincided with conservative domination in national politics.

The second item on the agenda was also expected, although its impact was not padded by that fact.

Advertising revenues, which had showed a substantial increase during the early years of the Jimmy Carter administration are expected to continue their downward trend along with a worsening economy.

These two pronouncements comprise the unending paradox which shadows the Black Press.

Since Freedom's Journal, the very survival of the Black Press has oftentimes depended on factors outside of its control.

Yet during its tenure, the Black Press has built a solid foundation of specialized journalism and, despite financial setbacks, has, and will survive.

A strong, and some say orchestrated, effort was made after the civil rights struggle of the 1960s to discredit the Black Press.

White newspapers were quick to say that the resulting integration-what little there ac-

'STILL NEEDED after all these years!'

The Survival of the Black Press

By Mikel Holt for the Milwaukee Press Club about 30 years ago...



"The Black Press has built a solid foundation of specialized journalism and, despite financial setbacks, has, and will survive."

tually was-signaled an end to Cornish's and Russwurm's dream.

Yet contrary to that assumption, which was nothing more than an apparently financially motivated effort, the Black Press tells a story of Black people to Black people—a story of Black life.

The story of the Black experience and its uniqueness must be told in every ramification and only the Black Press can tell it. Since the mid-1970s, the Black Press has become more urbanized in nature, in part because of its large college student readership.

Yet, of late, it appears to be returning to its ethnic 'roots' with a renewed thrust, a stronger voice than at any time in history.

Moreover, the Black Press is renewing told friendships among labor unions and special interest coalitions as its voice is once again being called upon to serve as the vanguard for social change.

The editorial policies and directions of the Black Press historically have united the fragmented forces. Many, if not most, of the issues presented by the Black Press cross all racial and ethnic lines.

The editorials address issues related to the 'haves' versus the 'have-nots,' although presented from a Black perspective.

Moreover, members of the Black Press, particularly its editors and staff writers again are being called upon to provide input into the coalition policy-making and direction.

Considered by many as the

(continued on page 16)

WE'RE NOT THE ONLY TEAM OUR PLAYERS PLAY FOR.

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'STILL NEEDED after all these years!'

"If there is one criticism, it rests with the traditional emphasis to editorialize too much in its straight news accounts. Yet, because the overwhelming majority of Black papers in this nation are weeklies, and their major responsibility is to educate more than inform, this factor is overshadowed by the newspaper's role in the civil rights struggle."

(continued from page 15)

watch-dogs of social change in America, their expertise reflects their specialized occupations. It is often they who make the news as much as report it.

But that factor is not unusual, although it is downplayed. Unlike its major white counterpart, the role of the Black Press has historically exceeded that of information source.

It resides just behind the

Black educational institutions as a major educational source, and its functions over the years have widened to include social service agency, civil rights organization, and even political liaison.

Locally, for example, a series of informational lunches sponsored by the Community Journal also has provided the backbone for the annual Community Pride EXPO, which has

expanded its scope from providing an avenue to accentuate the positives of the central city to coordinating an avenue to accentuate the positives of the central city too coordinating an international trade fair with 20 African and Central American nations.

The Milwaukee Courier used its communications networks to spearhead Martin Luther King Day in Milwaukee, and to so-

licit signatures as part of a national campaign to petition Congress to make his birthday a national holiday. And radio station WAWA now sponsors once of the largest expos in the Midwest.

Despite its impact or the size of its readership, the Black Press continues to be one of the strongest editorial mediums in the United States.

If there is one criticism, it

rests with the traditional emphasis to editorialize too much in its straight news accounts.

Yet, because the overwhelming majority of Black papers in this nation are weeklies, and their major responsibility is to educate more than inform, this factor is overshadowed by the newspaper's role in the civil rights struggle.

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MANAGEMENT OF
YOUR MILWAUKEE
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ARTS@LARGE

Arts @ Large is a gem of a community program quietly tucked away in the Walker's Point neighborhood, in an historic Patrick Cudahy structure that was built in 1890. Newly renovated, Arts @ Large is located in the building that contains an art gallery, café and office/Studio spaces that includes conference rooms, training center, and office space for non-profit organizations.

Symphony Swan, whose name strikes an artistic chord, is the Senior Director of Programs at Arts @ Large. The Arts @ Large staff boasts a slate of team members whose backgrounds as artists and educators serve students and participants well as they pursue equitable access to the arts. Arts @ Large provides a variety of FREE programs that give students, teachers, and the community opportunities to interact with and explore visual, performing, literary, and multimedia art.

Designed to meet the needs of individuals of every age and ability, participants use a variety of art forms to express themselves and share their individual stories, while examining ways to make the community an inclusive, arts-rich place to live.

Phillip Salat, Program Manager at Arts @ Large works as a conduit between clients and artists.

He enjoys his role of connecting directly with artists while serving the needs of potential students and the arts community.

"This is a dream job. I previously worked as a talent agent in Chicago, then had an opportunity to be an educator. Working at Arts @ Large, I have a unique opportunity to merge my experiences into one career, working with the artists and developing educational programming," said Salat.

Unique to the Arts @ Large is that corporate and government collaborations enable them to provide all their programming at no cost to the community.

"Our programming is free to the community

and, at the same time, we fairly compensate every artist who leads a program. We have an 'artist-first' mentality in that we always ask and pay artists their standard fee for their time.

This allows artists to pour into the people more freely while being compensated for their time," said Salat.

The Arts @ Large program provides an opportunity to encourage self-respect, respect of differences, and how art can be a tool for social responsibility, while also providing skills and processes that help peacefully manage conflicts and create innovative solutions to social challenges.

BREGETTA WILSON

Bregetta Wilson, MS, LPC-IT, has found her niche in life and is making positive, systemic changes in our community. From uncertain beginnings, Wilson has become a change agent who has replaced difficulties with determination. She is brilliant, tireless, focused, and does whatever it takes to foster positive change.

Wilson's personal experiences within the foster care system and as a teen mom have helped her advocate for others because she beat the odds. She not only graduated from college but went on to earn a master's degree. Wilson is now a licensed psychotherapist and has received national recognition for her efforts in advocating for changes in the foster care system. She understands how essential it is for the voices of families to be included in system change and how working together is necessary to improve the community. It is what led her to birth Embrace, Improve, Empower, LLC.

"One of the things I highlight in my career journey is that you can't have community without all the systems working together. My organization provides mental health services, and consultation in civic and community engagement, family advocacy and social justice," said Wilson.

Working tirelessly for the underdog, Wilson is never afraid to call it as she sees it for the benefit of those she serves. She asks the hard ques-



"Artworks for Milwaukee provides year-long, paid internships for high school students to promote growth and practice in art and job skills."

"I'm not a good bureaucrat because I say things that may not be politically correct but it is important to acknowledge the elephant in the room. When decisions are being made about where dollars go, we have the authority to say where we are going to shift things so that families' voices are included in decision making..."

—Bregetta Wilson

"Advocacy is another important part of Independence First's mission. Staff regularly work with city, state, and federal legislators to help make or change laws to improve the lives of people with disabilities."



tions—always—and is not shy about sharing her experiences and opinions or challenging the status quo.

"I always try to bring the voice of families to the table in spaces where traditionally children and families have not been included.

"I'm not a good bureaucrat because I say things that may not be politically correct but it is important to acknowledge the elephant in the room. When decisions are being made about where dollars go, we have the authority to say where we are going to shift things so that families' voices are included in decision making," she said.

Working in government has helped Wilson understand how much power people have, who creates policy, process, and resources, and enabled her to highlight issues that need addressing, in a manner that facilitates change.



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FELLOWSHIP OPEN ANNOUNCES 2023 HONOREES

Hall of Fame Pittsburgh Steeler
Jerome “The Bus” Bettis and
Church Mutual Insurance
President and CEO Rich Poirier
to Receive 23rd Annual Salute



Jerome Bettis



Rich Poirier

The Fellowship Open, Wisconsin’s premiere corporate and community golf event for 23 consecutive years, today announced the awards for its 23rd annual tournament – Pro Football Hall of Fame Pittsburgh Steeler legend Jerome Bettis and President and CEO of Church Mutual Insurance Rich Poirier.

The Legends and Corporate Leadership Honorees for 2023 will receive their awards during Fellowship Open golf tournament weekend August 24-27, at Kettle Hills Golf Course in Richfield, Wisconsin.

For 23 consecutive years, the Fellowship Open has acknowledged special individuals who have had measurable and meaningful impact in improving the lives of people across America with specific focus on leaders and role models who have created significant opportunities for youth.

Past recipients include Hank Aaron, Dr. John Carlos, Willie Davis, Jackie Joyner-Kersey, Oscar Robertson, Dan Bader, Commissioner.

Emeritus Bud Selig, the Honorable Vel Phillips, Frank Robinson, Wayne Embry, Senator Herb Kohl, Sidney Moncreif, Bobby Dandridge, Dr. Tommy Smith, Thelma Sias, Junior Bridgeman, LeRoy Butler, and many others.

The Fellowship Open has become one of the nation’s premiere community engagement and youth empowerment events attracting participants and support from more than 25 states.

About Jerome Bettis

The incredible storybook championship journey of how Jerome Bettis nearly retired but was compelled to give it one final try by a rookie quarterback named Roethlisberger, not only changed his destiny but changed the history of the league.

Rookie of the Year, Comeback Player of the Year, and Super Bowl Champion Jerome Bettis will forever be immortalized in NFL lore as “The Bus,” rumbling across the gridiron, a nimble running back in an offensive lineman’s body.

What many people may not know, however, are the agonizing, difficult times Jerome has faced throughout his lifetime.

Growing up on the northwest side of Detroit in the city’s most desperate and dangerous neighborhoods as an asthmatic, athletics came late to Jerome. At Detroit Mackenzie High School, he found football and legendary Coach Bobby Dozier. Despite his medical condition, “The Bus” was able to flourish beyond expectation, overcome, and land a scholarship to Notre Dame University where over a three-year career he established himself as one of the most iconic figures in the fabled annals of Fighting Irish football history.

In the same year he achieved the Super Bowl, after 13 seasons in the league, Jerome and wife Trameka faced their greatest trauma and distress in the premature birth of their first child, Jada.

“The times we’ve spent competing together has allowed me to develop a bond with many current and former players who have the same concern for our children and their future,” remarked the Hall of Famer and founder of the Bus Stops Here Foundation serving at-risk youth in the greater Pittsburgh area. “This acknowledgment validates the efforts of all NFL players in their respective communities around the country. I am honored and humbled to accept.”

“As fans, we often know the facts and statistics of our favorite players – 242 pounds, 13,662 yards gained, Hall of Fame Class of 2015. Unequivocally, “The Bus” ranks at the very top of the NFL players popularity chart,” noted Attorney John W. Daniels, Jr., Fellowship Open Founder and Chair.

“What many of us are unaware of is the story of the man outside the lines. Jerome Bettis, much like his friend and former Fellowship Open Legends Honoree LeRoy Butler, has endured many personal health and family challenges and has emerged as a Pro Football Hall of Fame icon.

“We proudly salute his achievements on and off the field where his impact will live forever as the 2023 Fellowship Open Legends Honoree.”

About Rich Poirier

Church Mutual Insurance President and CEO Rich Poirier will be recognized as the 2023 Fellowship Open Corporate Leadership Honoree.

Poirier has been an exuberant supporter of initiatives which have broadened and revitalized Church Mutual’s commitment to meaningful progress toward economic advancement and growing opportunities for business and faith-based enterprise.

“As we have seen the need for community engagement increase exponentially, we have also seen the opportunity to serve and support those most in need as well as those leading the drive toward equity and empowerment.

“Our focus and responsibility are to support that concept and initiative universally,” remarked President Poirier. “Faith-based organizations and initiatives are at the very core of rebuilding and uplifting people’s lives and prosperity.

Church Mutual eagerly accepts a lead role in improving the quality of life through affiliation and support of game-changing initiatives like the Fellowship Open.

“I am proud to join Hall of Famer Jerome Bettis in accepting this prestigious recognition humbly, with great gratitude, and in further encouragement to keep helping people.”

The 23rd annual Fellowship Open golf tournament event is scheduled for Friday, August 25, 2023, at Kettle Hills Golf Course in Richfield, WI. For more information visit www.fellowshipopen.org.



Congratulations

John Daniels III

President and Director of MKE Fellows

Milwaukee Community Journal 2023 Honoree

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It is very bright.*

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FELLOWSHIP OPEN

announces 2023 Civic Leadership Awardees

Three distinguished leaders to be recognized at annual meeting

The Fellowship Open, Wisconsin's premiere corporate and community golf event, recently announced its 2023 Civic Leadership Awardees – Eric L. Conley, Executive Vice President Froedtert Health and President, Froedtert Hospital, Reginald Newson, Chief Community Impact and Advocacy Officer, Ascension Wisconsin, and Randy D. Bryant, President, and CEO of Ten Chimneys Foundation.

Each year it is the tradition of the Fellowship Open to recognize at its annual meeting Wisconsin leaders who are having significant impact in our city and state.

These individuals reflect the very best of the traditions of the Fellowship Open, which for more than two decades has emerged singularly as the most prominent business and civic affairs engagement and advancement initiative in our community.

Eric Conley is a renowned healthcare leader acknowledged by his peers as one of the most powerful advocates and spokespersons for ensuring access to quality health care.

Reggie Newson has made lasting imprint in both health care and governmental affairs having advised former governors and led initiatives around philanthropy and civic engagement.

Milwaukee native Randy Bryant has a long and storied career in corporate business including international leadership.

He serves as President and CEO of Ten Chimneys Foundation and has led that organization to procuring the theatre community's most laudable talent.

These three distinguished leaders have demonstrated exceptional professionalism in community commitment and admirable governance within their respective spheres of influence and beyond.

Their guidance and influence have witnessed enormous positive impact in healthcare, governmental affairs, and the arts.

"Eric, Reggie, and Randy reinforce the reality that Wisconsin is producing and retaining some of the nation's most outstanding community servants and brilliant thought leaders," remarked Fellowship Open President John W. Daniels III.

"The Fellowship Open has prospered as a community resource because we have been able to connect our next generation of leaders and influencers to those making real impact today.

"We salute these exceptional visionaries with great pride and anticipate progressive advancement from their collective contribution for years to come."

About the Fellowship Open

The Fellowship Open was founded in 2000 by a group of corporate and community leaders to engage and inspire Milwaukee youngsters toward professional careers and to foster support for diversity and inclusion in Wisconsin's civic and business communities.

The event's list of honorary chairs includes Wisconsin's most prominent professionals in business, government, and civic affairs. Each year, its ranks expand with individuals that bring outstanding attributes and commitment to the event.

Over the past 23 years, the Fellowship Open has contributed more than \$4.5 million to programs and projects supporting over 130 youth-serving organizations and initiatives throughout Wisconsin.

About the Awards

The Civic Leadership Awards were established by the Honorary Chairs of the Fellowship Open to celebrate the incredible work of individuals whose efforts improve the very fabric of our community in tangible and direct ways. This recognition carries on a tradition established in the creation of the Fellowship Open which has recognized Hall of Fame, Olympic, World Champions, and legendary athletic figures like Henry Aaron, Jackie Joyner-Kersey, Oscar Robertson, LeRoy Butler, Bud Selig, and many others since its inception in 2000.

The Fellowship Open is particularly thrilled to highlight these noteworthy civic leaders in 2023.

The awards will be presented during the Fellowship Open annual meeting June 20, 2023, at Robert W. Baird's corporate headquarters in downtown Milwaukee and will be attended by Wisconsin's most influential community and civic leaders.

Another unique tradition of the occasion is the commissioning of a personal portrait of each awardee. The portraits are then displayed at many Milwaukee corporate, business, educational, and community facilities highlighting these remarkable achievements and promoting professional development for talented youth in our community.

The portraits of this year's awardees will join those of sports legends Tommy Smith, Willie Davis, Herb Kohl, and Bob Dandridge just to name a few.

For additional information, contact Fellowship Open Tournament Director Billy Young @ 414- 614-3109 or billy.young@alivemke.com.



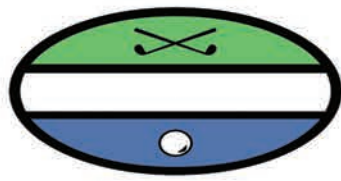
Randy Bryant



Eric Conley



Reginald Newson



23rd Annual

Fellowship Open

Congratulations to the Fellowship Open, its sponsors, and its Honorary Chairs on successfully promoting urban youth programs and involvement in business. The Fellowship Open's mission recognizes volunteers and organizations that positively impact our community's youth. In the past 23 years, the Fellowship Open has raised more than \$4.5 million for youth organizations, involving more than 160 organizations throughout Wisconsin.

Congratulations 2023 Honorees!



Rich Poirier
2023 Fellowship Open
National Corporate Leadership Honoree



Jerome "the Bus" Bettis
2023 Fellowship Open
Legends Honoree



2023 Honorary Chair Members

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Joe Davis	Lennox Johnson	Gerard Randall	
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	Gregory Jones	John Ridley	
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