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Entrepreneur: Larkins Closing One Door And Opening Another



By Sheila Ferguson

On July 29, 2023, Jacqueline Larkins officially retired as the Proprietor of Café Phix-Midtown in Cleveland's Ward 7. Its location is in the upscale new building that houses Digital C and Café Phix at 6815 Euclid Avenue. The café is across the lane from the Tru Hilton Hotel on Euclid's north side.

For Jackie, owning and operating coffee shops has been a labor of love for the last 20 years. More to the point, "It has been a journey," she says, from the start-up of her first venture, known as The Phix on Mayfield Road in South Euclid-Lyndhurst, to the

last five years at the Café Phix-Midtown. And now, she is preparing for a new adventure that involves teaching other women how to ply their talents as entrepreneurs.

Jackie's life as a businessperson is no surprise to anyone who knows her. They will all tell you that she has always been a force of nature and one ready to answer the call for adventure. Her resume includes graduating from East High and signing on to the U.S. Navy. As a military careerist, she served diligently as a Yeoman specializing in business administration and management while

traveling the world. However, at the close of her military service, she returned to Cleveland to be with her family and jumpstart her Corporate America career. Before becoming a café owner, she was a corporate events planner. In that job, Jackie created stellar corporate events and gatherings to salute the company and industry trailblazers, growths, and successes. The sheer enjoyment of meeting people and creating experiences for others made her start to dream about her future.

Soon her vision of opening a coffee shop

Continued on page 7



SCAN TO LISTEN

Neighborhood Pets Health Fair in Slavic Village

By Ashley Malaney and Megan Rospa

Neighborhood Pets is a nonprofit organization based in Slavic Village with a seemingly simple mission: Take Care Of Each Other. But in their almost seven years of work and relationship-building in the community, they have seen a growing need for their services that is only increasing.

Recognizing the important benefits of the human-animal bond, Neighborhood Pets works to help keep pets in their homes. To do this, they provide low-cost wellness pet care and supplies, a free spay-neuter program, a pet food bank, veterinary

care assistance, and more to pet owners in need in Cleveland. When you hear that list, you may not assume that Neighborhood Pets also has partnerships with human-focused social service agencies in the area.

Ashley Malaney, the project & outreach coordinator at Neighborhood Pets, emphasized the work they're doing to grow relationships with other organizations in Cleveland. "What we have learned is that people care so deeply about their pets, that they will come to us for help for their pets before getting help for themselves," she

Continued on page 4

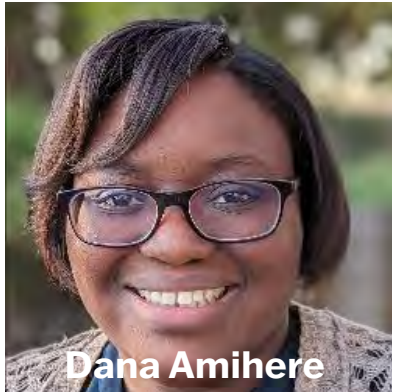


Amy Kidd volunteer for Neighborhood Pets. Photo Credit: Patrick Dobbins



SCAN TO LISTEN

2023 Solutions Journalism HBCU/Black Press Fellows



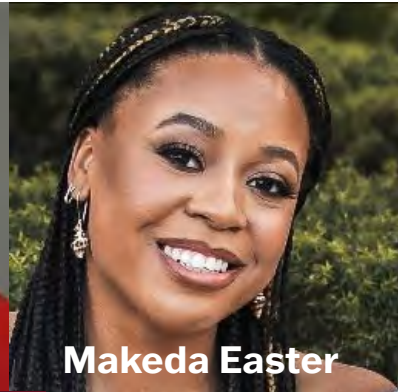
Dana Amihere



Ron Calhoun



Lona Cobb



Makeda Easter



Catherine Hollingsworth



Edward G. Robinson



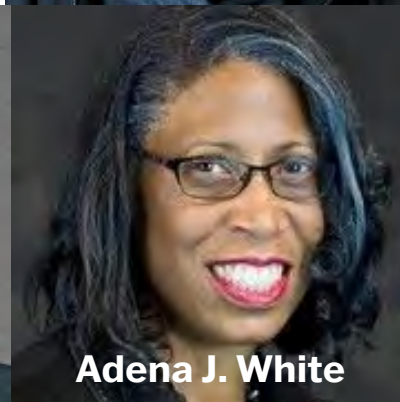
Cheryl Smith



David Squires



Latasha Rouseau



Adena J. White



Valerie D. White



Valerie Whitney



James Wright

The Solutions Journalism Network launches its first-ever HBCU/Black Press Academy & LEDE Fellowship with 14 HBCU educators and members of the Black Press. Exciting outcomes are expected to grow from the seed of an idea.

The Solutions Journalism Network is excited to announce the inaugural cohort for the Solutions Journalism HBCU/Black Press Academy & LEDE Fellowship. This cohort of educators from historically Black universities and newsroom leaders from the Black Press will spend a year learning how to incorporate solutions journalism into their curricula and media operations. Journalists and educators will be paired throughout the year to host community engagement events, collaborate on reporting projects and provide student journalists the chance to put what they're learning in the classroom into practice.

This is Solutions Journalism Network's first HBCU + Black

Press fellows cohort. This initiative deepens SJN's work with colleges and universities and builds on SJN's commitment to renewing and refreshing journalism for historically underserved communities.

Each fellow will receive \$7,500, training, and support to report on stories and hold community engagement events throughout the 2023-2024 academic year. Meet the class of fellows:

Dana Amihere is the founder/executive director of AfroLA. She is a designer, developer, and data journalist who left conventional newsrooms in 2021 to start Code Black Media, a digital media consultancy at the intersection of data, design, and equity. As a Black Press fellow, she will focus on Black migration to Los Angeles.

Ron Calhoun is the publisher of The Cleveland Observer (TCO). TCO provides information and resources on health, education, finance, and positive change within the community. Calhoun served in the U.S. Air Force and retired as a system analyst from the Cleveland Clinic Foundation Healthcare Data Center. He has spent over 35 years working with the Karamu Theater as an actor/singer, light/sound technician, and sound designer. As a Black Press fellow, he will focus

on training community members on the fundamentals of solutions journalism.

Lona Cobb is a professor who has been teaching journalism at Winston-Salem State University since 2008. Before coming to WSSU, she was a journalism professor at Bennett College, Marshall University, and West Virginia State University. She earned her MAJ at Marshall University and her doctorate at Southern Illinois-Carbondale University. Her research interests include the presentation/publication of AIDS and health news in Black publications (specifically magazines). She has been a copy editor at the Greensboro News & Record and a news reporter for the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette and the Winston-Salem Journal newspapers. During her time as an HBCU fellow, she hopes to establish ongoing partnerships between WSSU student journalists and African American community newspaper journalists throughout North Carolina.

Makeda Easter is an award-winning journalist and creative who works at the intersection of arts and social justice. Her work has appeared in the Los Angeles Times, Dance Magazine, Chemical & Engineering News, American Theatre, and other publications. In 2022, she created

the Art Rebellion, an independent platform amplifying the stories of artists who are also activists. Easter will spend her time as a Black Press fellow reporting solutions-focused stories on programs that have helped artists make a livable wage.

Catherine Hollingsworth founded the Bowie Sun digital newspaper in 2021 with a micro-grant from the Google News Initiative. The former Washington-based journalist formed the community news site out of a sense of urgency after a hedge fund closed the 41-year-old Bowie Blade-News. Hollingsworth is a former Freedom Forum-Paul Miller Washington Reporting Fellow with a master's degree in journalism from Michigan State University. As a Black Press fellow, Hollingsworth will focus on rebuilding the local news scene in Bowie, Maryland.

Edward G. Robinson III is an award-winning sports journalist who has written for The Washington Post, The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, The News & Observer in Raleigh, and other newspapers. He is a Professor of Practice at Morgan State University, in Baltimore, Maryland, where he teaches writing and reporting courses. He is also the director of the SGJC Center for the Study of Race and Culture in Sports. Robinson will use his time as an HBCU fellow to examine the ongoing debate about Baltimore's dirt bike culture.

Cheryl Smith is the editor-publisher of I Messenger Media LLC, the umbrella organization for Texas Metro News, Garland Journal, Metro News, and I Messenger. She is the immediate past secretary of the National Association of Black Journalists and a board member of the Society of Professional Journalists. As a Black Press fellow, she will focus on the COVID-19 pandemic's effect on Black Texans.

David Squires is a writer, editor, educator, and digital journalist who teaches writing and editing courses at N.C. A&T State University in Greensboro, North Carolina.

He is also a contributing writer for ESPN's Andscape.com, formerly The Undeclared.

As an HBCU fellow, he will focus on solutions to social problems unique to communities near universities.

Latasha Rouseau is the Executive Director of Sapelo Square, a digital media, education, and news organization that

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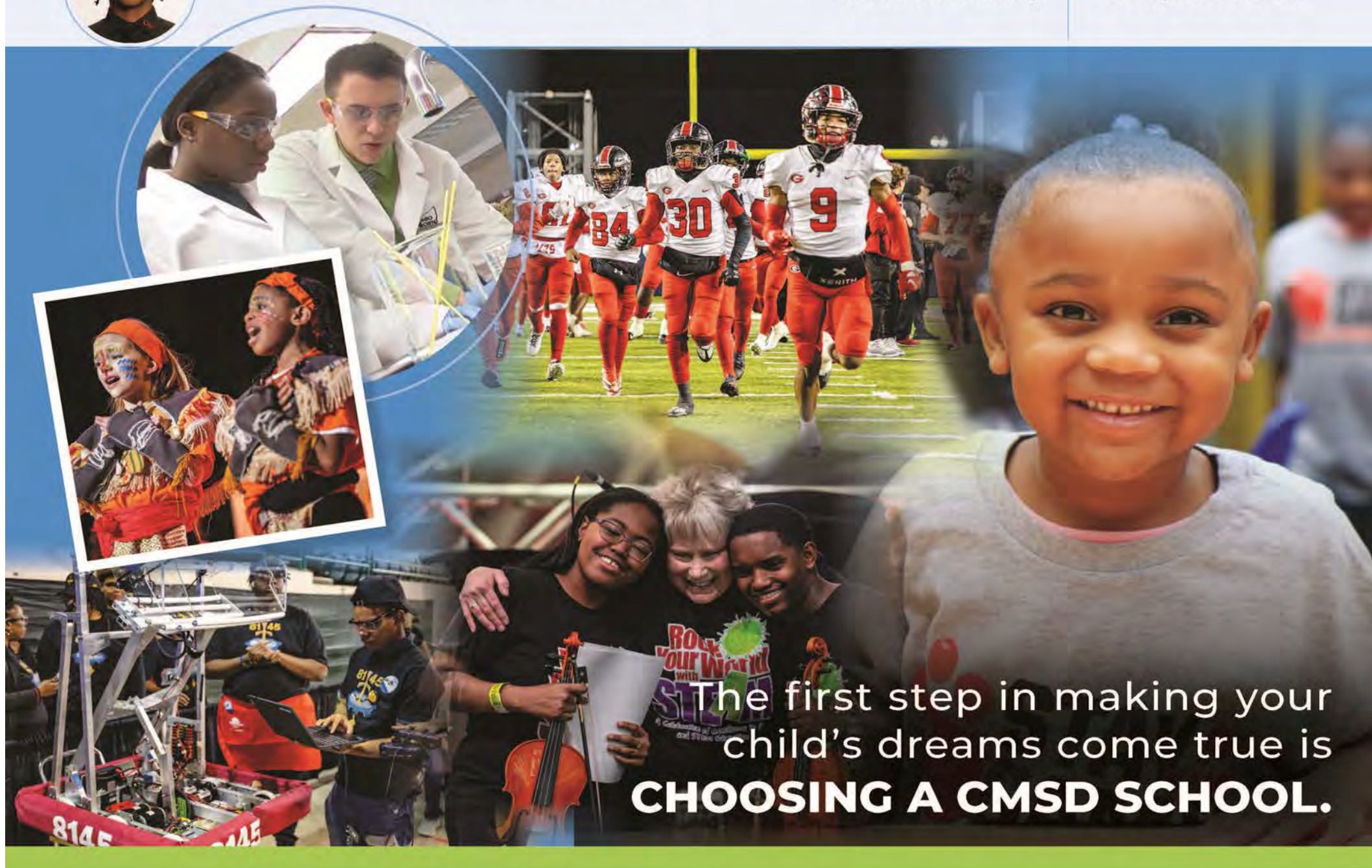
Top-rated urban district in Ohio for academic growth (12th in state overall)

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Savvy Consumers and Avoiding Scams

By Tonya Sams

With so many ways for consumers to spend their money, it is easy to become a victim of scams. Eric Zell, a supervising attorney in the Economic Justice group at The Legal Aid of Society of Cleveland, offers a few tips to keep your money safe.

One way to avoid being swindled is to conduct research to find out if the person or company you want to do business with is legitimate. This includes understanding the products and services being offered and researching to look for any consumer complaints. Consumers should ask around to find out if others are familiar with the reputation of the people or company that they are planning to do business with.

It is also important for consumers to understand how contracts work. "Read the contract and make sure that you understand what you're agreeing to," Zell said. He suggests that if it is hard to understand, find someone who can help you

understand the language. "Any person or company that you are interacting with who is offering you a contract should allow you some time to review it," he said. "It is not a good sign if someone is pressuring you to sign a contract immediately. You should have an opportunity to understand what's in it and review it, making sure that you understand what you will have to do going forward." After signing a contract, always keep a copy for your records. This includes keeping copies of documents that are exchanged after the contract has been signed, like payments and receipts. This will be helpful if you have any problems later and need to provide documentation.

This tip also applies when purchasing a vehicle. "Car dealers may try to hide information from you. They will not necessarily tell you everything upfront, so you need to review the paperwork thoroughly to understand what your monthly obligations are going to be," Zell said. "You need to understand whether there are additional fees or services added."



Zell said that it is also important not to be fooled by low-cost or free offers. Always read the fine print so you know what you're agreeing to. If it sounds too good to be true, then it probably is. "People can be scammed when they think they are signing up for a free offer, but their credit information is still collected," Zell said. "Then down the road, they are charged for other services or fees."

Keeping your personal information safe is also important. If a company is contacting you, make sure they are who they claim to be. Zell said that financial institutions or government entities like the social security administration or IRS will never reach out to people by phone or email unexpectedly. If you have

doubts, hang up the phone and call the number that you know is correct to reach them directly.

Legal Aid offers online resources on consumer issues, bankruptcy, and other money-related issues. Visit laslev.org, click on the "Services & Resources" tab, click "Legal Resources," and then select "Money."

Do you have questions regarding money-related issues? Legal Aid may be able to help! Call Legal Aid at 888-817-3777 during normal business hours or apply online 24/7 at laslev.org/apply.

Tonya Sams is the Development and Communications Assistant for The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland.

Health Fair in Slavic Village

front page



Christina Jackson, Director of Integrated Harm Reduction and Linkage to Care Services, The Centers Photo Credit: Patrick Dobbins

said. "Because we are building trust and rapport with our clients, they typically tell us more about their other needs as a result. We have a unique opportunity to reach folks who may not be comfortable looking for help on their own, and as a result, we feel we are called to support our clients in finding the resources they need for a better quality of life for themselves and their pets."

Neighborhood Pets isn't the only organization that senses this need to bring human resources to the neighborhood. In June, they partnered with University Settlement to create a health and safety fair that was free and open

to the public. "We wanted to not only give our community a chance to meet the organizations that are there for them, but we also wanted the organizations to meet and learn about what each other does. We all know that the more we work together, the easier it is to get things done, create change and powerful outcomes," said Malaney. Participating vendors included health and safety organizations from the Cleveland area that specialize in harm reduction, legal support, medical and dental care, food, and housing assistance. These organizations set up booths on the sidewalks surrounding Neighborhood Pets and in their

courtyard. With hundreds of Clevelanders in attendance, free lunch and refreshments were provided for all participants by The Centers, University Settlement, and Neighborhood Pets.

Neighborhood Pets also collected hygiene and first aid products, baby care items, some seed starters, and other items from the Goods Bank NEO to give to clients for free. The participating vendors were University Settlement, Legal Aid, MetroHealth, The Centers, NEON (Northeast Ohio Neighborhood Health), NORA (Northeast Ohio Recovery Association), Thrive 4 Change, and Care Alliance. Approximately 300 people

attended, many of whom were clients of Neighborhood Pets; however many neighbors and other community members also stopped by to participate in the event.

The simple mission of "Take Care of Each Other" was embodied by all who attended, and due to the strong attendance, Neighborhood Pets has committed to hosting these events on a regular basis to help any Clevelanders in need.

To learn more about Neighborhood Pets Outreach and Resource Center, visit their website at www.neighborhoodpetscle.org, or visit their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/neighborhoodpetscle.



Regina Savage, Dental Director and Carla Dates, Dental Manager of NEON Photo Credit: Patrick Dobbins

Midwest CannaWomen and the Ohio Midwest CannaFest



By Bruce Checefsky

Ally Reaves, founder and president of Midwest CannaWomen, wants people to know that the cannabis industry is thriving in Ohio. She has worked in the industry since 2017, educating and providing community resources to help Ohioans to become legal Medical Marijuana patients, empowering minority communities while advocating for women.

Reaves, born and raised in the Quincy neighborhood of Cleveland, was an intern at the Cleveland School of Cannabis the same year she founded Midwest CannaWomen. The intern experience was so rewarding she started her business which includes outreach programs to educate the public on cannabis use and procurement. Five years later, Midwest CannaWomen will present their fifth annual event on Saturday, Aug. 19, 2023, from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Rid-All Green Partnership, a Black-owned organization and one of the largest urban farms in Ohio, located at

8129 Otter Ave. in Cleveland.

Ohio Midwest CannaFest Part III has a western-style theme featuring Ohio Licensed Cannabis Operators and Ancillary/Supply Chain businesses that educate and provide resources on the cannabis industry. Spring Mist Farm Mobile Petting Zoo with Uncle David will be there with eighteen farm animals, food vendors, farm animals, farm games, Cowboy Girl/Cowboy Best Outfit Contest with cash prizes, and more. The event is free and open to the public. "I only allow licensed operators and ancillary supply chain companies to sponsor my events," said Reaves. "No hemp or CBD because the laws are strict."

CBD is a single compound in the cannabis plant, and marijuana is a type of cannabis plant or plant material that contains many naturally occurring compounds, including CBD and THC. Hemp and CBD products are generally not produced by licensed medical marijuana companies. Ohio Department

of Agriculture regulates hemp; the Department of Commerce, the State Medical Board, and the Ohio Board of Pharmacy regulate medical cannabis.

"Hemp and cannabis are two different types of products. The products with flowers and stuff you find in smoke shops are not regulated," she said. "People think they are buying tested, legal medical cannabis products, and they are not. There are ninety-nine medical dispensaries in Ohio. They do not have leaves of anything like that."

Cannabis in Ohio is legal for medical use and illegal for recreational use. Possession of less than 100 grams or about 3.5 ounces is considered a minor misdemeanor. Offenders can face a \$150 fine. Possession of more than 100 grams but less than 200 grams of marijuana is a misdemeanor punishable by up to thirty days in jail and a \$250 fine.

Reaves also created statewide career fairs and clinics across Ohio in Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, and Cincinnati, with her partner Nickole Ross at Noohra Labs. She has been instrumental in helping people with low-level marijuana convictions expunge their records so they can seek opportunities at work or school.

The event will be hosted by Because Cannabis Podcast Host, B.C. Wehman and Dustin Kava, and sponsored by Noohra Labs, Buckeye Relief, Green Thumb Industries, Beneleaves, Appalachian Farms, Standard Farms, Ancient Roots, Lighthouse Scientific, and SV Laboratories.

"I like to call myself an ally between the cannabis industry and community," she said. "My real name is Alicia, but I nicknamed myself Ally because I am an ally for the people."

Tickets can be purchased at: [midwestcannafest2.eventbrite.com](https://www.midwestcannafest2.eventbrite.com).

For additional information: allyreaves@midwestcannawomen.com.



Ally Reaves, founder and president of Midwest CannaWomen

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CLEVELAND OBSERVER

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The Cavaliers Remodel Local Recreation Center



By Anthony Byrd

On June 22, 2023, the Cleveland Cavaliers, in collaboration with the City of Cleveland, unveiled their 14th renovated gymnasium at the Collinwood Neighborhood Resource and Recreation Center (NRRC). Located at 16300 Lakeshore Blvd, it is a tribute to both community and basketball. The Cavaliers have undertaken an exciting project aimed at improving local communities and providing a better recreational space for the residents. As part of their commitment to social responsibility and community development, the Cavaliers have

A decision to remodel the Cleveland Collinwood Recreation Center reflected the Cavaliers' dedication to enhancing the quality of life in the city they call home. The recreation center, located in the Collinwood neighborhood, had long been a gathering place for individuals of all ages, providing opportunities for physical activity, education, and community engagement. However, the facility needed updates and improvements to better meet the evolving needs of the community. Since 2018, Collinwood has become the 14th neighborhood recreation and resource center to undergo renovation through the collaborative efforts of the

a comprehensive plan that took into account the unique requirements and desires of the Collinwood neighborhood. The interior fieldhouse was redesigned to maximize functionality and versatility, with updated equipment and amenities for sports, fitness, and wellness activities.

The Cavaliers not only committed financial resources to this project but also actively engaged with the Collinwood community throughout the remodeling process. They sought input from residents, community leaders, and organizations to ensure that the renovations aligned with the needs and

The inauguration at Collinwood NRRC consisted of a press conference and the symbolic ribbon cutting, which took place in the redesigned gymnasium. After the event, local children had the opportunity to interact with the Collinwood Cheerleading Team and engage in a Cavs Academy basketball clinic led by the Cavs Academy coaches. Furthermore, a dance clinic conducted by the Cavaliers Scream Team was also a part of the day's activities.

Remodeling of the Cleveland Collinwood Recreation Center was a testament to the Cavaliers' commitment to Cleveland and their belief in the power of sports and community



embarked on the remodeling of the Cleveland Collinwood Recreation Center, a facility that served as a hub for various activities and programs. In a formal ceremony, representatives from the Cavaliers, along with city officials, marked the grand opening of the fully revamped facility with a ribbon-cutting event.

Cleveland Cavaliers and the city of Cleveland.

The remodeling project was carried out to create a modern, inclusive, and multifunctional space that could cater to a wide range of interests and activities. The Cavaliers collaborated with local architects, designers, and community members to develop

aspirations of the people who would benefit from the upgraded facility. Cleveland community leaders like the City of Cleveland's Chief of Youth and Family Success Sonya Pryor-Jones, Council President Blaine A. Griffin, and Ward 8 Councilman Michael D. Polensek were all present at the occasion.

engagement. By revitalizing this important community resource, the team aimed to contribute to the overall well-being and vitality of the Collinwood neighborhood, creating a legacy that extends beyond the basketball court.

<https://www.nba.com/cavaliers/news/releases-court-refurbishment-230623>



Nic Barlage, CEO, Cleveland Cavaliers unveils the completed update of Collinwood Rec Center as Sonya Pryor-Jones, Council Griffin, and Polensek, staff and Coaches enjoy the celebration.

Larkins Opening Another Door

From page

came into focus. And it was not just an ordinary shop. Jackie envisioned an establishment filled with warmth and a spirit of welcome that connected people. In her mind's eye, the space would convene all sorts of people. It would also be a place open to spoken word poetry, book signings, and the works of emerging artists. In time, she manifested that café space where customers were treated to delicious foods and beverages and a nourishing experience at the soul level. Making it happen meant endless hours of research, meeting with coffee merchants and shop owners, learning about the origins and flavors of the various coffees and teas, writing a business plan, going to conferences, pricing equipment, and embarking on the journey of Coffee Shop sustainability.

Throughout the glue has been Jackie's imagination, tenacity, business know-how, bustling energy, captivating smile, warm energy, and genuine interest in people. Though the moment is bitter-sweet, she leaves the role of Café Owner with so many fond memories. Some of those highlights include:

- Support and Engagement in the café's first home community of South Euclid-Lyndhurst
- Recruitment as a model woman-owned community business primed for duplication in the urban region.
- Receipt of essential funding support with the gifts of a new



Café Phix MidTown housed in the Digital C building, 6815 Euclid Ave in Cleveland

- facility; and equipment.
- Embrace by Ward 7 and the metropolitan Cleveland community of residents and workers
- Meeting Barack Obama during his Cleveland visit in 2016 at Burke Lake Airport; and
- Hosting the Hillary Clinton team when they worked in Cleveland

Despite all of the blessings and good fortune, Jackie has weathered the COVID-19 pandemic. She recalls, "It almost sunk the business. Until then, the business was solvent and thriving with the support of her transient clients traveling to stay at the hotel and her regulars from the neighborhood, business groups, and those working at the surrounding businesses. She also

noted that "without our mainstays purchasing coffee, pastries, and lunch fare, the café almost shut its doors in 2020.

Fortunately, News Channel 5 helped save the day by publicizing her services and the challenges created by the pandemic. As a result, she started to have customers lined up around the block. She also received loans from Cuyahoga County and the Payroll Protection Program to stay afloat. "Those funds," she said, "allowed me to hire back an employee." Yet she notes that it is still difficult to hire qualified and dependable staff, offer a sustainable wage, and manage as the day-to-day operations are covered.

At the end of June, Jackie sent out a press release. It detailed

her next steps in community service. In 2022, Ms. Tenisha Gant Watson invited her to serve as a partner and consultant to the Community Resource Center and the Oasis in the City Conference and Retreat Center ("Oasis in the City"). This site is currently in the planning phase and is set to emerge as a crucial pillar in the Mt. Pleasant community.

The program aims to enhance the community's quality of life, prosperity, and self-sufficiency. Jackie will collaborate with the Jordan Community Resource Center and its diverse group of partners, including the Cleveland Foundation, The Black Futures Fund, NEORS, the United Black Fund, the Cuyahoga Land Bank, and the Saint Luke's Foundation. As the program's Hospitality and Community Enterprise Consultant, Jackie will help to build the program's infrastructure through the design of curricula on economic self-sufficiency, hospitality skill-building, financial and budget management, personal development curricula, and a variety of skills training opportunities. Overall, the Oasis Program will address such urgent community needs as health, wellness, and wealth creation. To fulfill its aims, the center will serve as a hub for entrepreneurship and innovation, to provide space for start-ups and community-driven initiatives.

The Cleveland Observer Team wishes Jackie all the best!

Why A Student-Led News Desk?

Staff Writer

The Cleveland Observer a local Black media digital and print news desk. We want to train the members of the community in Cleveland on the fundamentals of solutions-based journalism.

This cohort would allow us to train both students and community members to become effective solutions-based journalists. We are applying as a member of the Black Press. In addition, being paired with other fellows would allow us to learn, engage and apply solutions-based training.

Once trained residents will be able to highlight the issues within their community and develop solutions-based content. Therefore, helping communities hold individuals, institutions, and organizations accountable for the negative effects.

The Cleveland Observer has three content priorities being, health; education; and finances.

Thus, the program will focus on training students and community members to provide solutions based-content around these priority topics: Health, Education and Finances.

This training will be offered twice a year where the trainer and student will be paid a stipend to learn about and provide solutions -based content through print and digital media.

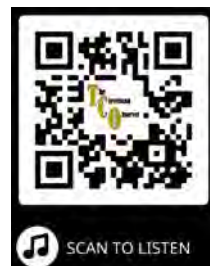
This program will collaborate with TCO's already functioning internship experience by recruiting students from our current collegiate partnerships (Cleveland State University, Case Western Reserve University, Baldwin Wallace University, and John Carroll University)

A community engagement town hall event is planned to obtain content by interviewing and surveying attendees. We also would like to have a panel of subject experts with community members asking topic-based

questions.

The Cleveland Observer will provide resources and solutions

to help students who may be struggling with mental health issues.



The Cleveland Observer

Student Media News Desk

The Cleveland Observer Student Journalist Paid Reporting



- September 2023 thru May 2024
- Bi- weekly meeting
- Solutions Journalism Training
- Community and peer to peer Interview
- Write blog and social media posts
- Create video content
- \$2000.00 stipend for content submission

Books, Buses and the Unexpected – Tips For School



By Tonya Sams

August is here and we will soon hear the ringing of school bells. But preparing for the new year is more than just buying clothes and supplies – it is also about preparing for new situations and challenges students may face at school.

The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland provides legal help that ensures kids' school success, and wants to offer a few helpful tips:

SPECIAL EDUCATION

If you are concerned that your child is not keeping up with peers, you can ask your school to test your child for special education needs. Make the request in writing and keep a dated copy for yourself. It doesn't matter if the school year is well underway; you can request a special education evaluation at any time.

If it is determined that your child qualifies for special education services, they will receive what is called an individualized education program or IEP. IEPs outline goals and accommodations that can help your child succeed.

If you and the school disagree regarding your child's placement in special education, you can contact the Ohio Department of Education to file a complaint or request a mediation to resolve the issue.

TROUBLE IN SCHOOL

If your child is constantly getting into trouble in school, find out if they are having problems with a teacher or other students. Talk to your child about the trauma that may be causing them to act out. You may find that the school can provide resources such as a mental health counselor for your child. You can also request that your child is tested for special education or a functional behavior assessment (FBA). Talk to school officials about these issues.

If your child has been disciplined by suspension, expulsion, or other measures, request documentation from the school.

BULLYING

According to Ohio law, bullying is any repeated, intentional act (either physical,



verbal, electronic, or written) that causes a student physical or mental harm and creates a hostile, threatening environment. Schools are required to allow people to report bullying anonymously. Schools also must protect students from bullying and discipline those students that are bullying others.

You have the right to report bullying to the school and to request an investigation. If an investigation is conducted, you have a right to see the results of that investigation. You can also obtain a lawyer or contact the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights.

HOUSING INSECURITY

If you and your child are homeless, federal law states that your child can not be denied their education. Your child has the right to continue to attend the same school before they became homeless and to receive transportation. They also have the right to transfer to a school that may be closer, enroll in school even if they do not have the proper documentation such as a birth certificate, and the right to continue to receive special education if needed.

If you have issues in any

of these areas, Legal Aid may be able to help. Call 888-817-3777 or visit laslev.org/contact for more information. Legal Aid also offers free legal clinics in neighborhoods throughout Northeast Ohio. Check Legal Aid's website for an event calendar and visit a clinic with your questions!

Tonya Sams is the Development and Communications Assistant at The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland.

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Child Immunization Schedule	
AGE	VACCINES
Birth	• HepB.
MONTHS	1-2 • HepB.
	2 • RV. • DTaP. • Hib. • PCV13. • IPV.
	4 • RV. • DTaP. • Hib. • PCV13. • IPV.
	6 • RV. • Hib. • DTaP. • PCV13.
	6-18 • HepB. • IPV.
	12 • Hep A.
	12-15 • MMR. • VAR. • Hib. • PCV13.
15-18 • DTaP.	
18-23 • Hep A.	
YEARS	4-6 • DTaP. • IPV. • MMR. • VAR.
	11-12 • Tdap booster. • HPV. • Meningococcal.
	16 • Meningococcal.
YEARLY (beginning at 6 months)	Influenza (flu vaccine). (A one-time booster shot is needed a month after your child's first flu vaccination if they are younger than 9 years old.)
ABBREVIATION DEFINITIONS:	
• DTaP:	Diphtheria, tetanus and acellular pertussis
• Hib:	Haemophilus influenzae type B
• Hep A:	Hepatitis A
• HepB:	Hepatitis B
• HPV:	Human papillomavirus
• IPV:	Inactivated poliovirus
• MMR:	Measles, mumps and rubella
• PCV13:	Pneumococcal conjugate
• RV:	Rotavirus
• Tdap:	Tetanus, diphtheria and acellular pertussis booster.
• VAR:	Varicella

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Review: “The Trial of Willie Lynch”

By Anthony Byrd

On June 10, the East Cleveland Library hosted an engaging pre-Juneteenth extravaganza, offering a diverse range of pop-up shops and family-friendly activities. Among the standout events was a captivating theatrical production called *Lynch: The Trial of Willie Lynch*. Given Willie Lynch’s significant association with the history of slavery, it was instantly intriguing.



Willie Lynch, directed by Fred A. Taylor

The Trial of Willie Lynch, directed by **Fred A. Taylor**, was an engrossing and thought-provoking theatrical production that skillfully delved into the depths of historical injustice and its enduring impact on society. Lynch, widely known for his letter-implementing tactics to pit Black people against one another and to destroy the mental health of an entire community, was the focal point of the play. With its poignant and incisive voice, the production invited the audience to confront the brutal legacy of slavery, igniting a compelling exploration of the ongoing consequences that reverberate even today.

The production’s greatest strength lay in its ability to seamlessly merge historical facts with a fictional courtroom drama. Set within the framework of a fictitious trial, the play centered around Willie Lynch, a symbolic character representative of the systemic oppression during the era of slavery. Through this metaphorical platform, the play bravely exposed the enduring repercussions of racism and discrimination in our collective history.

A favorite feature of this play was Taylor’s use of contemporary dance performances, choreographed by **Elijah Boddie**, to complement and enhance the themes being explored in the script. This creative decision added an extra layer of depth and emotion to the

production, elevating it beyond traditional theatrical conventions. This allowed the actors to convey their emotions and experiences through a different form of artistic expression. Taylor effectively bridged the gap between the past and present, further immersing the audience in the narrative. The synergy between the actors’ dialogue and the accompanying dance sequences created a multi-dimensional experience, engaging both the intellect and the senses.

The Trial of Willie Lynch boasted an exceptional ensemble cast, with each member delivering performances that were emotionally charged and profoundly compelling. Each character, like **Royce Ruffer** as Medgar Evers, **Martha Robinson** as Mamie Till, and **Laprise Marie**



Contemporary dance performances, choreographed by Elijah Boddie

Johnson as Betty Shabazz, represented a distinct era and carried with them a unique understanding of the weight of history. Their performances symbolized the ongoing fight for justice and equality, carrying the torch of change into the future. Their chemistry on stage created palpable energy, while their monologues and exchanges evoked a potent mix of anger, empathy, and introspection.

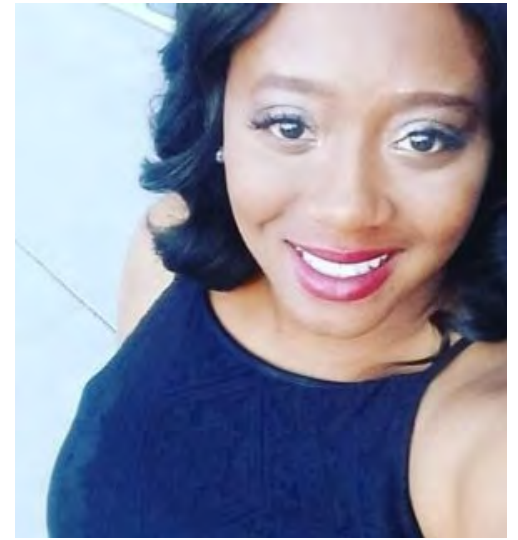
Complementing these performances, the play’s set design and staging were a testament to effective simplicity. The skillful use of lighting and sound design further enhanced the atmosphere, fostering a sense of tension, and amplifying dramatic moments throughout the play.

While *The Trial of Willie*



Martha Robinson as Mamie Till

Lynch excelled in many aspects, one area that could have benefited from further development was its pacing. Though the overall narrative flow was engaging, there were occasional instances where certain scenes felt slightly drawn out, causing a dip in the play’s momentum. By offering glimpses of hope and actionable change,



Laprise Marie Johnson as Betty Shabazz.

Taylor’s presentation would have provided a more well-rounded and impactful narrative.

With its exceptional performances, thought-provoking narrative, and commitment to fostering crucial conversations, *The Trial of Willie Lynch* was an important and necessary production. The portrayals served as a reminder of the enduring legacy of oppression and the importance of passing down knowledge and stories to younger generations. This play, which Taylor attempts to produce annually, left a lasting impression and serves as a catalyst for meaningful change.

Additional reporting by Melvin Mason

CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY

A Study of Alzheimer’s Disease & Genetics in African Americans

Black people are almost twice as likely to have Alzheimer’s Disease (AD) than white people. Yet, we are less likely to join *or be asked to join* most research studies. Dr. Jonathan Haines and his team at Case Western Reserve University are looking for the genetic factors that may play a part in this health disparity, and you can help!

This **global** research study is looking for the following people:

- **African Americans** with memory loss (like dementia) or AD. **AND African Americans 60+** who do not have memory loss.
- **Families** with >1 living person who has memory loss or AD.
- **Anyone** with memory loss who is younger than 60 years old.

Joining and sharing this study will help researchers around the world in the fight against AD. You’d do a 2 hour interview on your memory, health, and family history and then a small blood draw in the comfort of your home. At the end, you’ll get a gift card! For more details or to join this study, please contact anyone on our team.

GABBY
gcb27@case.edu
216-368-0786

PARIS
ptp14@case.edu
216-368-2089

SARA
sek67@case.edu
216-368-4693

God's Trustworthy Messengers



By Pastor Larry Frazier

Important responsibilities must be delegated to those that are the most competent. Since humans have a history of falling short, God knew that the good angels could always be trusted to correctly and honestly do His bidding. God entrusted the announcement of His Son's coming, the physical care of His

- They are created beings—not divine. Psalm 148:2&5: "Praise him, all his angels, all his heavenly hosts... Let them praise the name of the Lord for he commanded and they were created." Colossians 1:16: "For by him [Jesus] all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible." Angels are the invisible ones mentioned and God allows them to have bodies when the need arises. In heaven, we will be like the angels only in that there are no marriages.

- his servants who do his will."
- Angels serve as God's agents of divine punishment. Acts 12:23: "Immediately, because Herod did not give praise to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down...and he died." In Genesis 18 and 19, two angels came to Abraham with the pre-incarnate Jesus Christ. The angels went on to

east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flashing sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life."

- Angels foretell God's special events. In Judges 13:3, an angel appeared to the childless wife of Manoah announcing that Samson would be born.

In the Gospels of Matthew

Precious Lord, you have redeemed us to God by your blood and are worthy of our praise. You alone deserve our worship. Thank you for making us sons and daughters and bringing angels to minister to us. Amen.

Son, and ultimately the care of His Son's Church only to the most trustworthy beings—the angels. Angels are commemorated during the church season of Advent leading up to Christmas. At that time the Angel's Candle is lit on the wreath. It symbolizes peace and reminds us of the angel's message: "Peace on earth, goodwill toward men."

So what do the Scriptures say about these angels?

- Nowhere in scripture do humans have control over angels or give them commands. Angels do God's bidding and praise Him. Psalm 91:11: "For he will command his angels concerning YOU to guard YOU in all your ways." Psalm 103:20-21: "Praise the Lord, you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, who obey his word. Praise the Lord, all his heavenly hosts, you



- destroy Sodom and Gomorrah.
- Angels serve as God's agents of divine protection. In Daniel 6:22, an angel kept the lions from harming Daniel.
- God has created many angels. Revelation 5:11: "Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels numbering thousands upon thousands and ten thousand times ten thousand."
- Because of our sins, angels keep us from reentering the Garden of Eden on our own. Genesis 3:24: "After he drove the man out, he placed on the

and Luke, we are told that angels had to ensure that Joseph and Mary, Jesus' earthly parents, were in the right frame of mind concerning Jesus' birth. The Gospels also tell us that angels attended every aspect of Jesus' life from His birth, through His temptations, and into His death and resurrection. God loves the world so much that He sent Jesus to save us and in the words of Hebrews 13:1-2, He reminds us, "Keep on loving each other as brothers. Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing, some people have entertained angels without knowing it."

2023 Black Press Fellows

From page 2

documents and amplifies the experiences of Black Muslims in the United States. Prior to her current role, for over seventeen years, Latasha empowered and supported the most vulnerable groups in our communities by assisting youth and their families within the juvenile justice system. As a Black Press fellow, she will examine the impact of gentrification on inner-city masjids in Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., and Atlanta.

Adena J. White is an accredited public relations professional and social-impact storyteller with more than 15 years of experience leading communications efforts for place-based nonprofit organizations. In 2017, she founded Blackbelt Media to tell the stories of changemakers working to make the South a better place for all. Blackbelt Media produces the Blackbelt Voices podcast, which tells stories from and about Black folks down South that honor Black history, celebrate Black Southern

culture, and shape the future of the region. Since it launched in September 2019, Blackbelt Voices has been featured as a "New and Noteworthy" podcast by Apple Podcasts, named one of "The 15 Best Educational Podcasts for You to Expand Your Mind" by Oprah Daily, and listed among "Eight Podcasts to Deepen Your Knowledge of Black History" by Vanity Fair. As a Black Press Fellow, she will explore how Black farmers and growers in the South address the lack of healthy food options in their communities.

Valerie D. White is an associate professor in the School of Journalism & Graphic Communication at Florida A&M University and is chair of the Black College Communication Association. The Fort Valley, Georgia, native has advised three college newspapers and has worked in all areas of the media. She has been a public relations practitioner, a television news producer, a newspaper general assignment reporter, a

sportswriter and photographer, a magazine editor, and a copy editor. The Hampton University alumna received her master's in broadcast journalism from the University of Missouri and her doctorate in mass communication from the University of Georgia. Her hobbies include reading, watching movies, traveling, and crafts, particularly cross-stitch and jewelry making. As an HBCU fellow, she will examine programs and events to combat the attack in Florida on Black history and Black culture.

Valerie Whitney is a professor of practice at Bethune-Cookman University. She is the adviser to the student newspaper, Voice of the Wildcats, as well as McLeod Magazine, a student feature publication that is produced in the fall and the spring. She is a founding member of the Roots Revisited Book Club in Daytona Beach. She is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. As an HBCU fellow, Whitney will spend her time exploring plans to revitalize midtown Daytona

Beach, Florida.

James Wright is a staff writer for the Washington Informer Newspaper. He has worked with the Informer since December 2018 and previously worked as a freelance writer for the newspaper from 2009 to 2014. He has also written for the Washington AFRO-American Newspaper and The Washington Post. His work as a Black Press fellow will focus on initiatives to increase the number of Black medical professionals in predominantly Black wards in Washington, D.C.



Choosing to Accept or Decline Medical Care



By Sheila Ferguson

Approximately half (45% or 133 million) of all Americans suffer from at least one chronic disease, and the number is growing. Chronic diseases—including cancer, diabetes, hypertension, stroke, heart disease, respiratory diseases, arthritis, obesity,

will have to make critical medical decisions. The decision-making process about healthcare should never be one-sided. Rather, it is a partnership between the patient and the healthcare provider. Thus, there must be mutual trust, respect, and honest communication between you, the patient, your representative, and the physician. The best health outcomes occur when there is open and honest communication regarding medications, procedures, treatments, and surgery.

It is the healthcare provider's

The Medical Consent & Refusal Continuum	
Consent	Refusal
Informed consent is where, after everything has been explained, understood, and agreed upon, the patient permits to proceed with the recommended care. This is equal to the patient's agreement with their physician.	Informed refusal is where, after everything has been explained and understood, the patient decides against the recommended medical advice. This is the lesser-known counterpart to the doctrine of informed consent. It arises when patients elect not to undergo a procedure or accept medical advice provided by their physician. Going against medical advice also falls within this category.

and oral diseases—can lead to hospitalization, long-term disability, reduced quality of life, and death. Chronic conditions are the nation's leading cause of death and disability. According to the U.S. Department of Health, a chronic condition "is a physical or mental health condition that lasts more than one year and causes functional restrictions or requires ongoing monitoring or treatment." Chronic diseases are among the most prevalent and costly health conditions in the United States.

job to facilitate the patient's understanding of the risks and benefits of all recommendations and medications. **Patients should be aware that they can decline or refuse medications, treatments, surgeries, procedures, and even hospital admissions and stays.**

In the patient-doctor partnership, you must respect and trust your doctor; and you, in turn, feel understood and respected. This means feeling comfortable enough to ask questions about the risks and benefits of all recommended treatment procedures. Either way, consumers of healthcare must understand their rights and responsibilities concerning medical care. Overall, patients need to be aware of their right to informed consent, **right to informed refusal**, and the impact of declining care against medical advice (AMA). They are defined as the following:

Overall, we should be aware that, in making an important health decision, our thoughts may be influenced by:

- Financial concerns
- Feelings of Depression
- Fear
- Misinformation
- Personal values and beliefs
- Desire not to be a burden to loved ones
- Exhaustion from a long, painful illness and invasive medical procedures; and
- The acceptance of death

Sample Informed Consent in the procedure note.

Date

Procedure Note

Mr./Ms. _____ was explained the major risks and benefits associated with _____ procedure, and I answered his/her questions. I obtained informed consent directly from the patient in his/her language/through a professional interpreter/a nurse/staff/family member as an interpreter. The patient signed a consent form. The patient was then prepped in the usual manner. A "time-out" check was performed. Signature

In cases where you choose informed refusal, do not walk away mad. Spend time with your doctor to gain clarification of the issues at hand. Some of the most helpful hints include:

- State your reasons for refusal and listen to the doctor's recommendations to see if you can come to a shared decision.
- Stand firm in your concerns and work towards clarification of the issues
- Consider the options that your physician provides
- Ask about the possible consequences of the procedure's risks and benefits.
- Agree to seek a second and third opinion
- Be patient with yourself and take the time to talk with family and friends before making a final decision.

Also, take responsibility when you invoke your right to refuse treatment. Ask to **complete the proper medical form** that reflects your choice. These forms

that the patient is refusing medical treatment against the advice of their attending physician and that they understand the medical risks and benefits.

You can read more about this topic in such articles as:

An Empirical Study of Chronic Diseases in the United States: A Visual Analytics Approach to Public Health - PMC (nih.gov).

Informed Consent and Refusal | Hospital Handbook (ucsf.edu)

Relieving Bottlenecks in Patient Flow

Can You Leave the Hospital Against Medical Advice? (verywellhealth.com)

Refusal of Medically Recommended Treatment During Pregnancy | ACOG

When Patients Refuse Assessment of Decision-Making Capacity: How Should Clinicians Respond? | Law and Medicine | JAMA Internal

Sample Informed Refusal Letter

[Insert date here]

Dear [patient name], A review of your medical record reveals that you have not chosen to follow the recommended plan of care that I have provided for you. It is advisable for you to [insert the plan of care]. If you choose not to follow the recommended plan of care, you could experience health risks including, but not limited to [insert risk of not following the plan of care]

You and I are team members in managing your health. Therefore, you must follow my recommended plan of care. If you have any questions about what you should do, please call our office at [insert office phone number]

Sincerely, _____

can be obtained from your doctor, hospital, and nursing home administrators. Once completed, they will be added to your medical record. These forms include:

1) Against Medical Advice Form. An Against Medical Advice (AMA) form is a legal document that patients can sign to authorize doctors to release them against medical advice. For example, patients who leave against medical advice are a risk to themselves and can be a potential medical-legal risk. Signing the form certifies

Medicine | JAMA Network Informed Refusal—What You Need to Know | Duke Health Referring Physicians



Photo: Cottonbro Studio

Suffering from a chronic illness forces you to learn more about the healthcare experience and your options. During an illness, you, a loved one, a caregiver, a guardian, or a power of attorney



Cleveland's Own: Father of Labor Day, John Patterson Green



By Dorothy Salem

John Patterson Green (April 2, 1845-September 1, 1940) is known as the "Father of Labor Day" due to legislation he proposed in 1890 as an Ohio state legislator to recognize Labor Day as a state holiday. The trailblazer was the second African American to serve in the Ohio House of Representatives and the first to serve in the Ohio Senate.

His parents, John R. and Temperance Green were free blacks living in New Berne, NC who moved to Cleveland in 1857. John had to leave school to help support the family, but he continued to read and learn. Ten

years later, he published *Essays on Miscellaneous Subjects by a Self-Educated Colored Youth* (1866) and returned to attend Central High School (1866-69), the first public high school in Cleveland.

Upon graduation, he married Annie Walker, with whom he had four children: William, Theodore, Jesse and Clara. The following year, he finished his studies at Union Law School, moved to South Carolina and was admitted to the bar. The South held promise since the end of the Civil War and Reconstruction provided constitutional protections for blacks and promising careers for black Republicans.



After only two years, Green returned to Cleveland to pursue his political dreams. He became the first black elected to office in Cleveland as the Justice of the Peace. A Republican, Green held that post for nine years. In 1881, he published *Recollections of the Carolinas*. During that same year he ran for and won a seat in the Ohio House of Representatives where he proposed the Labor Day legislation.

In 1892, he became the Ohio Senate's first black member and the only black legislator in the North until the 20th century. He became a founding member of St. Andrews Episcopal Church. His Cleveland Republican ties to Marcus A. Hanna, businessman and supporter of William

McKinley, and to barbershop owner, George A. Myers, brought Green an appointment as U. S. postage stamp agent, a position he held 1897-1905.

He also served as acting superintendent of finance in the Post Office Department before returning to his law practice in 1906.

His wife died in 1912 and he later married Lottie Mitchell Richardson. During these years he compiled the stories of his life which resulted in his autobiography, *"Fact Stranger than Fiction"* (1920). At age 95, a car struck Green while crossing the street. He died from his injuries.

Song Birds

A Poem by Cheryl Darby

Chirping melodies so clear,
For all who listen to hear.
With a curious mind,
I opened my blinds.
Standing at the root of the tree,
Were two birds in sight to see.
On the branch up ahead,
A cardinal so pretty and red

And a blue jay,
To make my day.
They make their nests in the
tree,
With wings they fly free.
They protect their young,
As their songs are sung.

***Inspired by the birds who sing such beautiful songs.**



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