

Precinct Reporter

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"I wholly disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it" – Voltaire

The Community's Newspaper – Serving Riverside County, Eastern Los Angeles County & San Bernardino County

Vol. 27 - No 31



Gov. Newsom:

Black Caucus "Owed an Apology"

By Antonio Ray Harvey
California Black Media

A week after advocates rallied at the State Capitol to protest lawmakers for not allowing two reparations bills to be brought up for a vote on the Assembly floor, Gov. Gavin Newsom said the California Legislative Black Caucus (CLBC) members are "owed an apology."

For several days now, CLBC chair Lori Wilson (D-Suisun City) and other caucus members have been under fire from some activists and advocates who say the lawmakers did not do enough to push the reparations bills authored by their colleague, Sen. Steven Bradford (D-Inglewood).

Others have been accusing members of intentionally sabotaging the bills even though last week the CLBC issued a statement informing the public that it intends to reintroduce the reparations bills during the next legislative session.

On Sept. 7, Newsom said it was "disgraceful" for anyone to unleash their frustrations out on the CLBC.

"There were members of that Black Caucus that are owed an apology for being treated the way they were treated – to be doxed, to be personally maligned, and attacked. So, forgive me for expressing that," Newsom said. "I have great respect and admiration for the leadership of the Black Caucus and members of the Black Caucus," Newsom told reporters.

Newsom made the statement at a news conference held at the Capitol Annex Swing Space when he announced that he issued proposed emergency regulations to protect youth from the adverse health effects of dangerous hemp products.

The CLBC released a statement on Aug. 31, the last day of the Legislative session, stating that it had "concerns" about Bradford's bills Senate Bill (SB) 1403 and SB 1331, legislation that previously advanced with minimal opposition through Senate and Assembly committees before being withheld from a final floor vote by all members of the lower house of the Legislature.

SB 1403 proposes the

(Cont. on Page A-7)

"Artists Against Hate" Brings Love at CSU Dominguez Hills Concert

By Barbara Smith
Photos: Earl Edwards and Busby Promotions

"Artists Against Hate," a consortium of performers created in response to the CA vs HATE legislation enacted last year, brought audiences to their feet multiple times at

a riveting concert held at CSU Dominguez Hills last Friday evening. The diverse troupe of dancers, visual artists, poets, and writers, led by Executive Producer Brian Townsend, Publisher, Precinct Reporter Group; Project Director Kathryn Ervin, CSU San Bernardino

Professor Emeritus, Theatre Arts; and Associate Producer Maura Townsend, Artistic Director and Choreographer, Maura Townsend Dance Project, wrapped up their third in a series of three concerts over the last year with the message that it takes strength to stand up to hate and that art can be a universal language to bridge cultures and bring people together creatively to combat hate.

State data released one year after the launch of CA vs HATE, the hotline and online portal for reporting hate crimes and incidents, has shown its impact. The statewide reporting hotline was created to combat a rise in reported hate crimes, which had risen nearly 33 percent from 2020 to 2021. After one year, people statewide reported more than 1,000 acts of hate, with race and ethnicity bias being the most widely cited motivations. Friday's interactive concert helped drive awareness of services and resources available to anyone targeted for hate including direct services for victims and survivors of hate incidents

and crime; prevention services including arts and cultural work, youth development and senior safety and escort programs; and intervention services including outreach, training, restorative justice and coordination with local government and institutional partners. Audience members were reminded of the hotline, offered in 15 languages, which is available for any victim or witness to anonymously report a hate incident or crime at 833-8-NO-HATE or at CAvsHATE.org.

Selections in the 90-minute concert addressed race, gender identity, religion and ethnicity. Performances included dance, music, spoken word, and visual art. "These concerts actually connected two communities," said Project Director Kathryn Ervin. "I hope the audiences we served were moved by the performances to understand how hate hurts us all and the importance of speaking out! I know the artists were moved by the opportunity to interact and present with artists similarly

(Cont. on Page A-2)



Fontana and MoVal Job Fairs Set

By Dianne Anderson

Youth who may be running short on marketable skills, or even adults seeking new employment prospects have a lot to gain at upcoming job fairs where they can shake hands, interview and possibly land that dream career.

Applicants can show out their best attire and pitch their skills. Or, if they're not ready for prime time, they could learn to sharpen interviews, shine up their resumes, and get to the top of the stack next time around.

On Friday, September 27, the Fontana Mayor's Education Coalition Youth Career & Job Fair hopes to reduce the stress of finding a job for their future leaders, innovators, and workforce.



The event, which runs from 9:00 a.m. to noon is located at Jessie Turner Health & Fitness Community Center at 5556 Summit Avenue in Fontana.

"This event is a unique chance to inspire and guide

local youth as they explore potential career paths. It's also an opportunity for our local business community to make a significant impact on the future of our young people and to help shape our

community's workforce," said Mayor Acquafredda Warren.

City Spokesperson Monique Carter said the event clears the path for the business community to connect with local youth.

"We are still accepting vendor applications, currently, we have various businesses confirmed – Fontana PD, San Bernardino Fire, First Institute Training & Management, and several scholarship

organizations just to name a few," she said, adding that other event partners include the City of Fontana, and Chaffey College.

The Fontana Mayor's Education Coalition was established in 2019, but she said the Youth-focused Job and Career Fair and Career - Pathfinder Day are the newest additions to the program.

"As a valued business or organization in Fontana, business participation will play a crucial role in providing our young attendees with the guidance, inspiration, and resources they need to explore various career paths, internships, and job opportunities," Carter said in an email.

(Cont. on Page A-6)



The male and female Microbusiness Persons of the Year were honored during the First Community Capital Rising Star Microbusiness Awards Dinner. Shown above from left to right are honorees Jose Jesus Martinez of Martinez & Son Trucking Co., Dr. Boni Johnson of AFC Urgent Care, and Jay DiAllo Founder and CEO of First Community Capital. Photo: James

“Artists Against Hate”

(Cont. from Page A-1)

developing creative work to present against hate.”

Outstanding dance companies who performed at Friday’s concert included Kybele Dance Theater, led by Seda Aybay, Artistic Director and Choreographer; Maura Townsend Dance Project, featuring guest artist Michael Tomlin III; FUSE Dance Company, led by Artistic Director Joshua Estrada-Romero; and BrockusRED, led by Deborah Brockus, Artistic Director and Choreographer. Narrators Ron Berglas, actor and educator, and Joyce Lee, filmmaker and theatre professional, connected the threads through each performance, weaving data and historical references with personal stories of how hate has impacted communities and how we can forge a path forward. “Hate is a very old idea,” offered Lee, relating that in 1895, newspapers reported the gruesome Tyler, Texas lynching of Robert Hilliard, a Black man, by a lynch mob numbering some 10,000 people. Now, in our increasingly polarized climate, data shows that for the year ending 2022, Blacks suffered over three times the impact of other groups. “Art pushes against hate,” Lee added, introducing jazz vocalist Dwight Trible, who also serves as executive director of the World Stage in Los Angeles. Trible has collaborated with jazz greats Pharoah Sanders, Billy Higgins and most recently saxophonist Kamasi Washington. His rich,

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Microbusiness Awards Dinner Honors Small Business

Black owned CDFI First Community Capital (FCC) recently hosted its Second Annual Rising Star Microbusiness Awards Celebration at the UC Riverside Alumni & Visitor Center. Over 100 people came out to support founder and CEO Jay DiAllo and his team for the worthy cause.

Many in attendance were small business owners and non-profits that understand the important role CDFI’s play when it comes to having access to capital.

“The Microbusiness Award Celebration serves as a cornerstone of our organization, highlighting the vital support we provide

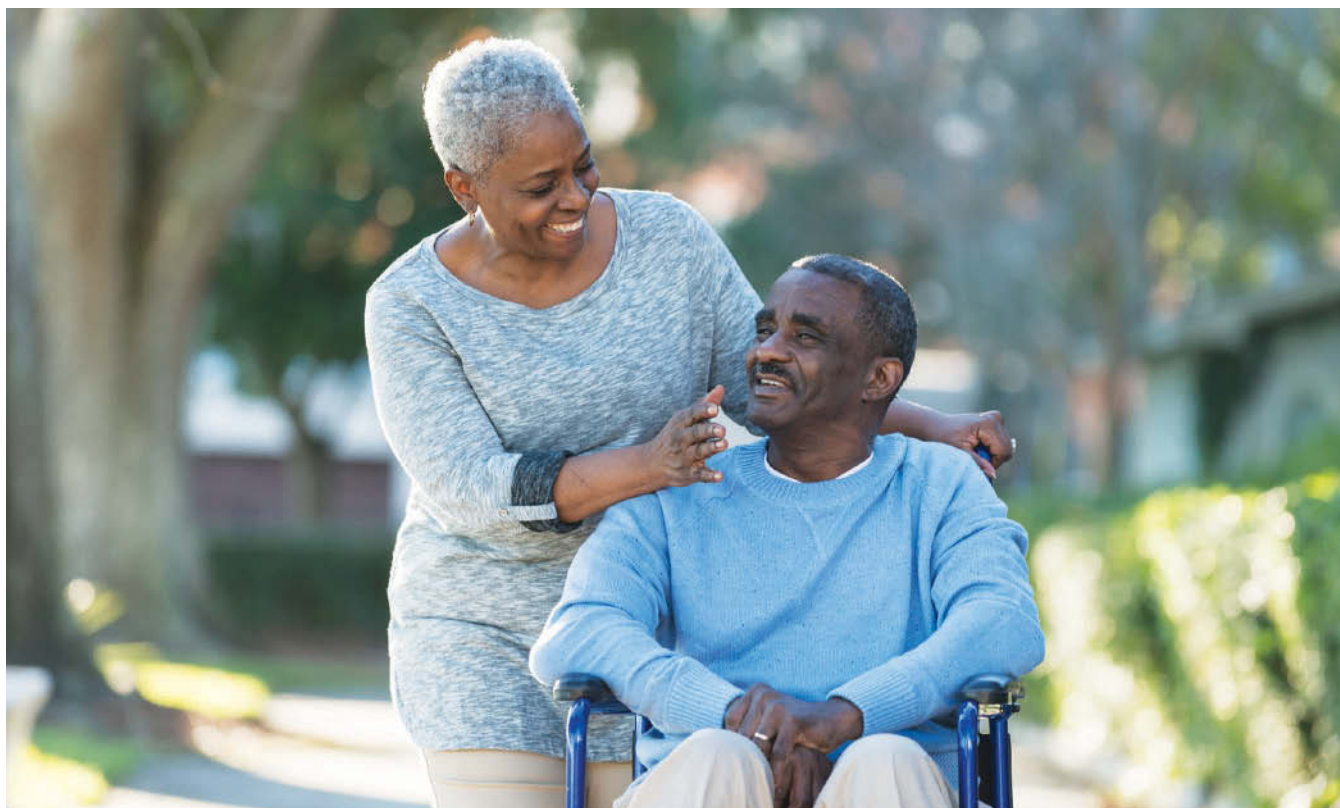
through capital and technical assistance to disadvantaged microentrepreneurs,” said DiAllo.

During the elegant awards dinner celebration, FCC honored their male and female Microbusinesses of The Year and recognized five other businesses with its Rising Star Award.

“The honorees exemplify the entrepreneurial spirit and positive community impact we strive to foster at First Community Capital,” said DiAllo.

During the awards celebration the FCC team acknowledged its key partners and funders whose contributions are essential

to its mission of advancing economic justice and creating opportunities for all. “Our mission is to foster economic empowerment by offering accessible capital and guidance to economically disadvantaged small businesses and low to moderate income individuals,” concluded DiAllo.



California’s Aging Services Offer Valuable Resources for Older Adults

As we grow older, our needs and priorities change. In California, a wide range of services is available to help you maintain your independence, stay connected, and lead a fulfilling life. Whether you’re looking for support with daily tasks, health care guidance, or planning for the future, California’s aging services are here to help.

Aging in Place

Many of you may prefer to stay in your own home as you get older. California offers programs that can assist with home repairs, transportation, and in-home care. Additionally, health and social care programs, including day centers with activities like arts and exercise, help you stay independent.

Nutrition Services

You can enjoy home-delivered meals or gather for group meals at local centers. For those with limited income, there are options to get fresh produce and other food benefits through the CalFresh Expansion program.

Health Insurance Guidance

Confused about health insurance options? The Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP) provides guidance on

Medicare and long-term care insurance.

Support for Caregivers

If you are caring for an older adult, there are programs like Caregiver Resource Centers (CRCs) and the Family Caregiver Support Program offering respite, counseling, and assistance with paperwork. CRCs also provide action plans for families dealing with dementia.

Legal Assistance

Facing issues like consumer fraud, elder abuse, or age discrimination? Legal Services are available to help with Social Security, health insurance, pensions, and more.

Employment Opportunities

Looking for a job? Free training and job placement services are available for older Californians.

Emergency Preparedness

Planning for emergencies is especially important as we age. California offers resources to help you prepare for natural disasters, power outages, and other emergencies. Creating a personal emergency plan, keeping an emergency kit ready, and staying informed about local resources can make all the difference.

COMMENTARY

DOJ, State AGs File Joint Price Fixing Lawsuit

By Charlene Crowell

In August, the Department of Justice and eight state Attorneys Generals filed a lawsuit charging RealPage Inc., a commercial revenue management software firm with providing apartment managers with illegal price fixing software data that violates antitrust law and artificially increases costs for millions of renters across the nation.

After a nearly two-year



investigation, the agencies found an estimated 80 percent of renters are forced to pay falsely inflated rates while

also denying honest landlords an opportunity to compete for these same customers.

The lawsuit claims RealPage's practices are federal interstate commerce violations provided by the long-standing Sherman Act enacted in 1890.

"When the Sherman Act was passed, an anticompetitive scheme might have looked like robber barons shaking hands at a secret meeting," stated U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland. "Today, it looks like landlords using mathematical algorithms to align their rents. But antitrust law does not become obsolete simply because competitors find new ways to unlawfully act in concert. And Americans should not have to pay more in rent simply because a company has found a new way to scheme with landlords to break the law."

Joining the civil lawsuit are the Attorneys General of California, Colorado, Connecticut, Minnesota, North Carolina, Oregon,

Tennessee, and Washington.

Falsely-inflated rental costs worsen the already disproportionate financial strain felt by people of color. Tight living spaces that come at sky-high costs especially harm disproportionate numbers of Black and Latino renters. As Harvard's Joint Center for Housing Studies 2024 State of the Nation's Housing noted:

"More than half of Black (57 percent), Hispanic (54 percent), and multiracial (50 percent) renter households were cost burdened at last measure in 2022... While racial income inequality explains some of the difference, burden rates remain disproportionately high for lower-income renters of color, at 85 and 87 percent for Black and Hispanic renters, respectively, as compared to 80 percent of their white counterparts."

The complaint alleges that RealPage contracts with competing landlords who agree to share with the firm nonpublic, competitively sensitive information about their apartment rental rates and other lease terms. This data is then used with RealPage's algorithmic pricing software to generate

recommendations, including apartment rental pricing and other terms, for participating landlords. The use of rivals' data trove of competitively sensitive information violates interstate commerce law aimed at preventing monopolies.

The complaint further alleges that in a free market, these landlords otherwise would be competing independently to attract renters based on pricing, discounts, concessions, lease terms, and other dimensions of apartment leasing.

"Healthy competition in the rental housing market requires two key ingredients," added Deputy Attorney General Lisa Monaco. "The market must be dictated by open and honest competition among landlords. And, renters must be able to negotiate prices with landlords — without the specter of collusion... But RealPage has shut away those ingredients, changed the locks, and thrown away the keys. That's collusion — and that's against the law."

North Carolina Attorney General Josh Stein, whose office filed the joint lawsuit on August 23 in the Middle District of North Carolina, also weighed in on the lawsuit's importance.

"Few things are as important as our homes — but too many North Carolinians struggle to afford their apartment," said Attorney

General Josh Stein. "Rents are already too high. I will not tolerate any company scheming to block healthy competition among landlords. It raises rent, and it's illegal."

For one North Carolina local official, the lawsuit is an opportunity to right a grievous wrong.

"Between 2010 and 2020 the median rent in Wake County jumped up 40 percent," said Shinica Thomas, Wake County Board of Commissioners Chair. "That costs families an extra \$4,200 a year. For a household that's struggling to make ends meet, that can be the difference between stability and eviction."

A growing metro market, Wake County is home to the state's capitol, Raleigh. But according to multiple independent housing research reports, high rental rate increases have occurred throughout the nation, in communities of varying sizes and locales.

For example, monthly rents in Knoxville, TN reached \$1,818 in February 2024, a 59.1 percent increase from 2019, according to this spring, SmartAsset.com.

More recently, Apartments.com found posted national rental rate averages by state and city. Nationally, the average national monthly cost of a one-bedroom apartment with 699 square feet is \$1,563.

On a statewide basis, average rental costs in California, the District of Columbia, Massachusetts, New Jersey and New York all surpass \$2,000 for dwellings with as low as 631 square feet to no more than 727 square feet. Conversely, Oklahoma is one of the states with the lowest average rent of \$880 for a 687 square foot unit.

Comparing costs and square footage by city, Apartments.com additionally found New York City had the highest monthly rental cost of \$3,865, and the smallest square footage at 598 square feet. The only other city, Boston (\$3,450), was the only other city with more than had over \$3,000 in average rental costs. All of the following cities average rental costs exceed ng \$2,000 for less than 700 square feet in Los Angeles, Miami, Oakland, San Diego and Seattle.

"Access to affordable housing options is becoming increasingly difficult," said Monica Burks, Policy Counsel at the Center for Responsible Lending. "Anti-competitive practices that inflate already high housing costs disadvantage individuals and families working hard to secure this basic need."

Charlene Crowell is a senior fellow with the Center for Responsible Lending. She can be reached at Charlene.crowell@responsiblelending.org.

Report Calls for Urgent Reforms:

Tax System's Role in Widening Racial Wealth Gap

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Sr Natl Correspondent

Color of Change, the nation's largest online racial justice organization, and Americans for Tax Fairness released a damning report exposing the deep racial inequities entrenched in the U.S. tax system. The issue brief "How Tax Fairness Can Promote Racial Equity," written by Color of Change Managing Director Portia Allen-Kyle and Americans for Tax Fairness Executive Director David Kass, exposes the systemic flaws in tax policy that have widened the racial wealth gap and prevented economic mobility for Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities.

The report urgently calls for sweeping reforms to stop the flow of tax benefits to the wealthiest Americans—who

are overwhelmingly white—while offering concrete solutions to make the tax code work for everyone, not just the top 1%.

"An equitable tax system does two things," Allen-Kyle asserts. "It narrows the racial wealth gap from the bottom up and spurs economic mobility for Black, Brown, and Indigenous individuals and families. Our current tax code fails on both accounts. It's a prime example of how so-called 'colorblind' systems actively prevent Black families from building generational wealth and economic security."

Tax Code Deepens Racial Disparities, Experts Say

The brief pulls no punches in describing how current tax policies disproportionately benefit wealthy white families, further deepening racial inequalities. By giving preferential treatment to wealth over work, the system locks in

economic advantages for white households while leaving communities of color to bear the brunt of these inequities.

"Our tax system is not only failing to address racial wealth inequality, it's exacerbating it," Kass warns. "We privilege wealth over work, fail to adequately tax our richest households and corporations, and allow inherited fortunes to compound unchecked by taxation. This perpetuates a legacy of racial inequality."

The racial wealth gap has exploded in recent years, with the median wealth gap between Black and white households jumping from \$172,000 in 2019 to over \$214,000 in 2022. Economic crises such as the Great Recession and the COVID-19 pandemic further entrenched these divides, benefiting the already wealthy while leaving Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities further behind.

The Racial Wealth Gap and Homeownership, long touted as a primary means of building wealth in America, has failed to deliver for Black families. The report points to factors such as biased home appraisals and a regressive property tax system as key reasons why Black homeowners have been unable to accumulate wealth at the same rate as their white counterparts.

As the brief notes, with critical provisions of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) set to expire, now is a pivotal moment for tax reform. "We have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reform our

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Precinct Reporter Group
Art Townsend - Founder
(1965 - 1989)

Precinct Reporter
Serving Inland Southern California
Adjudicated a Legal newspaper of general circulation on July 24, 1974 case number 162020 by the Superior Court of San Bernardino County. The Precinct Reporter is published every Thursday by the Precinct Reporter Group, 357 W. 2nd St. Ste 1A, SB 92401, San Bernardino, CA 92401.

Tri-County Bulletin
The Only Black Publication Serving All of Orange County.
Adjudicated a Legal newspaper of general circulation on July 15, 1988 case number A143589 by the Superior Court of Orange County. The Tri-County Bulletin is published every Thursday by the Precinct Reporter Group.

Long Beach Leader
The Community's Newspaper serving Long Beach and Surrounding Communities.
Established as a newspaper of general circulation on January 23, 1997. The Long Beach Leader is published every Thursday by the Precinct Reporter Group.

Publisher and Editor Brian Townsend
Asst. to the Publisher Willie Ellison, II
Classified Advertising Maura Townsend
Orange County Social Editor Jacqueline Johnson
Graphic Design Ken Jordan

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Member: National Newspaper Publishers Association
West Coast Black Publishers Association
Associated Press

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Black Caucus Releases Corporate Accountability Report on DEI

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Sr Natl
Correspondent

Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) Chairman Steven Horsford (NV-04) and CBC members have released a first-of-its-kind report titled "What Good Looks Like: A Corporate Accountability Report on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion." The report aims to hold Fortune 500 companies accountable for their commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the wake of George Floyd's murder and the racial justice movement that followed. This initiative comes as corporate America faces renewed scrutiny following the Supreme Court's decision to overturn affirmative action in the Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard case.

The CBC's report highlights which corporations are making tangible progress in advancing DEI and offers a roadmap for other companies to follow. Despite efforts from right-wing groups to dismantle diversity initiatives, the report finds that many Fortune 500 companies are standing firm in

their commitments. The report also examines DEI practices in manufacturing, finance, insurance, and technology sectors, providing industry-specific insights.

Most Fortune 500 companies participating in the CBC's survey demonstrated their commitment to DEI even after the Supreme Court's ruling. CBC members said this is crucial because conservative organizations, such as Stephen Miller-led America First Legal, are increasingly waging legal and political attacks against corporations' diversity initiatives. These groups argue that DEI initiatives violate federal law, threatening legal action against companies that continue to promote workplace diversity.

The Findings
The CBC's report offers a detailed analysis of diversity efforts across various industries, using data from the Global Industry Classification Standard (GICS) and the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Key findings include:

S e c t o r Representation: The bulk

of the responses came from companies in manufacturing (31%), finance and insurance (25%), and information (16%).

Best Practices: The report identifies 12 best practices, including leadership accountability, data disaggregation, talent retention, and pay equity. These examples provide a model for other companies to implement DEI strategies effectively.

Progress and Challenges: While many companies have made significant strides, persistent gaps remain, particularly in leadership diversity and retention rates. The report encourages corporations to move beyond public statements and implement measurable DEI outcomes.

The CBC hopes the report will serve as a tool for corporations to benchmark their progress and adopt more robust DEI measures. "What Good Looks Like" outlines not only where companies are succeeding but also where opportunities for improvement lie, urging corporate leaders to align their actions with their stated DEI values.

Conservative Backlash and the Fight for DEI

Officials said the CBC's efforts to hold corporations accountable come amid heightened political tensions. Since the Supreme Court's ruling, Donald Trump and his supporters have escalated their attacks on DEI programs. Right-wing legal campaigns have targeted not only corporate diversity efforts, but also federal programs aimed at leveling the playing field for Black and minority-owned businesses.

Conservative attorneys general from over a dozen states have warned Fortune 500 companies, threatening legal action over their diversity programs. Additionally, anti-DEI bills have been introduced in more than 30 states, aiming to restrict diversity efforts in college admissions and the workplace.

Despite the attacks, the CBC said it remains steadfast in its commitment to advancing racial and economic equity. In December 2023, the CBC sent Fortune 500 companies an accountability letter urging them to uphold their DEI commitments in

the face of political pressure, which catalyzed the report.

Corporate America's response has been overwhelmingly positive. Since the CBC's letter, companies have held over 50 meetings with CBC representatives, affirming their dedication to diversity. The CBC has also convened discussions with industry trade associations and hosted a briefing with more than 300 Fortune 500 company representatives to strengthen collaboration on DEI efforts.

Moving Forward
The CBC's report is not just a reflection on past efforts but a call to action for the future. It highlights the importance of cross-industry learning, encouraging companies to share best practices and build upon one another's successes. The CBC also recommends that corporations adopt consistent performance metrics to track progress and foster accountability.

Looking ahead, the CBC plans to push for more economic opportunities for Black Americans, focusing on closing the racial wealth gap. Horsford emphasized that DEI

is not only a moral imperative but also an economic one. Research from McKinsey & Company shows that racially diverse companies outperform their peers by 39% in profitability, further underscoring the business case for diversity.

The CBC's report offers a roadmap for companies committed to fostering a more inclusive and equitable future, despite political and legal challenges.

"Following the murder of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, we witnessed a nationwide response calling for long-overdue justice and accountability," Horsford wrote in the report. "Millions of Americans flooded the streets in protest to advocate for an end to the cycles of violence against Black Americans that are perpetuated by systemic racism ingrained deeply in the United States."

"Now, in order to move forward and achieve the goals of these commitments, we must evaluate where we are and stay the course. We cannot allow a handful of right-wing agitators to bully corporations away from their promises."

"Artists Against Hate"

(Cont. from Page 1)

importance of speaking out! I know the artists were moved by the opportunity to interact and present with artists similarly developing creative work to present against hate."

Outstanding dance companies who performed at Friday's concert included Kybele Dance Theater, led by Seda Aybay, Artistic Director and Choreographer; Maura Townsend Dance Project, featuring guest artist Michael Tomlin III; FUSE Dance Company, led by Artistic Director

Joshua Estrada-Romero; and BrockusRED, led by Deborah Brockus, Artistic Director and Choreographer. Narrators Ron Berglas, actor and educator, and Joyce Lee, filmmaker and theatre professional, connected the threads through each performance, weaving data and historical references with personal stories of how hate has impacted communities and how we can forge a path forward. "Hate is a very old idea," offered Lee, relating that in 1895, newspapers

reported the gruesome Tyler, Texas lynching of Robert Hilliard, a Black man, by a lynch mob numbering some 10,000 people. Now, in our increasingly polarized climate, data shows that for the year ending 2022, Blacks suffered over three times the impact of other groups. "Art pushes against hate," Lee added, introducing jazz vocalist Dwight Trible, who also serves as executive director of the World Stage in Los Angeles. Trible has collaborated with jazz greats Pharoah Sanders, Billy Higgins and most recently saxophonist Kamasi Washington. His rich, thunderous arrangement of the classic "Everything Must Change," drew deep on his ancestral origins and showcased incredible range, sending a surge of hope

through the crowd. He later shared how his work with the World Stage, an educational and performance art space in Leimert Park Village, and the famed Leimert Park Jazz Festival, is rooted in helping artists invest in themselves. "That is what I have dedicated my life to," he said, "bringing us together to fight against what has separated us, seeing similarities in our common humanity and coming together in our greatness."

Spoken word artist Shaunté Keakalani Caraballo, Assistant Professor, Department of Theatre & Dance at CSU Dominguez Hills, drew on her self-described roots as African American, LatinX and Boricua, in an elegantly phrased poem, delivered with passion and nuance, her story, which many in the audience

related to, a kind of "romantic rendezvous of melanin."

Clearly audience members were moved by each performance. Roshada Baldwin, niece of Lula Washington, Founder and Artistic Director of the Lula Washington Dance Theatre (LWDT) and Founding Member of the International Association of Blacks in Dance, came with her 10-year-old son Jemari English to support fellow dancers and artists. Baldwin's own career in dance gave her an added appreciation for the project. "It's important for such an event to take place," she said. "In fact, it should be a priority to stimulate discussion. Hate comes in many forms. So does love. Art always teeters on extinction. A program like this reenergizes us to see how dancers, poets, and

musicians can come together with passion for their art and to make a difference."

Added Associate Producer Maura Townsend, "The artistic expression by the artists elicited audience reactions in a safe space. My hopes are to continue concerts like this promoting positivity through the arts and simultaneously bringing artists of various backgrounds to spread the message."

In remembering acting legend James Earl Jones, who passed away Monday, we are reminded of his statement, "The arts have always been an important ingredient in the health of a nation, but we haven't gotten there yet." With projects like "Artists Against Hate," we move steps closer to that goal.

SoCal Dems

(Cont. from Page 1)

Beach and the Inland Empire. Their goal is to work together to engage local areas, and drive awareness on policies and candidates for local office.

"We provide education to understand why this is the most important election year of our time and how they can be part of it," he said. "We're going out to the streets, to their events block clubs, to let people know there is still time to vote."

In Orange County, Darlene Futrel is also concerned with challenges facing her

county's voter engagement, where many residents there feel disenfranchised from the political process, that their vote doesn't count.

On September 21, their FREE Bowling Party/Voter Education/Registration Drive targets ages 18-34 and runs from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 pm at Splitsville Luxury in Downtown Disney District.

With Election Day just around the corner, she said they want to include, educate and register every eligible voter so no one is left behind and no one sits this one out.

"By hosting or participating in local events, we create opportunities for face-to-face interactions, allowing us to answer questions and provide information directly to community members," said Futrel, president of the Orange County chapter of the National Action Network.

Outreach campaigns are in full force. They have hired a Voter Engagement expert from SCLC (Southern Christian Leadership Conference) to educate voters on participation on the impact of local elections.

She encourages participants to take what they have learned and educate and register their family, friends, co-workers and community members. They will also check the status and, or, register all eligible attendees.

"Me personally, when I am out and about, at the gas station, grocery store, concerts, etc., and have conversations with complete strangers, especially our young people, I always ask "Are you registered to vote?" she said.

When someone tells her they're not, she asks why. If they are Black, she stresses

that too many Black people have died in the pursuit of voting rights.

Not voting means that others are the decision-makers.

"Too many of our allies, people who already had the right to vote, yet put their lives on the line so that we could enjoy that same right, for you not to vote," she said. "When you don't vote you are in essence muting yourself, silencing yourself and silence is compliance."

She also utilizes the QR Code for easy access to California Online Voter Registration. OC NAN is nonpartisan, but she said they are reaching the community by collaborating with local organizations, social media platforms, using comparison charts, addressing vital issues, in propositions, deadlines, around upcoming elections.

Recently, she engaged an

80-year-old Vietnam Vet at a local doughnut shop. He was not interested in voting, but in the end, she may have sold him on the idea that all people should exercise their voice.

"He disagreed with that, but then when he got ready to leave, he turned around and said "You know what you are right and I'm going to vote this year."

Voters should start watching the mail on October 7 for their ballots coming in from their counties.

The Secretary of State's website lays out all the important dates to save. October 21 is the last day to register to vote online for the General Election at <https://registertovote.ca.gov>. Voters are encouraged to check Voter Status at <https://voterstatus.sos.ca.gov/>

For those not registered even at the last minute, they

can also register on the same day as the Election. To learn how to register to vote, see <https://vote.gov/register/california>

Save the date, November 5, 2024, <https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/upcoming-elections/general-election-nov-5-2024>

To see the SOS QR Code, <https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/myvote-democracy-work-project/daw-qr-code>

Learn more about what VP Harris stands for, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/vice-president-harris/>

For more BLAYD information, see <https://www.blacklayoungdemocrats.com/>

For NAN OC, see <https://www.nan-oc.com/> National Action Network - Orange County Chapter

Racial Wealth Gap

(Cont. from Page 3)

tax system to address racial inequality," the report states, comparing recent monumental legislation like the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act.

Three Key Reforms to Tackle Racial Inequality

The report lays out three central reforms aimed at curbing the wealth concentration among the ultra-rich and dismantling the racial inequities baked into the tax code:

Taxing Wealth Fairly: The report calls for equalizing the

tax rates on wealth and work. Currently, capital gains—profits from investments—are taxed at a far lower rate than wages earned by working people, a disparity that overwhelmingly benefits white households. The vast majority of capital gains income flows to white families, who comprise only two-thirds of taxpayers but receive 92% of the benefits from lower tax rates on investment income.

Strengthening the Estate Tax: The estate tax, which is supposed to curb the

accumulation of dynastic wealth, has been weakened over time, allowing large fortunes—primarily held by white families—to grow even larger across generations. The report calls for stronger enforcement of the estate tax to prevent the further entrenchment of wealth and power within a small, overwhelmingly white elite.

Targeting Tax Deductions to Benefit Lower-Income Households: Deductions for mortgage interest, college savings, and retirement accounts disproportionately benefit wealthier, predominantly white households. In order to prevent lower-income and minority households from falling behind due to policies that are currently biased in favor of the wealthy, the brief advocates for

restructuring these deductions.

B i d e n - H a r r i s Administration and Senate Proposals for Change

Both the Biden-Harris administration and Senate Finance Committee Chairman Ron Wyden have proposed addressing the racial wealth gap. The Billionaire Minimum Income Tax (BMIT) and the Billionaire Income Tax (BIT) would ensure that the wealthiest Americans—who often go years without paying taxes—contribute their fair share. These proposals would raise over \$500 billion in revenue over the next decade, which could be reinvested in healthcare, education, and housing for communities of color.

As the report points out, our current tax system is skewed in favor of the ultrawealthy. It

allows the rich to avoid paying taxes on the increased value of their investments unless they sell them. They often borrow against these growing fortunes, further delaying taxation, which allows white billionaires to accumulate vast wealth while paying a fraction of what working families pay in taxes.

Defending IRS Funding to Hold the Wealthy Accountable

The report also highlights the critical need to defend IRS funding, restored under the Inflation Reduction Act, which is essential for cracking down on wealthy tax cheats. Contrary to Republican claims, this funding will not increase tax enforcement on households earning less than \$400,000. Instead, it will improve customer service and expand the Direct File program, saving

taxpayers significant time and money.

The Biden administration's restored IRS funding is expected to raise an additional \$100 billion over the next decade by ensuring the wealthiest Americans and corporations pay what they legally owe.

A Call for Urgent Action

The message from Color of Change and Americans for Tax Fairness is clear: America's tax system is broken, and without immediate reforms, the racial wealth gap will continue to widen. "Addressing the insidious racial preferences in our tax code is one of the most direct ways we can not only help Black communities grow here and now but for generations to come," Allen-Kyle concludes.

HEALTH

3 Essential Steps to Love Your Heart

FAMILY FEATURES

Taking steps to improve your overall health can help you live a longer, healthier life. One key component of overall well-being – heart health – is especially critical as heart disease has been the leading cause of death among Americans since 1950, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Adopting habits like exercising regularly, eating a heart-healthy diet with lots of vegetables and fruits like grapes and getting the proper amount of sleep can set you on the right path.

Eat a Heart-Healthy Diet

A diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins and healthy fats can have a positive impact on heart health and may lower your risk for heart disease. For example, grapes are easy to keep on hand as a heart-healthy snack. They have no saturated fat or cholesterol and are low in sodium; contain 7% of the daily recommended intake of potassium; and are a good source of vitamin K. Grapes are also a natural source of beneficial antioxidants and other polyphenols and help maintain healthy circulation by promoting the relaxation of blood vessels.

Whether enjoying them by the handful on their own or as part of recipes like these Baked Grape Falafel Bites, where Grapes from California add juicy goodness to a classic chickpea fritter, grapes are a perfect ingredient for heart-friendly eating plans. Research suggests eating grapes daily helps support heart health. In one study, for example, women who consumed 1 1/4 cups of grapes every day benefited from reduced blood triglyceride levels, LDL cholesterol levels, inflammatory proteins and other markers of heart disease.

Exercise Regularly

Getting at least 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity aerobic activity or 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity, as recommended by the American Heart Association, can have a positive impact on heart health by lowering blood pressure, reducing inflammation and aiding in maintaining a healthy weight.

Get the Proper Amount of Sleep

A crucial component of heart health, experts recommend adults get 7-9 hours of sleep each night. Creating a cozy sleep space by turning off electronics and setting the thermostat to a comfortable temperature is the first step toward a restful night's sleep. Also aim for consistency with your bedtime routine, including going to sleep and waking at the same times each day (including weekends), for best results.

Learn more about the heart-health benefits of grapes, and find additional heart-friendly recipes, at GrapesFromCalifornia.com.



Baked Grape Falafel Bites

Servings: 6 (3 falafel bites per serving)

- 1 cup dried chickpeas, rinsed cold water, for soaking
- 1 cup loosely packed fresh parsley leaves
- 1/2 cup loosely packed fresh cilantro leaves
- 4 garlic cloves, peeled
- 1 medium onion, peeled and cut in wedges
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/3 cup all-purpose flour
- 18 red Grapes from California
- vegetable oil cooking spray
- tahini sauce or baba ghanoush, for dipping

In medium bowl, cover chickpeas with at least 2 inches cold water. Let soak at least 12 hours, or overnight, at room temperature. To make falafel bites: Drain soaked chickpeas, rinse well in colander and let stand.

In bowl of food processor, process parsley and cilantro until chopped herbs stick to sides of bowl. Do not scrape down. With motor still running, drop garlic through feed tube; it will also stick to sides of bowl. Remove lid, add onion and pulse to chop well. Add chickpeas, cumin, salt and baking powder. Scrape everything off sides of bowl and process until mixture is well chopped and looks mealy. Add flour and pulse to blend. Cover mixture and chill at least 1 hour.

Using 1-ounce scoop or tablespoon, drop 2-tablespoon mounds of chickpea mixture onto plate. Shape into balls, stuffing one grape inside each.

Heat oven to 350 F. Line baking sheet with foil then parchment paper.

Place falafel balls on sheet and spray with vegetable oil cooking spray. Bake 20 minutes, turning 1-2 times with tongs, until golden brown.

Nutritional information per serving: 240 calories; 8 g protein; 30 g carbohydrates; 11 g fat (41% calories from fat); 1 g saturated fat (4% calories from saturated fat); 0 mg cholesterol; 480 mg sodium; 6 g fiber.

Essential Tips to Support Your Immune System

FAMILY FEATURES

The immune system – made up of organs, tissues, cells and proteins – is your body's personal defense system against bacteria and viruses, helping ward off illness and infection. Because of the vital role it plays in keeping you healthy, it's important to take steps to keep your immune system strong.

Consider these healthy habits that can go a long way toward supporting your immune system and maintaining your health.

Practice Proper Hygiene

Good hygiene – and avoiding close contact with people who are sick – is a key component of maintaining a healthy immune system. Practices such as washing your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; covering your nose and mouth with a tissue or your elbow when coughing or sneezing; and disinfecting oft-touched objects and surfaces like doorknobs, light switches, counters and remote controls can help remove germs and reduce their spread.

Consider a Nutrient-Rich Supplement

The body requires many essential nutrients to form the foundation of a healthy immune system. Consider adding a nutrient-rich supplement like Airborne, which has been reformulated with seven key essential nutrients – vitamins A, C, D and E; zinc; manganese; and selenium. Available in effervescent tablets and chewable gummies, with flavors varying from Zesty Orange to Very Berry and Citrus, the addition of vitamin D and increased levels of zinc mean the improved formula provides the most essential nutrients of any Airborne immune-supporting supplement.

Maintain a Healthy Diet

Because a poor diet can weaken the immune system, according to research published in "Science Direct," giving your body the nutrients it needs is key to helping your immune system thrive. Including a variety of fruits and vegetables, which are rich in antioxidants and vitamins, as well as whole grains, lean proteins and healthy fats as part of your meals can help strengthen your immune system. Also remember to drink plenty of water to stay hydrated and



Photos courtesy of Shutterstock



limit processed foods, sugary snacks and beverages high in added sugars that can weaken your immune system and have a negative impact on your health.

Engage in Regular Physical Activity

Not only can maintaining a regular exercise routine help build muscle and improve endurance, it helps improve circulation, too, which allows immune cells to move more freely through the body. Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate or 75 minutes of vigorous exercise per week, such as brisk walking, cycling, swimming or dancing. This activity also promotes the production of endorphins and can help reduce stress, further benefiting to your immune system, according to the Mayo Clinic. Just be sure not to push yourself too hard, as excessive exercise can have the opposite effect and put your body under more physical stress.

Get an Appropriate Amount of Sleep

Sleep and immune health are intertwined. In fact, inadequate or poor-quality sleep can lead to a higher susceptibility to illness, according to research by the Sleep Foundation. During sleep, your body

repairs and rejuvenates itself, so aim for the expert-recommended 7-9 hours of quality sleep each night. Establish a regular sleep schedule by going to bed and waking at the same time each day, even on weekends, and create a relaxing routine to signal to your body it's time to wind down. This may include limiting screen time an hour before bed, reading or practicing relaxation techniques. A comfortable, cool and dark sleep environment can also improve the quality of your sleep.

Manage Stress Levels

Stress, both physical and mental, can weaken your immune system and lead to a higher risk of infection, particularly if it leads to sleep disturbances, reduced water intake, less frequent exercise or unhealthy eating habits. To effectively manage stress, practice relaxation techniques such as meditation, yoga or deep breathing and prioritize self-care through activities you find relaxing like reading, listening to music, journaling, exercising or spending time outdoors.

Find solutions to help support your immune system at schiffvitamins.com.

Black Caucus Releases Corporate Accountability Report on DEI

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Sr Natl
Correspondent

Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) Chairman Steven Horsford (NV-04) and CBC members have released a first-of-its-kind report titled "What Good Looks Like: A Corporate Accountability Report on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion." The report aims to hold Fortune 500 companies accountable for their commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the wake of George Floyd's murder and the racial justice movement that followed. This initiative comes as corporate America faces renewed scrutiny following the Supreme Court's decision to overturn affirmative action in the *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard* case.

The CBC's report highlights which corporations are making tangible progress in advancing DEI and offers a roadmap for other companies to follow. Despite efforts from right-wing groups to dismantle diversity initiatives, the report finds that many Fortune 500 companies are standing firm in

their commitments. The report also examines DEI practices in manufacturing, finance, insurance, and technology sectors, providing industry-specific insights.

Most Fortune 500 companies participating in the CBC's survey demonstrated their commitment to DEI even after the Supreme Court's ruling. CBC members said this is crucial because conservative organizations, such as Stephen Miller-led America First Legal, are increasingly waging legal and political attacks against corporations' diversity initiatives. These groups argue that DEI initiatives violate federal law, threatening legal action against companies that continue to promote workplace diversity.

The Findings
The CBC's report offers a detailed analysis of diversity efforts across various industries, using data from the Global Industry Classification Standard (GICS) and the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Key findings include:

S e c t o r Representation: The bulk

of the responses came from companies in manufacturing (31%), finance and insurance (25%), and information (16%).

Best Practices: The report identifies 12 best practices, including leadership accountability, data disaggregation, talent retention, and pay equity. These examples provide a model for other companies to implement DEI strategies effectively.

Progress and Challenges: While many companies have made significant strides, persistent gaps remain, particularly in leadership diversity and retention rates. The report encourages corporations to move beyond public statements and implement measurable DEI outcomes.

The CBC hopes the report will serve as a tool for corporations to benchmark their progress and adopt more robust DEI measures. "What Good Looks Like" outlines not only where companies are succeeding but also where opportunities for improvement lie, urging corporate leaders to align their actions with their stated DEI values.

Conservative Backlash and the Fight for DEI

Officials said the CBC's efforts to hold corporations accountable come amid heightened political tensions. Since the Supreme Court's ruling, Donald Trump and his supporters have escalated their attacks on DEI programs. Right-wing legal campaigns have targeted not only corporate diversity efforts, but also federal programs aimed at leveling the playing field for Black and minority-owned businesses.

Conservative attorneys general from over a dozen states have warned Fortune 500 companies, threatening legal action over their diversity programs. Additionally, anti-DEI bills have been introduced in more than 30 states, aiming to restrict diversity efforts in college admissions and the workplace.

Despite the attacks, the CBC said it remains steadfast in its commitment to advancing racial and economic equity. In December 2023, the CBC sent Fortune 500 companies an accountability letter urging them to uphold their DEI commitments in

the face of political pressure, which catalyzed the report.

Corporate America's response has been overwhelmingly positive. Since the CBC's letter, companies have held over 50 meetings with CBC representatives, affirming their dedication to diversity. The CBC has also convened discussions with industry trade associations and hosted a briefing with more than 300 Fortune 500 company representatives to strengthen collaboration on DEI efforts.

Moving Forward
The CBC's report is not just a reflection on past efforts but a call to action for the future. It highlights the importance of cross-industry learning, encouraging companies to share best practices and build upon one another's successes. The CBC also recommends that corporations adopt consistent performance metrics to track progress and foster accountability.

Looking ahead, the CBC plans to push for more economic opportunities for Black Americans, focusing on closing the racial wealth gap. Horsford emphasized that DEI

is not only a moral imperative but also an economic one. Research from McKinsey & Company shows that racially diverse companies outperform their peers by 39% in profitability, further underscoring the business case for diversity.

The CBC's report offers a roadmap for companies committed to fostering a more inclusive and equitable future, despite political and legal challenges.

"Following the murder of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, we witnessed a nationwide response calling for long-overdue justice and accountability," Horsford wrote in the report. "Millions of Americans flooded the streets in protest to advocate for an end to the cycles of violence against Black Americans that are perpetuated by systemic racism ingrained deeply in the United States."

"Now, in order to move forward and achieve the goals of these commitments, we must evaluate where we are and stay the course. We cannot allow a handful of right-wing agitators to bully corporations away from their promises."

"Artists Against Hate"

(Cont. from Page A-2)

thunderous arrangement of the classic "Everything Must Change," drew deep on his ancestral origins and showcased incredible range, sending a surge of hope through the crowd. He later shared how his work with the

World Stage, an educational and performance art space in Leimert Park Village, and the famed Leimert Park Jazz Festival, is rooted in helping artists invest in themselves. "That is what I have dedicated my life to," he said, "bringing

us together to fight against what has separated us, seeing similarities in our common humanity and coming together in our greatness."

Spoken word artist Shaunté Keakalani Caraballo, Assistant Professor, Department of Theatre & Dance at CSU Dominguez Hills, drew on her self-described roots as African American, LatinX and Boricua, in an elegantly phrased poem, delivered with passion and nuance, her story, which many in the audience related to, a kind of "romantic rendezvous

of melanin."

Clearly audience members were moved by each performance. Roshada Baldwin, niece of Lula Washington, Founder and Artistic Director of the Lula Washington Dance Theatre (LWDT) and Founding Member of the International Association of Blacks in Dance, came with her 10-year-old son Jemari English to support fellow dancers and artists. Baldwin's own career in dance gave her an added appreciation for the project. "It's important

for such an event to take place," she said. "In fact, it should be a priority to stimulate discussion. Hate comes in many forms. So does love. Art always teeters on extinction. A program like this reenergizes us to see how dancers, poets, and musicians can come together with passion for their art and to make a difference."

Added Associate Producer Maura Townsend, "The artistic expression by the artists elicited audience reactions in a safe space. My hopes are to continue concerts like this

promoting positivity through the arts and simultaneously bringing artists of various backgrounds to spread the message."

In remembering acting legend James Earl Jones, who passed away Monday, we are reminded of his statement, "The arts have always been an important ingredient in the health of a nation, but we haven't gotten there yet." With projects like "Artists Against Hate," we move steps closer to that goal.

Affordable Housing

(Cont. from Page A-4)

This is National CORE's fourth AHSC award and its second for Arrowhead Grove, a 30-acre master-planned community in the heart of San Bernardino launched in 2012 by HACSB and National CORE with an extensive community outreach program. Arrowhead Grove replaces an aging 1940s era public housing site, with a modern community that supports educational attainment, economic mobility and improved health.

"We are proud to be working with the insightful leaders of HACSB on the fourth phase of Arrowhead Grove," National CORE President Michael Ruane said. "Each new step of this innovative, resident-focused development deepens the significant transformation we are seeing for the San

Bernardino community."

"Phase IV at Arrowhead Grove is the next step in our work to preserve affordable housing for future generations," HACSB Executive Director Maria Razo said. "With energy-efficient design features and enhanced access to public transportation, this phase of redevelopment helps to position the community for long-term sustainability. We are excited to work alongside National CORE as our developer partner to bring our shared vision to reality."

So far, National CORE and HACSB have completed three phases of the transformative development: Valencia Vista (2016), Olive Meadow (2017) and Crestview Terrace (2022) totaling 321 homes. All three feature state-of-the-art sustainability design,

earning two LEED for Homes Platinum certifications and one Gold certification from the U.S. Green Building Council.

Crestview Terrace was the first development in San Bernardino County to receive funding through SGC's AHSC program. The \$20 million awarded in the Council's third round included bus passes for three years for each household, new bus shelters, ADA-compliant sidewalks, improvements to lighting, additional trees and traffic-calming measures.

"Including sustainable transportation infrastructure when planning to build housing developments is how we increase a community's long-term climate resilience," said Amar Cid, SGC's deputy director of community investments and planning. "The type of continued investments happening in San Bernardino County are an example of how government and community can come together to not only address California's housing crisis but also provide safe and environmentally friendly ways for people to move around their

community."

Arrowhead Grove's fourth phase, set to launch construction in mid-2025, will add 92 new affordable and sustainable mixed-income apartments for residents earning under 80 percent of the area median income.

The all-electric construction will incorporate photovoltaic solar panels in its covered parking area, electric vehicle charging stations, a xeriscape landscape, permeable materials, an enhanced tree canopy, covered gardens, a Village Green and a system for channeling stormwater to recharge local groundwater supplies. Design elements will address the impacts of extreme heat, with solar panels producing at least a third of the community's energy needs.

"Features such as the community garden and the EV charging stations that will be installed in this phase of the development will significantly increase the quality of life at Arrowhead Grove and create an example for future developments in this community in terms of what

is possible," HACSB Director of Development John Moore said. "We are continuing to partner with the city and local nonprofits to expand on the sustainability features of this site, as well as green jobs training programs that will help residents prepare for the future jobs being created via these development projects."

Community partners include a host of nonprofits who will provide a vast array of onsite services, including Operation New Hope for workforce development, Hope through Housing Foundation for health and wellness, financial coaching and student mentoring, and Neighborhood Housing Service of the Inland Empire for free housing stability counseling.

One nonprofit – Uplift San Bernardino for ongoing engagement – was co-founded by National CORE and the San Bernardino City School District to support collective impact work in targeted neighborhoods of the city.

This latest phase also featured intensive outreach efforts to discern community

perspectives on the most beneficial improvements. After the consultations, development partners are working on the following plans:

- Repair and upgrade sidewalks
- Provide residents with free Wifi
- Purchase an EV bus for Omnitrans to boost service frequency
- Fund one year of Omnitrans service on the route
- Fund three-year bus passes for residents
- Upgrade bus shelters along East Base Line Street
- Reduce 9th Street from two lanes to one lane in each direction
- Add bike lanes on 9th Street
- Add a high-visibility crosswalk on 9th Street at an elementary school
- Purchase Calvans residents can use for vanpools
- Outreach will continue to keep community members engaged during the development process to ensure they are aware of opportunities for leasing the new apartments.

Racial Wealth Gap

(Cont. from Page A-3)

tax system to address racial inequality," the report states, comparing recent monumental legislation like the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act.

Three Key Reforms to Tackle Racial Inequity

The report lays out three central reforms aimed at curbing the wealth concentration among the ultra-rich and dismantling the racial inequities baked into the tax code:

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tax rates on wealth and work. Currently, capital gains—profits from investments—are taxed at a far lower rate than wages earned by working people, a disparity that overwhelmingly benefits white households. The vast majority of capital gains income flows to white families, who comprise only two-thirds of taxpayers but receive 92% of the benefits from lower tax rates on investment income.

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Biden-Harris Administration and Senate Proposals for Change

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A Call for Urgent Action

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ENTERTAINMENT

James Earl Jones, Iconic Voice of Darth Vader and EGOT Winner, Dies at 93

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Sr Natl
Correspondent

James Earl Jones, the legendary actor whose deep, resonant voice became synonymous with some of the most iconic characters in film history, passed away today at his home in Dutchess County, New York. He was 93.

His representatives at Independent Artist Group first confirmed the actor's death to Deadline. Over a remarkable career that spanned six decades, Jones earned an indelible place in both Hollywood and Broadway. He became one of only a few entertainers to achieve the prestigious EGOT, winning an Emmy, Grammy, Oscar, and Tony.

Best known to many as the commanding voice behind Darth Vader in Star Wars, Jones brought depth and gravitas to the villainous character, making him one of cinema's most unforgettable antagonists. He reprised the role in Star Wars: Episode III – Revenge of the Sith (2005) and Rogue One: A Star Wars Story (2016), further cementing his legacy in the galaxy far, far away.

Born on January 17, 1931, in Arkabutla, Mississippi, Jones's contributions to the arts extended far beyond Star Wars. He voiced the beloved character Mufasa in Disney's animated classic *The Lion King* (1994) and again in the 2019 live-action remake. His

unmistakable voice was also a signature of CNN's "This is CNN" campaign.

Jones's acting career began on the stage and in film with his breakout role in Stanley Kubrick's *Dr. Strangelove* (1964). His powerful on-screen presence led to roles in a variety of acclaimed films including Conan the Barbarian (1982), Coming to America (1988), The Hunt for Red October (1990), and The Sandlot (1990). He earned an Oscar nomination for his portrayal of Jack Jefferson in *The Great White Hope* (1970), a role that also won him his first Tony Award.

On Broadway, Jones was a force to be reckoned with. He earned four Tony nominations and took home two wins for *The Great White Hope* in 1969 and August Wilson's *Fences* in 1987. His contribution to the stage was celebrated with a Special Tony Award in 2017.

Jones's talents were equally recognized on television, where he won two Primetime Emmys in 1991 for Gabriel's Fire and Heat Wave. His voice and presence on-screen were magnetic, a testament to his versatility as an actor who could excel in drama, comedy, and everything in between.

A recipient of the Kennedy Center Honors in 2002, Jones's lifetime of achievements earned him accolades from SAG-AFTRA and the National Board of Review and a Grammy for Best Spoken Word Recording in 1977.



James Earl Jones

Black Caucus

(Cont. from Page A-1)

creation of a new state agency called the California American Freedmen Affairs Agency (CAFAA). That agency, one of the California Reparations Task Force's 115 recommendations, would be responsible for determining eligibility for reparations and administering government processes related to compensation.

SB 1331 would establish an account for reparations in the State Treasury for the purpose of funding reparations policies approved by the Legislature and the Governor. Neither one of those pieces of legislation, authored by Bradford, a CLBC member, were a part of CLBC's initial reparations priority package of 14 bills announced in January.

However, according to a letter obtained by California Black Media, the CLBC added 1403 to the package in May. In the same letter, the Black Caucus requested that the state provide \$6 million to help fund efforts related to 1403 and another \$6 million to the California Black Freedom Fund, a \$100-million non-profit initiative focused on eradicating systemic and institutional racism in the state.

Another bill that was a part of the package, authored by Wilson, Assembly Constitutional Amendment (ACA 8), was approved by both houses of the Legislature and will appear on the ballot in the November election. If approved by voters, ACA 8 will erase language in the state constitution that legalizes

involuntary servitude and end forced labor in prisons as a punishment for crimes. ACA 8 will appear on the ballot as Prop. 6.

Nine reparations bills included in the CLBC package passed and have now been advanced to the Governor's desk for his consideration. Those bills include SB 1050, authored by Bradford, which would allow California to review and investigate complaints from individuals who claim their property was taken without compensation as a result of racially motivated eminent domain. It passed with a 73-0 vote on the Assembly floor.

Assemblymember Tina McKinnor (D-Inglewood), a CLBC member, [inked an opinion article](#) sharing her perspective on why the Legislature did not advance SB 1403 and SB 1331. McKinnor did not mention Bradford by name, but it is clear from context that she was referring to the author of the two bills in question.

"From the outset, a Black caucus member worked against the CLBC's efforts. Days after the CLBC introduced its reparations legislative package, a Black caucus member introduced his own reparations bills, not part of the CLBC's work, and spent months attempting to negotiate away the \$12 million that the CLBC had secured in this year's state budget for his own project," McKinnor wrote.

Bradford appeared on various media platforms as well with accusations directed at his CLBC colleagues. Bradford told Roland Martin, the popular media host on his podcast, that all the members of CLBC had signed on as co-authors of SB 1403 in May.

"It's probably the most heartbreaking, disappointing time I've experienced in the Legislature," Bradford told Martin on his "Unfiltered"

show on Sept. 4. "You're taught early 'don't fall in love with your bills.' I didn't fall in love with this bill, but I felt what this bill meant not only to Black Californians but Black Americans."

Assemblymember Issac Bryan (D-Ladera Heights), one of the CLBC members who was feeling the heat from disgruntled activists, faced the music and showed up at a town hall meeting held on Sept. 5 at the Los Angeles' Center for Black Power in Leimert Park. Bryan said the crowd yelled at him, but he understood the community's frustrations.

The next day, Bryan appeared on Dominique di Prima's KBLA 1500 AM radio show, based in L.A., to explain why the CLBC did not push for the bills to get an Assembly floor vote.

Bryan said the CLBC had a number of concerns that included "last-minute amendments" to SB 1403 requested by the governor that were not immediately shared with the Black lawmakers, absent legislative oversight, a potential veto, and no solutions for longtime funding of the CAFAA. Bryan said he was still in favor of the CLBC bringing the bills to the Assembly floor for a vote, but the group collectively decided against it. In the end, he respected the members' action.

"On a personal level, I had no problem sending the bills to the Governor," Bryan said to di Prima. "But I think when you're moving in solidarity, not just with your colleagues in Sacramento, but within the community and there are disagreements, strategically, you've got to make the best decisions you can."

Bryan continued by saying "In this particular instance, there was a decision collectively by a majority of the caucus to not move on (SB 1403 and SB 1331) this year."

JUST ONE PIECE CAN RUIN THE PICTURE.

LOS ANGELES

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Photographer Roy Lewis Honored by Black Journalists

By **Hamil R. Harris**

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - Roy Lewis has photographed iconic images across Black America for decades and his love for the lens was captured by Jet Magazine in 1964 when it published his photograph of pianist Thelonious Monk.

Born in 1937, on a plantation below Natchez, Mississippi, Lewis's resourcefulness is part of his gift. He first fell in love with vocational photography in high school. He later practiced that love on a professional level at the Johnson Publishing Company on South Michigan Avenue in Chicago. He earned the money for a 35 millimeter camera after he was drafted into the Army.

This summer, Lewis, 87, was back on South Michigan Avenue in Chicago, but not at the John H. Johnson headquarters. He was there to receive "special honors," at the convention of the National Association of Black Journalists.

"I worked for Mr. Johnson from 1956 to 1968 and then to be honored on this Avenue..." Lewis said. "It's not about the pictures, it's about the feeling of being honored by your peers and being back in Chicago where I did some of my top work."

Lewis was bestowed with the Legacy Award during NABJ's Annual Convention in August. The Legacy Award recognizes a Black print, broadcast, digital, or photojournalist of "extraordinary accomplishment who has broken barriers and blazed trails."

Legacy honorees are those who have "contributed to the understanding or advancement of people and issues in the African Diaspora," according to NABJ.

The NABJ wrote, "Lewis is a renowned photographer and activist whose photography career started in 1964 when JET Magazine published his photograph of musician Thelonious Monk. His work has been celebrated nationwide, including in his 'Everywhere with Roy Lewis Exhibition,' beginning in 2008 at the Essence Music Festival."

Lewis, who left Chicago in 1973 and moved to Washington DC, was nominated for the award by Sam Ford, a founding member of the NABJ who worked for more than 51 years as an award-winning broadcaster for three decades on air at WJLA ABC Channel 7 in Washington, DC.

"Roy has been part of the Washington press corp for as far as I can remember," Ford said. "Roy started taking pictures when he was 17 years old. He will be 87 this year...That is more than 70 years connected with the news media except when he was in the Army."

Lewis also worked in his hometown paper in Natchez and went back to work for Ebony and Jet after the Army. He has a large collection of pictures from his days at Ebony and Jet from the 1960s and he is still a photographer for the Washington Informer, the Trice Edney News Wire and NNPA. "I thought he needed recognition. When a



Roy Lewis (Center) receives the Legacy Award from NABJ representatives Frank Holland of CNBC and Abby Phillip of CNN. PHOTO: Roland Martin/#Roland Martin Unfiltered

person is going for 87 years you don't want to wait too long," Ford said.

According to Lewis' biography in History Makers, in 1960 he was drafted in the United States Army. While in the military, he developed a talent for photography after purchasing his first camera for just \$25. In 1968, Lewis left Johnson Publishing and joined the staff at Northeastern University, filming student activities. In 1970, Lewis videotaped

an exclusive interview with the late Honorable Elijah Muhammad. Lewis' work was featured in the film A Nation of Common Sense. In 1974, Lewis traveled to Zaire to film the Muhammad - Ali-George Foreman fight. This historic video would later be featured in the Hollywood film When We Were Kings, which was a remake of the legendary championship fight. In 1975, Lewis worked on River Road on the Mississippi, a pictorial

book that focused on African-American people and life along the Mississippi River.

Dr. Ben Chavis, President/CEO of NNPA, said in an interview, "The National Newspaper Publishers Association salutes Roy Lewis as a phenomenal photojournalist and for his long-standing contribution to freedom, justice, and equality. Roy Lewis is an icon of the Black Press."

Likewise, Hazel Trice

Edney, editor-in-chief of the Trice Edney News Wire, said, "Roy Lewis's name is synonymous with excellence in Black Press photography." Under her leadership as president of the Capital Press Club (CPC) in 2014, Lewis was also an award recipient during the CPC's 70th anniversary celebration. She said, "Roy is deserving, not just because of great and historic photography, but because of his commitment to the cause."



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"I wholly disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it" – Voltaire

A Precinct Reporter Group Publication – The Community's Newspaper – Serving Long Beach and Surrounding Communities

Vol. 27 - No 34



"Artists Against Hate" Brings Love at CSU Dominguez Hills Concert

By Barbara Smith
Photos: Earl Edwards and Busby Promotions

"Artists Against Hate," a consortium of performers created in response to the CA vs HATE legislation enacted last year, brought audiences to their feet multiple times

at a riveting concert held at CSU Dominguez Hills last Friday evening. The diverse troupe of dancers, visual artists, poets, and writers, led by Executive Producer Brian Townsend, Publisher, Precinct Reporter Group; Project Director Kathryn Ervin, CSU

San Bernardino Professor Emeritus, Theatre Arts; and Associate Producer Maura Townsend, Artistic Director and Choreographer, Maura Townsend Dance Project, wrapped up their third in a series of three concerts over the last year with the message that it takes strength to stand up to hate and that art can be a universal language to bridge cultures and bring people together creatively to combat hate.

State data released one year after the launch of CA vs HATE, the hotline and online portal for reporting hate crimes and incidents, has shown its impact. The statewide reporting hotline was created to combat a rise in reported hate crimes, which had risen nearly 33 percent from 2020 to 2021. After one year, people statewide reported more than 1,000 acts of hate, with race and ethnicity bias being the most widely cited motivations. Friday's interactive concert helped drive awareness of services and resources available to anyone targeted

for hate including direct services for victims and survivors of hate incidents and crime; prevention services including arts and cultural work, youth development and senior safety and escort programs; and intervention services including outreach, training, restorative justice and coordination with local government and institutional partners. Audience members were reminded of the hotline, offered in 15 languages, which is available for any victim or witness to anonymously report a hate incident or crime at 833-8-NO-HATE or at CAvsHATE.org.

Selections in the 90-minute concert addressed race, gender identity, religion and ethnicity. Performances included dance, music, spoken word, and visual art. "These concerts actually connected two communities," said Project Director Kathryn Ervin. "I hope the audiences we served were moved by the performances to understand how hate hurts us all and the

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Gov. Newsom:

Black Caucus "Owed an Apology"

By Antonio Ray Harvey
California Black Media

A week after advocates rallied at the State Capitol to protest lawmakers for not allowing two reparations bills to be brought up for a vote on the Assembly floor, Gov. Gavin Newsom said the California Legislative Black Caucus (CLBC) members are "owed an apology."

For several days now, CLBC chair Lori Wilson (D-Suisun City) and other caucus members have been under fire from some activists and advocates who say the lawmakers did not do enough to push the reparations bills authored by their colleague, Sen. Steven Bradford (D-Inglewood).

Others have been accusing members of intentionally sabotaging the bills even though last week the CLBC issued a statement informing the public that it intends to reintroduce the reparations bills during the next legislative session.

On Sept. 7, Newsom said it was "disgraceful" for anyone to unleash their frustrations on the CLBC.

"There were members of that Black Caucus that are owed an apology for being treated the way they were treated – to be doxed, to be personally maligned, and attacked. So, forgive me for expressing that," Newsom said. "I have great respect and admiration for the leadership of the Black Caucus and members of the Black Caucus," Newsom told reporters.

Newsom made the statement at a news conference held at the Capitol Annex Swing Space when he announced that he issued proposed emergency regulations to protect youth from the adverse health effects of dangerous hemp products.

The CLBC released a statement on Aug. 31, the last day of the Legislative session, stating that it had "concerns" about Bradford's bills Senate Bill (SB) 1403 and SB 1331, legislation that previously advanced with minimal opposition through Senate and Assembly committees before being withheld from a final floor vote by all members of the lower house of the Legislature. SB 1403 proposes the

(Cont. on Page 5)



SoCal Dems Push Voter Registration

By Dianne Anderson

Gen Z and Millennials seem revved up and raring to go as Black Los Angeles Young Democrats (BLAYD)

want to keep the momentum going strong enough for voters to cast their ballots on the last stretch to Election Day.

Young folks are aware and enthusiastic, which, by itself, is

not enough to pull the Party in November.

Maurice Johnson BLAYD president wants the community mobilized, and educated about the many early voting options.

The most important is voter registration.

"Part of the biggest challenge that we're seeing particularly with BLAYD is that young Black folks are not really registered to vote. We all have an opinion, we're all excited about Kamala Harris, but there's not been this big push to register to vote," said Johnson, who also works closely with the Black Long Beach Young Democrats

One misconception is that one vote doesn't count, even though some elections have been lost for a handful of votes. He tries to stress that for local state and federal levels, Black votes are even more important because Blacks generally make up the minority in politics.

Another way to pave the way for young Black voices to be elevated is to understand

ballot language, the candidates, the measures and propositions, and potential laws.

Getting resources in front of the people, such as physical paper voter registration forms has been a priority, he said. The organization makes good use of the Secretary of State QR Code for easy access to registration.

"As much as you have your opinion and you have thoughts about the election, you're also sort of your money where your mouth is when you cast your vote for who you want in different elections," he said.

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issues for a councilmember at LA City Hall, and wasn't able to make the convention, but he plans to be at the inauguration.

These days, he finds younger voters want to get a handle on economic systems, on taxes that come out of their paychecks, and why the cost of living and housing is soaring.

"What most people care about is how do these policies affect my life?" he said. "How much I can buy with my paycheck and different economic policies the president puts in place, and how that trickles down to the Fed, state and local neighborhoods."

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SPORTS

Jovan Jester Jr. Joins UCI Men's Basketball Team

Incoming freshman Jovan Jester Jr. adds to the 2024-25 men's basketball roster as a skilled guard.

Jester Jr., another Southern California product, played under Joey Brooks at Pasadena High School where he was a two-time Pacific League MVP. Additionally, the guard was named to the All-CIF Second Team.

"Jovan is a true point guard with size, vision, and excellent athletic burst," said head coach Russell Turner. "At each stop in the club circuit, Jovan has improved and developed, and he has a truly bright future in front of him. He also comes from a wonderful hard-working family who values the academic community at UCI, and I am excited to see his growth in our program."

In 2024, Jester Jr. earned the championship titles in both the Damian Classic Silver Division and Rose City Roundball.

Guard Tishan Ahir, an incoming freshman has also been added to the talented 2024-25 men's basketball squad.



Jovan Jester Jr
UCI

Ahir stays in Southern California after graduating from Crescenta Valley High School as a four-year scholar-athlete and was named to the All-Prodigy League in 2022.

"Tishan is an emerging talent with an excellent outside shot and an unusual commitment to being a great teammate," remarked head coach Russell Turner. "He is an incredibly hard working and tough-minded competitor, and I am excited to see how Tishan can impact our group in our quest to win championships."

The guard played club basketball under the developmental eye of Ryan Silver at West Coast Elite and for BTI where he was awarded the Commitment Award (2023).

Ahir joins Myles Che, Kyle Evans, Jovan Jester Jr., and Torian Lee in the incoming recruiting class, entering the Anteater program that concluded the 2023-24 campaign with a 24-10 overall record, including a 17-3 conference record to defend their Big West regular season championship title.

CSULB Women Improve to .500 With Win

Long Beach State earned its second victory over Northwestern in three days as the Beach took down the Wildcats. 3-2 [25-17, 25-21, 16-25, 18-25, 15-10] recently at the Walter Pyramid.

The Beach (2-2) were led by seniors Natalie Glenn and Zayna Meyer who each finished with a double-double, while the Wildcats (0-4) got a 20-kill performance from Buse Hazan and a double-double from Alexa Rousseau.

Glenn led the Long Beach offensive attack with 14 kills, while adding 11 digs, two blocks, one assist, and one ace.

Also recording double figure kills was senior middle blocker Kameron Bacon who finished the match with 11 kills on a .280 clip.

Meyer was consistent as she distributed 40 assists and got five hitters to five or more kills on the night. She also

logged 11 digs for her first double-double of the season, while adding three kills, two blocks, and one ace.

Defensively, sophomore Ella Lomigora was on fire as she put up 10 blocks at the net. The 6-foot-2 middle blocker posted eight block assists and two solo blocks, while also contributing offensively with five kills.

In addition to Glenn and Meyer recording 11 digs, senior libero Jenna Giambi chipped in 11 digs of her own in the backcourt, while senior defensive specialist Savana Chacon added eight.

The Beach were on-point from the start as they scored five-straight points to open up an 11-5 lead over the Wildcats in the first set. After a 4-0 LBSU run gave Long Beach a 16-7 advantage, Northwestern used its second timeout of the set. The

Wildcats managed to cut the Beach's lead down to four (21-17), but LBSU utilized a timeout of its own to regroup. Long Beach State came out of the break and scored four-consecutive points to put the first set away, 25-17.

After hitting .406 in the opening frame, the Beach's offense cooled off a little in the second. However, the LBSU defense stepped up and forced Northwestern into a negative attack percentage (-.027). The second set went back-and-forth early and the Wildcats held a 15-13 edge at the media timeout. The Beach used a 4-0 run to turn the deficit into a 16-15 lead thanks to a kill from Jaylen Jordan. LBSU took a two-point lead twice which led to a pair of Northwestern timeouts. Similar to set one, the Beach came out of the break in action and scored three-straight points to win 25-21 and take a 2-0 set lead.



Natalie Glenn
CSULB

The Wildcats found their footing in the third set as they hit .458 in the frame. Meanwhile, Long Beach State hit .156. Northwestern went on a 6-0 run and jumped out to a 14-10 lead, then strung together four-consecutive points to go up 22-14, before claiming the third set, 25-16.

The Beach fell behind early in the fifth set after Northwestern took a 6-3 lead as Long Beach State called a timeout. The Beach brought in freshman Madi Collins to serve and she got LBSU going on an 8-0 run that saw two Northwestern timeouts and put Long Beach up 11-6. The momentum shifted in favor of the Beach as Long Beach State put the game away on back-to-back kills from Glenn on the way to winning, 15-10.

Long Beach State hosted Omaha on Wednesday. Game results were not available by press time.

CSF Men Get 3-1 Win Over UCLA

For the first time since 1997 and 1998 the Titans defeated UCLA in back-to-back seasons, handing No. 6 UCLA its first loss of the season with a 3-1 victory on the road Thursday night.

Jorge Quintero gave the Titans an early 1-0 lead in the 12th minute of play, getting a foot on the ball on a low cross into the box from Roberto Ordonez. Fernando Valenzuela also assisted on the goal.

Just under 30 seconds later, Valenzuela stole the ball in the Bruins zone and had a perfect touch on the ball to put it over the UCLA goalkeeper to put Fullerton up 2-0 in the 12th minute. Valenzuela had three points in the game with one goal and one assist.

UCLA cut the Titans lead to 2-1 early in the second half, scoring in the 50th minute of action to bring the Bruins within one goal.

The Titans quickly got the goal back, scoring on a penalty kick by Sulaiman Bah in the 53rd to regain a two-goal lead



Sulaiman Bah
CSF

at 3-1. Fullerton's defense stood strong for the remainder of the game to keep the two-goal lead intact and earn the Titans three

points on the road against the No. 6 team in the country.

The Titans are back in action Friday, September 13 as LMU comes to Titan Stadium.

Kickoff is scheduled for 7:00 p.m.

Women's Soccer
The Cal State Fullerton Titans women's soccer team

lost 1-0 at Boston College recently to finish out their first trip to the Northeast part of the country.

The Titans fell to 2-5 overall and have lost their fifth consecutive game. The Titans stretch of scoreless play has increased to 457 minutes. After having an 8-1 goal difference after their first two games, the Titans have conceded seven goals in their last five games and have an 8-8 goal differential now.

The Titans string of bad luck continued after Boston College scored their only goal on an own goal in the first 30 seconds of the game. After Ranson made a kick save on a shot by Ella Richards, the ball ricocheted off Jenae Perez's head into the goal to give the Eagles a 1-0 lead.

The Titans and Eagles then traded shots and corner kicks for the rest of the first half. In the 32nd minute, the Titans were awarded a penalty kick after Isabella Cruz was fouled inside the box. However, after

the lengthy review, Cruz's penalty shot was saved by the Eagles keeper to keep the Titans off the score sheet.

The Titans were once again the more aggressive side in the second half and outshot the Eagles 6-to-5 for the half. The Eagles outshot the Titans 15-to-12 for the game with a 5 shot on goal to 3 shot on goal difference. However, after the Eagle's first five shot attempts, they never got a shot on frame the rest of the game.

In the 84th minute, Isabella Contreras had a shot from outside the box head towards the upper 90 of the left goal. However, the Eagles keeper once again thwarted the Titans's best opportunity of finding the back of the net.

After facing their toughest stretch of opposition including four ACC opponents, the Titans will have one more non-conference road game against UNLV Sunday. Kick-off is set for 12:00 PM at the Peter Johann Memorial Field.

COMMENTARY

DOJ, State AGs File Joint Price Fixing Lawsuit

By Charlene Crowell

In August, the Department of Justice and eight state Attorneys General filed a lawsuit charging RealPage Inc., a commercial revenue management software firm with providing apartment managers with illegal price fixing software data that violates antitrust law and artificially increases costs for millions of renters across the nation.

After a nearly two-year



investigation, the agencies found an estimated 80 percent of renters are forced to pay falsely inflated rates while

also denying honest landlords an opportunity to compete for these same customers.

The lawsuit claims RealPage's practices are federal interstate commerce violations provided by the long-standing Sherman Act enacted in 1890.

"When the Sherman Act was passed, an anticompetitive scheme might have looked like robber barons shaking hands at a secret meeting," stated U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland. "Today, it looks like landlords using mathematical algorithms to align their rents. But antitrust law does not become obsolete simply because competitors find new ways to unlawfully act in concert. And Americans should not have to pay more in rent simply because a company has found a new way to scheme with landlords to break the law."

Joining the civil lawsuit are the Attorneys General of California, Colorado, Connecticut, Minnesota, North Carolina, Oregon,

Tennessee, and Washington.

Falsely-inflated rental costs worsen the already disproportionate financial strain felt by people of color. Tight living spaces that come at sky-high costs especially harm disproportionate numbers of Black and Latino renters. As Harvard's Joint Center for Housing Studies 2024 State of the Nation's Housing noted:

"More than half of Black (57 percent), Hispanic (54 percent), and multiracial (50 percent) renter households were cost burdened at last measure in 2022... While racial income inequality explains some of the difference, burden rates remain disproportionately high for lower-income renters of color, at 85 and 87 percent for Black and Hispanic renters, respectively, as compared to 80 percent of their white counterparts."

The complaint alleges that RealPage contracts with competing landlords who agree to share with the firm nonpublic, competitively sensitive information about their apartment rental rates and other lease terms. This data is then used with RealPage's algorithmic pricing software to generate

recommendations, including apartment rental pricing and other terms, for participating landlords. The use of rivals' data trove of competitively sensitive information violates interstate commerce law aimed at preventing monopolies.

The complaint further alleges that in a free market, these landlords otherwise would be competing independently to attract renters based on pricing, discounts, concessions, lease terms, and other dimensions of apartment leasing.

"Healthy competition in the rental housing market requires two key ingredients," added Deputy Attorney General Lisa Monaco. "The market must be dictated by open and honest competition among landlords. And, renters must be able to negotiate prices with landlords — without the specter of collusion... But RealPage has shut away those ingredients, changed the locks, and thrown away the keys. That's collusion — and that's against the law."

North Carolina Attorney General Josh Stein, whose office filed the joint lawsuit on August 23 in the Middle District of North Carolina, also weighed in on the lawsuit's importance.

"Few things are as important as our homes — but too many North Carolinians struggle to afford their apartment," said Attorney

General Josh Stein. "Rents are already too high. I will not tolerate any company scheming to block healthy competition among landlords. It raises rent, and it's illegal."

For one North Carolina local official, the lawsuit is an opportunity to right a grievous wrong.

"Between 2010 and 2020 the median rent in Wake County jumped up 40 percent," said Shinica Thomas, Wake County Board of Commissioners Chair. "That costs families an extra \$4,200 a year. For a household that's struggling to make ends meet, that can be the difference between stability and eviction."

A growing metro market, Wake County is home to the state's capitol, Raleigh. But according to multiple independent housing research reports, high rental rate increases have occurred throughout the nation, in communities of varying sizes and locales.

For example, monthly rents in Knoxville, TN reached \$1,818 in February 2024, a 59.1 percent increase from 2019, according to this spring, SmartAsset.com.

More recently, Apartments.com found posted national rental rate averages by state and city. Nationally, the average national monthly cost of a one-bedroom apartment with 699 square feet is \$1,563.

On a statewide basis, average rental costs in California, the District of Columbia, Massachusetts, New Jersey and New York all surpass \$2,000 for dwellings with as low as 631 square feet to no more than 727 square feet. Conversely, Oklahoma is one of the states with the lowest average rent of \$880 for a 687 square foot unit.

Comparing costs and square footage by city, Apartments.com additionally found New York City had the highest monthly rental cost of \$3,865, and the smallest square footage at 598 square feet. The only other city, Boston (\$3,450), was the only other city with more than had over \$3,000 in average rental costs. All of the following cities average rental costs exceed ng \$2,000 for less than 700 square feet in Los Angeles, Miami, Oakland, San Diego and Seattle.

"Access to affordable housing options is becoming increasingly difficult," said Monica Burks, Policy Counsel at the Center for Responsible Lending. "Anti-competitive practices that inflate already high housing costs disadvantage individuals and families working hard to secure this basic need."

Charlene Crowell is a senior fellow with the Center for Responsible Lending. She can be reached at Charlene.crowell@responsiblelending.org.

Report Calls for Urgent Reforms:

Tax System's Role in Widening Racial Wealth Gap

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Sr Natl Correspondent

Color of Change, the nation's largest online racial justice organization, and Americans for Tax Fairness released a damning report exposing the deep racial inequities entrenched in the U.S. tax system. The issue brief "How Tax Fairness Can Promote Racial Equity," written by Color of Change Managing Director Portia Allen-Kyle and Americans for Tax Fairness Executive Director David Kass, exposes the systemic flaws in tax policy that have widened the racial wealth gap and prevented economic mobility for Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities.

The report urgently calls for sweeping reforms to stop the flow of tax benefits to the wealthiest Americans—who

are overwhelmingly white—while offering concrete solutions to make the tax code work for everyone, not just the top 1%.

"An equitable tax system does two things," Allen-Kyle asserts. "It narrows the racial wealth gap from the bottom up and spurs economic mobility for Black, Brown, and Indigenous individuals and families. Our current tax code fails on both accounts. It's a prime example of how so-called 'colorblind' systems actively prevent Black families from building generational wealth and economic security."

Tax Code Deepens Racial Disparities, Experts Say

The brief pulls no punches in describing how current tax policies disproportionately benefit wealthy white families, further deepening racial inequalities. By giving preferential treatment to wealth over work, the system locks in

economic advantages for white households while leaving communities of color to bear the brunt of these inequities.

"Our tax system is not only failing to address racial wealth inequality, it's exacerbating it," Kass warns. "We privilege wealth over work, fail to adequately tax our richest households and corporations, and allow inherited fortunes to compound unchecked by taxation. This perpetuates a legacy of racial inequality."

The racial wealth gap has exploded in recent years, with the median wealth gap between Black and white households jumping from \$172,000 in 2019 to over \$214,000 in 2022. Economic crises such as the Great Recession and the COVID-19 pandemic further entrenched these divides, benefiting the already wealthy while leaving Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities further behind.

The Racial Wealth Gap and Homeownership, long touted as a primary means of building wealth in America, has failed to deliver for Black families. The report points to factors such as biased home appraisals and a regressive property tax system as key reasons why Black homeowners have been unable to accumulate wealth at the same rate as their white counterparts.

As the brief notes, with critical provisions of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) set to expire, now is a pivotal moment for tax reform. "We have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reform our

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Precinct Reporter Group

Art Townsend - Founder
(1965 - 1989)

Precinct Reporter

Serving Inland Southern California
Adjudicated a Legal newspaper of general circulation on July 24, 1974 case number 162020 by the Superior Court of San Bernardino County. The Precinct Reporter is published every Thursday by the Precinct Reporter Group, 357 W. 2nd St., Ste 1A, SB 92401, San Bernardino, CA 92401.

Tri-County Bulletin

The Only Black Publication Serving All of Orange County.
Adjudicated a Legal newspaper of general circulation on July 15, 1988 case number A143589 by the Superior Court of Orange County. The Tri-County Bulletin is published every Thursday by the Precinct Reporter Group.

Long Beach Leader

The Community's Newspaper serving Long Beach and Surrounding Communities.

Established as a newspaper of general circulation on January 23, 1997. The Long Beach Leader is published every Thursday by the Precinct Reporter Group.

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Member: National Newspaper Publishers Association
West Coast Black Publishers Association
Associated Press

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Black Caucus Releases Corporate Accountability Report on DEI

By Stacy M. Brown
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Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) Chairman Steven Horsford (NV-04) and CBC members have released a first-of-its-kind report titled "What Good Looks Like: A Corporate Accountability Report on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion." The report aims to hold Fortune 500 companies accountable for their commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the wake of George Floyd's murder and the racial justice movement that followed. This initiative comes as corporate America faces renewed scrutiny following the Supreme Court's decision to overturn affirmative action in the Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard case.

The CBC's report highlights which corporations are making tangible progress in advancing DEI and offers a roadmap for other companies to follow. Despite efforts from right-wing groups to dismantle diversity initiatives, the report finds that many Fortune 500 companies are standing firm in

their commitments. The report also examines DEI practices in manufacturing, finance, insurance, and technology sectors, providing industry-specific insights.

Most Fortune 500 companies participating in the CBC's survey demonstrated their commitment to DEI even after the Supreme Court's ruling. CBC members said this is crucial because conservative organizations, such as Stephen Miller-led America First Legal, are increasingly waging legal and political attacks against corporations' diversity initiatives. These groups argue that DEI initiatives violate federal law, threatening legal action against companies that continue to promote workplace diversity.

The Findings
The CBC's report offers a detailed analysis of diversity efforts across various industries, using data from the Global Industry Classification Standard (GICS) and the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Key findings include:

S e c t o r Representation: The bulk

of the responses came from companies in manufacturing (31%), finance and insurance (25%), and information (16%).

Best Practices: The report identifies 12 best practices, including leadership accountability, data disaggregation, talent retention, and pay equity. These examples provide a model for other companies to implement DEI strategies effectively.

Progress and Challenges: While many companies have made significant strides, persistent gaps remain, particularly in leadership diversity and retention rates. The report encourages corporations to move beyond public statements and implement measurable DEI outcomes.

The CBC hopes the report will serve as a tool for corporations to benchmark their progress and adopt more robust DEI measures. "What Good Looks Like" outlines not only where companies are succeeding but also where opportunities for improvement lie, urging corporate leaders to align their actions with their stated DEI values.

Conservative Backlash and the Fight for DEI

Officials said the CBC's efforts to hold corporations accountable come amid heightened political tensions. Since the Supreme Court's ruling, Donald Trump and his supporters have escalated their attacks on DEI programs. Right-wing legal campaigns have targeted not only corporate diversity efforts, but also federal programs aimed at leveling the playing field for Black and minority-owned businesses.

Conservative attorneys general from over a dozen states have warned Fortune 500 companies, threatening legal action over their diversity programs. Additionally, anti-DEI bills have been introduced in more than 30 states, aiming to restrict diversity efforts in college admissions and the workplace.

Despite the attacks, the CBC said it remains steadfast in its commitment to advancing racial and economic equity. In December 2023, the CBC sent Fortune 500 companies an accountability letter urging them to uphold their DEI commitments in

the face of political pressure, which catalyzed the report.

Corporate America's response has been overwhelmingly positive. Since the CBC's letter, companies have held over 50 meetings with CBC representatives, affirming their dedication to diversity. The CBC has also convened discussions with industry trade associations and hosted a briefing with more than 300 Fortune 500 company representatives to strengthen collaboration on DEI efforts.

Moving Forward
The CBC's report is not just a reflection on past efforts but a call to action for the future. It highlights the importance of cross-industry learning, encouraging companies to share best practices and build upon one another's successes. The CBC also recommends that corporations adopt consistent performance metrics to track progress and foster accountability.

Looking ahead, the CBC plans to push for more economic opportunities for Black Americans, focusing on closing the racial wealth gap. Horsford emphasized that DEI

is not only a moral imperative but also an economic one. Research from McKinsey & Company shows that racially diverse companies outperform their peers by 39% in profitability, further underscoring the business case for diversity.

The CBC's report offers a roadmap for companies committed to fostering a more inclusive and equitable future, despite political and legal challenges.

"Following the murder of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, we witnessed a nationwide response calling for long-overdue justice and accountability," Horsford wrote in the report. "Millions of Americans flooded the streets in protest to advocate for an end to the cycles of violence against Black Americans that are perpetuated by systemic racism ingrained deeply in the United States."

"Now, in order to move forward and achieve the goals of these commitments, we must evaluate where we are and stay the course. We cannot allow a handful of right-wing agitators to bully corporations away from their promises."

"Artists Against Hate"

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importance of speaking out! I know the artists were moved by the opportunity to interact and present with artists similarly developing creative work to present against hate."

Outstanding dance companies who performed at Friday's concert included Kybele Dance Theater, led by Seda Aybay, Artistic Director and Choreographer; Maura Townsend Dance Project, featuring guest artist Michael Tomlin III; FUSE Dance Company, led by Artistic Director

Joshua Estrada-Romero; and BrockusRED, led by Deborah Brockus, Artistic Director and Choreographer. Narrators Ron Berglas, actor and educator, and Joyce Lee, filmmaker and theatre professional, connected the threads through each performance, weaving data and historical references with personal stories of how hate has impacted communities and how we can forge a path forward. "Hate is a very old idea," offered Lee, relating that in 1895, newspapers

reported the gruesome Tyler, Texas lynching of Robert Hilliard, a Black man, by a lynch mob numbering some 10,000 people. Now, in our increasingly polarized climate, data shows that for the year ending 2022, Blacks suffered over three times the impact of other groups. "Art pushes against hate," Lee added, introducing jazz vocalist Dwight Trible, who also serves as executive director of the World Stage in Los Angeles. Trible has collaborated with jazz greats Pharoah Sanders, Billy Higgins and most recently saxophonist Kamasi Washington. His rich, thunderous arrangement of the classic "Everything Must Change," drew deep on his ancestral origins and showcased incredible range, sending a surge of hope

through the crowd. He later shared how his work with the World Stage, an educational and performance art space in Leimert Park Village, and the famed Leimert Park Jazz Festival, is rooted in helping artists invest in themselves. "That is what I have dedicated my life to," he said, "bringing us together to fight against what has separated us, seeing similarities in our common humanity and coming together in our greatness."

Spoken word artist Shaunté Keakalani Caraballo, Assistant Professor, Department of Theatre & Dance at CSU Dominguez Hills, drew on her self-described roots as African American, LatinX and Boricua, in an elegantly phrased poem, delivered with passion and nuance, her story, which many in the audience

related to, a kind of "romantic rendezvous of melanin."

Clearly audience members were moved by each performance. Roshada Baldwin, niece of Lula Washington, Founder and Artistic Director of the Lula Washington Dance Theatre (LWDT) and Founding Member of the International Association of Blacks in Dance, came with her 10-year-old son Jemari English to support fellow dancers and artists. Baldwin's own career in dance gave her an added appreciation for the project. "It's important for such an event to take place," she said. "In fact, it should be a priority to stimulate discussion. Hate comes in many forms. So does love. Art always teeters on extinction. A program like this reenergizes us to see how dancers, poets, and

musicians can come together with passion for their art and to make a difference."

Added Associate Producer Maura Townsend, "The artistic expression by the artists elicited audience reactions in a safe space. My hopes are to continue concerts like this promoting positivity through the arts and simultaneously bringing artists of various backgrounds to spread the message."

In remembering acting legend James Earl Jones, who passed away Monday, we are reminded of his statement, "The arts have always been an important ingredient in the health of a nation, but we haven't gotten there yet." With projects like "Artists Against Hate," we move steps closer to that goal.

SoCal Dems

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Beach and the Inland Empire. Their goal is to work together to engage local areas, and drive awareness on policies and candidates for local office.

"We provide education to understand why this is the most important election year of our time and how they can be part of it," he said. "We're going out to the streets, to their events block clubs, to let people know there is still time to vote."

In Orange County, Darlene Futrel is also concerned with challenges facing her

county's voter engagement, where many residents there feel disenfranchised from the political process, that their vote doesn't count.

On September 21, their FREE Bowling Party/Voter Education/Registration Drive targets ages 18-34 and runs from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 pm at Splitsville Luxury in Downtown Disney District.

With Election Day just around the corner, she said they want to include, educate and register every eligible voter so no one is left behind and no one sits this one out.

"By hosting or participating in local events, we create opportunities for face-to-face interactions, allowing us to answer questions and provide information directly to community members," said Futrel, president of the Orange County chapter of the National Action Network.

Outreach campaigns are in full force. They have hired a Voter Engagement expert from SCLC (Southern Christian Leadership Conference) to educate voters on participation on the impact of local elections.

She encourages participants to take what they have learned and educate and register their family, friends, co-workers and community members. They will also check the status and, or, register all eligible attendees.

"Me personally, when I am out and about, at the gas station, grocery store, concerts, etc., and have conversations with complete strangers, especially our young people, I always ask "Are you registered to vote?" she said.

When someone tells her they're not, she asks why. If they are Black, she stresses

that too many Black people have died in the pursuit of voting rights.

Not voting means that others are the decision-makers.

"Too many of our allies, people who already had the right to vote, yet put their lives on the line so that we could enjoy that same right, for you not to vote," she said. "When you don't vote you are in essence muting yourself, silencing yourself and silence is compliance."

She also utilizes the QR Code for easy access to California Online Voter Registration. OC NAN is nonpartisan, but she said they are reaching the community by collaborating with local organizations, social media platforms, using comparison charts, addressing vital issues, in propositions, deadlines, around upcoming elections.

Recently, she engaged an

80-year-old Vietnam Vet at a local doughnut shop. He was not interested in voting, but in the end, she may have sold him on the idea that all people should exercise their voice.

"He disagreed with that, but then when he got ready to leave, he turned around and said "You know what you are right and I'm going to vote this year."

Voters should start watching the mail on October 7 for their ballots coming in from their counties.

The Secretary of State's website lays out all the important dates to save. October 21 is the last day to register to vote online for the General Election at <https://registertovote.ca.gov>. Voters are encouraged to check Voter Status at <https://voterstatus.sos.ca.gov/>

For those not registered even at the last minute, they

can also register on the same day as the Election. To learn how to register to vote, see <https://vote.gov/register/california>

Save the date, November 5, 2024, <https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/upcoming-elections/general-election-nov-5-2024>

To see the SOS QR Code, <https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/myvote-democracy-work-project/daw-qr-code>

Learn more about what VP Harris stands for, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/vice-president-harris/>

For more BLAYD information, see <https://www.blacklayoungdemocrats.com/>

For NAN OC, see <https://www.nan-oc.com/> National Action Network - Orange County Chapter

Racial Wealth Gap

(Cont. from Page 3)

tax system to address racial inequality," the report states, comparing recent monumental legislation like the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act.

Three Key Reforms to Tackle Racial Inequity

The report lays out three central reforms aimed at curbing the wealth concentration among the ultra-rich and dismantling the racial inequities baked into the tax code:

Taxing Wealth Fairly: The report calls for equalizing the

tax rates on wealth and work. Currently, capital gains—profits from investments—are taxed at a far lower rate than wages earned by working people, a disparity that overwhelmingly benefits white households. The vast majority of capital gains income flows to white families, who comprise only two-thirds of taxpayers but receive 92% of the benefits from lower tax rates on investment income.

Strengthening the Estate Tax: The estate tax, which is supposed to curb the

accumulation of dynastic wealth, has been weakened over time, allowing large fortunes—primarily held by white families—to grow even larger across generations. The report calls for stronger enforcement of the estate tax to prevent the further entrenchment of wealth and power within a small, overwhelmingly white elite.

Targeting Tax Deductions to Benefit Lower-Income Households: Deductions for mortgage interest, college savings, and retirement accounts disproportionately benefit wealthier, predominantly white households. In order to prevent lower-income and minority households from falling behind due to policies that are currently biased in favor of the wealthy, the brief advocates for

restructuring these deductions.

Biden-Harris Administration and Senate Proposals for Change

Both the Biden-Harris administration and Senate Finance Committee Chairman Ron Wyden have proposed addressing the racial wealth gap. The Billionaire Minimum Income Tax (BMIT) and the Billionaire Income Tax (BIT) would ensure that the wealthiest Americans—who often go years without paying taxes—contribute their fair share. These proposals would raise over \$500 billion in revenue over the next decade, which could be reinvested in healthcare, education, and housing for communities of color.

As the report points out, our current tax system is skewed in favor of the ultrawealthy. It

allows the rich to avoid paying taxes on the increased value of their investments unless they sell them. They often borrow against these growing fortunes, further delaying taxation, which allows white billionaires to accumulate vast wealth while paying a fraction of what working families pay in taxes.

Defending IRS Funding to Hold the Wealthy Accountable

The report also highlights the critical need to defend IRS funding, restored under the Inflation Reduction Act, which is essential for cracking down on wealthy tax cheats. Contrary to Republican claims, this funding will not increase tax enforcement on households earning less than \$400,000. Instead, it will improve customer service and expand the Direct File program, saving

taxpayers significant time and money.

The Biden administration's restored IRS funding is expected to raise an additional \$100 billion over the next decade by ensuring the wealthiest Americans and corporations pay what they legally owe.

A Call for Urgent Action

The message from Color of Change and Americans for Tax Fairness is clear: America's tax system is broken, and without immediate reforms, the racial wealth gap will continue to widen. "Addressing the insidious racial preferences in our tax code is one of the most direct ways we can not only help Black communities grow here and now but for generations to come," Allen-Kyle concludes.

ENTERTAINMENT

James Earl Jones, Iconic Voice of Darth Vader and EGOT Winner, Dies at 93

By Stacy M. Brown
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Correspondent

James Earl Jones, the legendary actor whose deep, resonant voice became synonymous with some of the most iconic characters in film history, passed away today at his home in Dutchess County, New York. He was 93.

His representatives at Independent Artist Group first confirmed the actor's death to Deadline. Over a remarkable career that spanned six decades, Jones earned an indelible place in both Hollywood and Broadway. He became one of only a few entertainers to achieve the prestigious EGOT, winning an Emmy, Grammy, Oscar, and Tony.

Best known to many as the commanding voice behind Darth Vader in Star Wars, Jones brought depth and gravitas to the villainous character, making him one of cinema's most unforgettable antagonists. He reprised the role in Star Wars: Episode III – Revenge of the Sith (2005) and Rogue One: A Star Wars Story (2016), further cementing his legacy in the galaxy far, far away.

Born on January 17, 1931, in Arkabutla, Mississippi, Jones's contributions to the arts extended far beyond Star Wars. He voiced the beloved character Mufasa in Disney's animated classic *The Lion King* (1994) and again in the 2019 live-action remake. His

unmistakable voice was also a signature of CNN's "This is CNN" campaign.

Jones's acting career began on the stage and in film with his breakout role in Stanley Kubrick's *Dr. Strangelove* (1964). His powerful on-screen presence led to roles in a variety of acclaimed films including Conan the Barbarian (1982), *Coming to America* (1988), *The Hunt for Red October* (1990), and *The Sandlot* (1990). He earned an Oscar nomination for his portrayal of Jack Jefferson in *The Great White Hope* (1970), a role that also won him his first Tony Award.

On Broadway, Jones was a force to be reckoned with. He earned four Tony nominations and took home two wins for *The Great White Hope* in 1969 and August Wilson's *Fences* in 1987. His contribution to the stage was celebrated with a Special Tony Award in 2017.

Jones's talents were equally recognized on television, where he won two Primetime Emmys in 1991 for Gabriel's *Fire and Heat Wave*. His voice and presence on-screen were magnetic, a testament to his versatility as an actor who could excel in drama, comedy, and everything in between.

A recipient of the Kennedy Center Honors in 2002, Jones's lifetime of achievements earned him accolades from SAG-AFTRA and the National Board of Review and a Grammy for Best Spoken Word Recording in 1977.



James Earl Jones

Black Caucus

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creation of a new state agency called the California American Freedmen Affairs Agency (CAFAA). That agency, one of the California Reparations Task Force's 115 recommendations, would be responsible for determining eligibility for reparations and administering government processes related to compensation.

SB 1331 would establish an account for reparations in the State Treasury for the purpose of funding reparations policies approved by the Legislature and the Governor. Neither one of those pieces of legislation, authored by Bradford, a CLBC member, were a part of CLBC's initial reparations priority package of 14 bills announced in January.

However, according to a letter obtained by California Black Media, the CLBC added 1403 to the package in May. In the same letter, the Black Caucus requested that the state provide \$6 million to help fund efforts related to 1403 and another \$6 million to the California Black Freedom Fund, a \$100-million non-profit initiative focused on eradicating systemic and institutional racism in the state.

Another bill that was a part of the package, authored by Wilson, Assembly Constitutional Amendment (ACA 8), was approved by both houses of the Legislature and will appear on the ballot in the November election. If approved by voters, ACA 8 will erase language in the state constitution that legalizes

involuntary servitude and end forced labor in prisons as a punishment for crimes. ACA 8 will appear on the ballot as Prop. 6.

Nine reparations bills included in the CLBC package passed and have now been advanced to the Governor's desk for his consideration. Those bills include SB 1050, authored by Bradford, which would allow California to review and investigate complaints from individuals who claim their property was taken without compensation as a result of racially motivated eminent domain. It passed with a 73-0 vote on the Assembly floor.

Assemblymember Tina McKinnor (D-Inglewood), a CLBC member, inked an opinion article sharing her perspective on why the Legislature did not advance SB 1403 and SB 1331. McKinnor did not mention Bradford by name, but it is clear from context that she was referring to the author of the two bills in question.

"From the outset, a Black caucus member worked against the CLBC's efforts. Days after the CLBC introduced its reparations legislative package, a Black caucus member introduced his own reparations bills, not part of the CLBC's work, and spent months attempting to negotiate away the \$12 million that the CLBC had secured in this year's state budget for his own project," McKinnor wrote.

Bradford appeared on various media platforms as well with accusations directed at his CLBC colleagues. Bradford told Roland Martin, the popular media host on his podcast, that all the members of CLBC had signed on as co-authors of SB 1403 in May.

"It's probably the most heartbreaking, disappointing time I've experienced in the Legislature," Bradford told Martin on his "Unfiltered"

show on Sept. 4. "You're taught early 'don't fall in love with your bills.' I didn't fall in love with this bill, but I felt what this bill meant not only to Black Californians but Black Americans."

Assemblymember Issac Bryan (D-Ladera Heights), one of the CLBC members who was feeling the heat from disgruntled activists, faced the music and showed up at a town hall meeting held on Sept. 5 at the Los Angeles Center for Black Power in Leimert Park. Bryan said the crowd yelled at him, but he understood the community's frustrations.

The next day, Bryan appeared on Dominique di Prima's KBLA 1500 AM radio show, based in L.A., to explain why the CLBC did not push for the bills to get an Assembly floor vote.

Bryan said the CLBC had a number of concerns that included "last-minute amendments" to SB 1403 requested by the governor that were not immediately shared with the Black lawmakers, absent legislative oversight, a potential veto, and no solutions for longtime funding of the CAFAA. Bryan said he was still in favor of the CLBC bringing the bills to the Assembly floor for a vote, but the group collectively decided against it. In the end, he respected the members' action.

"On a personal level, I had no problem sending the bills to the Governor," Bryan said to di Prima. "But I think when you're moving in solidarity, not just with your colleagues in Sacramento, but within the community and there are disagreements, strategically, you've got to make the best decisions you can."

Bryan continued by saying "In this particular instance, there was a decision collectively by a majority of the caucus to not move on (SB 1403 and SB 1331) this year."

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Photographer Roy Lewis Honored by Black Journalists

By **Hamil R. Harris**

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - Roy Lewis has photographed iconic images across Black America for decades and his love for the lens was captured by Jet Magazine in 1964 when it published his photograph of pianist Thelonious Monk.

Born in 1937, on a plantation below Natchez, Mississippi, Lewis's resourcefulness is part of his gift. He first fell in love with vocational photography in high school. He later practiced that love on a professional level at the Johnson Publishing Company on South Michigan Avenue in Chicago. He earned the money for a 35 millimeter camera after he was drafted into the Army.

This summer, Lewis, 87, was back on South Michigan Avenue in Chicago, but not at the John H. Johnson headquarters. He was there to receive "special honors," at the convention of the National Association of Black Journalists.

"I worked for Mr. Johnson from 1956 to 1968 and then to be honored on this Avenue..." Lewis said. "It's not about the pictures, it's about the feeling of being honored by your peers and being back in Chicago where I did some of my top work."

Lewis was bestowed with the Legacy Award during NABJ's Annual Convention in August. The Legacy Award recognizes a Black print, broadcast, digital, or photojournalist of "extraordinary accomplishment who has broken barriers and blazed trails."

Legacy honorees are those who have "contributed to the understanding or advancement of people and issues in the African Diaspora," according to NABJ.

The NABJ wrote, "Lewis is a renowned photographer and activist whose photography career started in 1964 when JET Magazine published his photograph of musician Thelonious Monk. His work has been celebrated nationwide, including in his 'Everywhere with Roy Lewis Exhibition,' beginning in 2008 at the Essence Music Festival."

Lewis, who left Chicago in 1973 and moved to Washington DC, was nominated for the award by Sam Ford, a founding member of the NABJ who worked for more than 51 years as an award-winning broadcaster for three decades on air at WJLA ABC Channel 7 in Washington, DC.

"Roy has been part of the Washington press corp for as far as I can remember," Ford said. "Roy started taking pictures when he was 17 years old. He will be 87 this year...That is more than 70 years connected with the news media except when he was in the Army."

Lewis also worked in his hometown paper in Natchez and went back to work for Ebony and Jet after the Army. He has a large collection of pictures from his days at Ebony and Jet from the 1960s and he is still a photographer for the Washington Informer, the Trice Edney News Wire and NNPA. "I thought he needed recognition. When a



Roy Lewis (Center) receives the Legacy Award from NABJ representatives Frank Holland of CNBC and Abby Phillip of CNN. PHOTO: Roland Martin/#Roland Martin Unfiltered

person is going for 87 years you don't want to wait too long," Ford said.

According to Lewis' biography in History Makers, in 1960 he was drafted in the United States Army. While in the military, he developed a talent for photography after purchasing his first camera for just \$25. In 1968, Lewis left Johnson Publishing and joined the staff at Northeastern University, filming student activities. In 1970, Lewis videotaped

an exclusive interview with the late Honorable Elijah Muhammad. Lewis' work was featured in the film A Nation of Common Sense. In 1974, Lewis traveled to Zaire to film the Muhammad - Ali-George Foreman fight. This historic video would later be featured in the Hollywood film When We Were Kings, which was a remake of the legendary championship fight. In 1975, Lewis worked on River Road on the Mississippi, a pictorial

book that focused on African-American people and life along the Mississippi River.

Dr. Ben Chavis, President/CEO of NNPA, said in an interview, "The National Newspaper Publishers Association salutes Roy Lewis as a phenomenal photojournalist and for his long-standing contribution to freedom, justice, and equality. Roy Lewis is an icon of the Black Press."

Likewise, Hazel Trice

Edney, editor-in-chief of the Trice Edney News Wire, said, "Roy Lewis's name is synonymous with excellence in Black Press photography." Under her leadership as president of the Capital Press Club (CPC) in 2014, Lewis was also an award recipient during the CPC's 70th anniversary celebration. She said, "Roy is deserving, not just because of great and historic photography, but because of his commitment to the cause."



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