

Michigan Banner

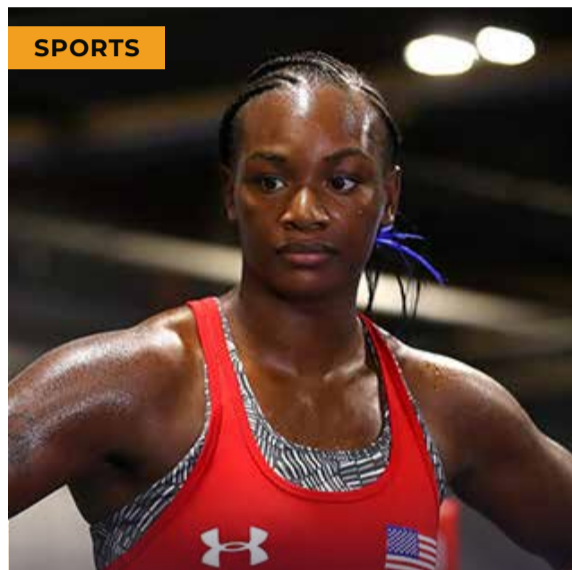
Leading in Diversity for 18 years



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SPORTS



MARCH 5, 2021

CLARESSA SHIELDS
DEFEATS MARIE-EVE DICAIRE BECOMING FIRST WORLD CHAMPION BOXER TO HOLD TITLES IN TWO DIFFERENT WEIGHT DIVISIONS



RUTH C. PRYOR

Mother Pryor remains always a **Victorious Believer**

By MB STAFF

When Ruth Pryor worked for Flint Public Schools as an elementary teacher for nearly two decades, she had no idea that a second calling would come her way,

She was settled into family life with her husband, Marvin, who was principal at Flint Northern High School.

"We were raising four children, and we couldn't have been happier," she recalls.

They also were active in their church, Greater Holy Temple Church of God in Christ, and that's how their second calling enters the picture.

Marvin was an associate minister and Ruth was president of the choir when Elder Roger Jones, now a bishop, asked them in 1984 to take responsibility for the pastorate duties of Williams Memorial COGIC on Saginaw's South Side. This was supposed to

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My journey of leadership and servanthood

Kelley A. Peatross, Ph.D.

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Cover, Mother Pryor

be a temporary task, but as they began to build back the congregation they grew to cherish their new surroundings.

"We embraced this role of teaching biblical principles, discipleship and building loving relationships with the congregation," Ruth Pryor says.

Soon, the renamed Victorious Believers Mission was prospering and the couple qualified for school retirement in Flint. As the years passed and the congregation swelled through the 1990s, plans were mapped for the ambitious 50,000-square-foot structure, built in a former farm field that stands tall and wide along South Outer Drive. A 1,400-seat-sanctuary is complemented by multiple classrooms and a full-size gymnasium

Evangelist Ruth Pryor in no way feels she sacrificed her career, because she's still a teacher.

"Instead of teaching children in the classrooms, I now speak to women at churches and convention centers who have reached various seasons in their lives," she explains.

She has a passion to help bridge the gap between women of various generations, along with encouraging and empowering them to overcome life's challenges. She served as director of the congregation's Women's Department, known as Women of Victory, for 30 years.

She has traveled the length and breadth of the nation, preaching the word of God and joined by Bishop Marvin until his sudden transition in 2010, after 47 years of marital bliss. She was honored in 2015 as one of The Church of God in Christ's "150 Most Influential Women."

Mother Ruth Pryor was born in Henderson, Tennessee, to William and Irma Trice. She was raised in Jackson, Michigan, where she once had aspirations of becoming a social worker because of her

love for family, or a gospel singer due to her enthusiasm and passion for singing hymns in church.

Some of Mrs. Pryor's fondest memories are traveling with her husband and children -- Derrick, Vonda, Melvin and

has coped with more hardships. In 1996, a younger sister and an aunt who was "like a sister" passed away, her father endured quadruple bypass surgery, her mother-in-law had a leg amputated, and finally in December her younger brother died of a sudden heart attack.

"If it had not been for a supportive family and a sustaining prayer life," she says, "there is no way I would have made it."

She leads Grief Sharing, a ministry and intercession team at VBM.

At the same time, her 96-year-old mother still lives independently in Jackson, and Mrs. Pryor feels blessed to assist in the caregiving. She also keeps in touch with her one remaining sister, Diane.

Expansion of Victorious Believers was accomplished "with a great sense of purpose," Mrs. Pryor adds, and the location along Interstate 75 sometimes attracts truck drivers and other out-of-towners.

"People traveling on I-75 see the "V" structured sign and pull on the church grounds to be a part of our lively services, or to simply request prayer," she explains.

A main source of pride is the Bishop Marvin C. Pryor Memorial Fund, which supports various missions and educational endeavors both locally and abroad. She has traveled to Trinidad, the West Indies and Ghana. Last year,

the memorial fund was able to assist with building a dormitory for housing and purchase a bus to transport children at the Royal Seed Orphanage in Accra, Ghana. Along with regularly supporting families around the world, Mother Ruth and the Late Bishop have adopted children through Compassion International, World Vision and Watoto Orphanages.

It is Mrs. Ruth C. Pryor's life mission to love God and to love His people.



Christopher -- exposing them to various cultures and all the beauty the world has to offer. She is proud of the fact that all of her children have had a personal relationship with the Lord, including Mel, who passed away four years ago. Christopher has accepted the baton and is running this leg of the race as the pastor of Victorious Believers Ministries.

In addition to the deaths of her husband and her middle son, Ruth Pryor

MESSAGE FROM THE PUBLISHER

Judge With Honor

Judges are held to a very high standard. There is a long list of attributes which must be consistently demonstrated before one can even be considered for such a position of honor and authority. Aside from the very rigorous intellectual/educational requirements, character traits such as open-mindedness, compassion, common sense, courage, and proper temperament are essential to providing justice to the community which placed its faith in individuals elected to serve in this capacity. Passing judgement, however, is not reserved for elected officials. We all make decisions on a daily basis which have an impact on the individuals or groups on the receiving end of our scrutiny. It is important that we exercise the same level of integrity in our decision making and the words we speak regarding others in our places of employment, social networks (direct and indirect), and community.

I have observed on the news, on social media platforms, and in day-to-day conversations that there is no shortage of opinions (judgement) on topics or issues from little to no importance all the way to matters of life or death. I have also noticed that judgement is often passed without verification of facts or without consideration of possible harmful results. Negative words spoken have adverse effects: relationships are tested, reputations are ruined, jobs are lost, and people are often harmed. Individuals perceived to be leaders or in positions of authority must be particularly cautious in communicating their views when the outcome has potential to cause hurt or shame. There is usually a person, a family, a business, or an entire group at the receiving end of the criticism or judgement.

Judge not lest ye be judged reminds us that since no one is without fault, criticizing or minimizing the life circumstance of others can be risky. What if the tables were turned? As we judge or condemn others, we stand to be judged by the same standard. This topic of judgement actually came to mind as I read a seemingly endless supply of memes regarding the recent approval of the stimulus package. People in need of critical financial support and other resources are used as material for jokes. Some of the memes were hilarious, however others judged entire groups of people in intentionally spiteful, discriminatory, and insensitive ways. Disguising judgement as 'humor' does not make it less inappropriate. While we must maintain the ability to observe (judge) a person or situation and oftentimes make decisions which may be less than popular, it is important that we make every effort to cause no harm. The current atmosphere of hurtful and biased judgement of others weighs heavy on our ability to trust and minimize stress and pain in our lives.

Judging with honor and compassion allows us the ability to model appropriate conduct in the presence of the next generation. There are very bright and capable young leaders in the Great Lakes Bay Region, Flint, Detroit and throughout the state of Michigan! Let us set them up for success. As we are now able to 'see daylight' at the end of this tunnel of distance and isolation, frequent reference is made to a return to normal. A new normal, one more focused on building better will support efforts to continue healing from tremendous loss and move forward in a safe and healthy community where we judge others with the same measure of compassion that we would like dispensed to us.



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MISSION

The Michigan Banner, Latino Banner and Youth Banner operates and serves as a print and online media venue committed to educating, informing and enlightening our readership regarding events and news that directly and indirectly affect the communities regionally and globally. Furthermore, to serve as a catalyst and a link for cultivating young adults as entrepreneurial and business leaders for the future.

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Latino Banner

LIDER EN LA
DIVERSIDAD

VAMOS ADELANTE



MARIA OLIVAREZ

Cake and cookie baker keeps customers coming

LB, pg 2



SARAH TORRES

CELEBRATING
WOMEN'S
HISTORY MONTH

In midlife, high school dream is fulfilled

By MB STAFF

Sarah Torres carried childhood hopes to enter the medical field. Now, as a middle-aged adult, she's making the dream come true.

In April, she will achieve her Delta College associates degree in medical administration, 19 years after she graduated from Bridgeport High School.

"I needed to better myself for my kids," says Torres, who is mother to a 21-year-old daughter and a 15-year-old son, along with a pair of grandchildren. "I felt like I was

standing still."

It's not like she has been a couch potato.

A youthful pregnancy didn't stop her from working as a nurse's aide in a senior care home, but she was diverted from moving on to college. She also observed physicians on the job, and decided the burden would be beyond her circumstances. An early youthful marriage had some bumps, but Sara continued working and mothering until a separation after 12 years.

She remains connected with her father, the Rev. Ralph Torres, and her mother, SanJuanita Tello

"There were times I wanted to give up," she says. "My father has been my top supporter."

She also has received strength from an encounter four years ago with Agapito Martinez, which has evolved into a significant other relationship.

"When I finally felt moved to go back to college, I felt butterflies all up in my stomach," Sarah recalls.

With her diploma, she will aim to find work in a doctor's office.

"Coding is my strength, but also billing," she explains.

Torres also enjoys writing in her spare time, and includes "writer" in her email address. This has led her to volunteer as secretary for MAC, the Mexican American Council, which promotes cultural activities, aid to neighbors in need, and social action from a historic home and office along South Washington Avenue's Grove section, across from Hoyt Park.

Her employment now is with a cleaning company that services governmental and small business offices.

"I'm going to school full-time, working, and taking care of my kids." Sarah summarizes, "and at the same time, I'm with MAC. Things are looking brighter."

LATINO BANNER SPONSORED BY GREAT LAKES BAY HEALTH CENTERS



MARIA OLIVAREZ

By MB STAFF

If you know everyone already, then who needs advertising?

That's pretty much the story for Maria Olivarez and the home bakery she operates. Que Sabroso, which is Spanish for "How Tasty It Is."

To succeed as an independent entrepreneur, it helps if

- You grew up in Saginaw and know lots of people.
- You worked 29 years as the body shop manager for a car dealership, Thelen Automotive Group, and made loads of customers happy.
- You have 14 brothers and sisters to spread the word from the southwest Saginaw family of Anastacio and Ruth Ramos.

- Finally, if you really-really know to slam with that kitchen stove.

"I've been baking ever since I was six years old," Olivarez says.

No, she's not speaking of an old-time childhood toy, like an Easy Bake Oven with its heat lamps to ensure safety.

"My mother always cooked our dinners and our meals, but she didn't bake until I came along" as the ninth child, Maria explains. "She didn't speak English, and so I would read to her, the pages of the Betty Crocker cookbook. If we needed items, like, cookie cutters, Dad would take me to the hardware."

It wasn't always a perfect science.

"If the book said, 'one cup,' we would fill a coffee cup, because neither of us knew any better," she says, with a giggle. "Even today, she still won't bake without me."

Maria has given Mother Ruth special attention, especially after Anastacio Ramos passed away in 2007.

During the childhood baking, she didn't mind sharing the family home with so many siblings.

"They all would eat our mistakes," Olivarez recalls.

As she grew older, she researched and experimented with her own ideas. Cakes became a favorite with all the decorating possibilities, the more layers and tiers the better.

Maria swept through Merrill Park Elementary, South Intermediate and then Arthur Hill High, Class of 1981.

"But I never stopped baking," she notes.

Then came marriage to Patrick Olivarez, nowadays a Saginaw Valley State University minority services administrator. Most folks among her growing baked-good base of family and friends always were thoughtful enough to contribute some cash when they receive their sweet treats. And so when Maria took retirement from the car garage, a wifey-hubby talk led to the idea of making the enterprise official.

They decided to keep a home base for pickups at 3051 State midway between Mackinaw and Bay streets, a convenient right turn off the one-way into a wide double driveway.

Maria says a favorite item that always tastes at least as good as it looks is a tres leches, three-milk cake. The blending includes sweet condensed milk, evaporated milk and heavy cream.

But not everything need be newfangled. Many Que Sabroso patrons swear by a dozen or so polvorones, sugar cookies with bright food colors. Then there are empanadas, Mexican turnovers filled with items of choice, such as pumpkin, pineapple or cream cheese.

Maria and Patrick Olivarez share two sons. Patrick II and his wife, Olivia, are parents to their two grandchildren, Jey and Alicia. Maximilian is a student at Saginaw Valley State University.

Maris has received the prestigious Adelante Culture Award from Union Civica Mexicana.

The phone number to place orders is 737-0239, and the email is quesabroso@yahoo.com.

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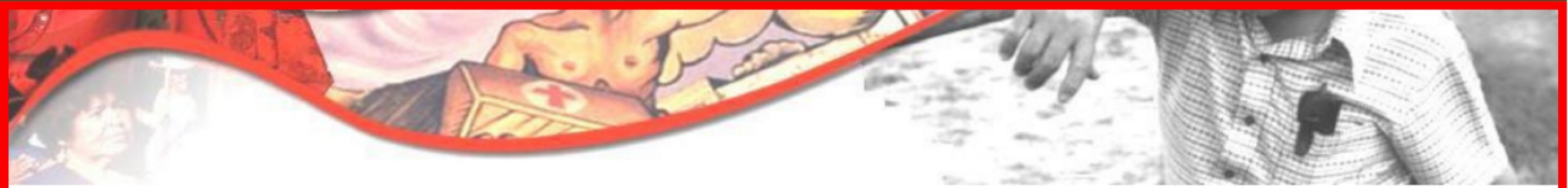
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Special Guest: Andres Chavez, Cesar Chavez Foundation
Grandson of César E. Chávez

Wednesday, March 31, 2021 | 10am-11am

RSVP: gvsu.edu/inclusion/2021cec

Zoom link to follow



Contact: Lupe Ramos-Montigny at Irmontigny@yahoo.com

GREAT LAKES BAY HISPANIC LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE IS NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATION for its 13th Cohort.

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

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- Individuals, ages 21 to 50, male or female, who reside in and plan to stay in Great Lakes Bay Region (Saginaw, Bay, Midland Counties and Mt. Pleasant)
- Must be a U.S. Citizen.
- Must have a High School Diploma or GED minimum.
- Must show a willingness to learn and to be introduced to local community organizations and businesses.
- Individuals who have exemplified leadership qualities in their personal or professional environment and who are looking to expand their leadership skills. Also, individuals who would be under the radar for traditional leadership programs.
- Must be able to attend classes/training once a month, 8 am – 5 pm. (Schedule is provided in advance).

glbhispanicleadership.org/application

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¡PLEIBOL! IN THE BARRIOS AND THE BIG LEAGUES

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CELEBRATING
WOMEN'S
HISTORY MONTH

KELLEY PEATROSS

My journey of leadership and servanthood

By **KELLEY A. PEATROSS, PH.D.**

It wasn't easy growing up as a biracial child in the 60s and 70s with a black father, white mother and nine siblings. I endured, overcame and persevered because of my parents' commitment to each other, amidst adversity, their love for their children, family, faith and education. They stressed, showed and taught me how to be obedient, how to love the Lord, how to have courage, a strong work ethic, commitment to myself, my work and others

and how to trust, love, lead by example and always give back to my community.

A Lansing, Michigan native serving twelve years with the Michigan Department of Education, over twenty years as a servant leader in K-12 urban and suburban education relocating to the amazing Great Lakes Bay Region in 2010 where I served as the Assistant Superintendent and Interim Superintendent for Saginaw Public Schools for five years before retiring. After retirement, I joined Consumers Energy where I continue to support the region through local engagement efforts,

community outreach and support for our residents, businesses and non-profits as the Director of Community Affairs.

Now, my journey wasn't without challenges; call it life. I look back at the many women pioneers, including my mother, that paved the way for me to lead and serve in the capacity and roles I have held and remind myself of their sacrifices and the gratitude and humility that I show daily for their efforts. Remembering a few of our historical servant leaders such as Rosa Parks (Civil Rights Activist), Katherine Johnson (NASA Mathematician), Mary McLeod Bethune (Educator) Marsha P. Johnson (Black Transgender woman and Activist), Madam C.J. Walker (Hair Care Solutions), Ruby Bridges (Child Integrator), Fannie Lou Hamer (Voting Activist for people of color), Shirley Chisholm (First Black Woman elected to Congress), Mae Jemison (First Black Woman to fly to space on the Space Shuttle Endeavour), and Octavia Butler, an award-winning Black Sci-Fi novelist keep me grounded knowing my work is not done.

I am me because of those that came before me and strive to pay it forward daily with my actions through community work and outreach in the region, volunteering my time where needed and serving on boards focused on our youth and improving the quality of life in our communities. I am grateful to the women pioneers who opened the door, my parents for being my example, for being a strong woman and role model to other women, both young and seasoned, and for always choosing to lift others up with both my actions and my words.

As a servant leader, I lead with the purpose to serve from the heart. I strive for and encourage diversity of thought, work hard to create a culture of trust, keep my mind open to assisting and working with others and always foster and promote sound leadership traits in others. I remind myself daily that everyone has value and purpose. Knowing this, I am diligent with supporting our current leaders, offer outreach to engage with inspiring our younger leaders and look forward to growing our little leaders.

+ COMMUNITY

Mid-Michigan Chapter of Credit Unions Receives National Award

The Mid-Michigan Chapter of Credit Unions was recently awarded the Credit Union National Association's Dora Maxwell Social Responsibility Community Service Award. This award is given to a credit union or chapter/multiple credit union group for its social responsibility projects within the community. The chapter created the Mid-Michigan Chapter of Credit Union Flood Relief Grant Program following the catastrophic flooding caused by the dam breakages in the Midland and surrounding counties. The Mid-Michigan Chapter, together with the Michigan Credit Union League and Foundation, raised \$163,760 to help as many impacted members as possible from its 21 chapter credit unions. Funds raised

were distributed in the form of \$500 grants, via an online application process, helping 325 families and individuals impacted by the disaster.

The Mid-Michigan Chapter of Credit Unions include: Copoco Community CU, Dow Chemical ECU, Family First CU, FinancialEdge Community CU, First Area

CU, Frankenmuth CU, Graco FCU, Gratiot Community CU, Great Lakes FCU, Health Advantage FCU, Isabella Community CU, Jolt CU, Lake Huron CU, Members First CU, Saginaw County Employees CU, Sunrise Family CU, Team One CU, United Bay Community CU, United Financial CU, Wanigas CU, and Wildfire CU



PASTOR SANDRA DOLLY-MCGLOTHIN WOMEN OF FAITH MINISTRIES

Mother, Grandmother, Daughter, Sister, Friend, Aunt, Widow.

Pastor McGlothlin's early days as an educator in the city of Saginaw Michigan was a time of enlightenment. Concerns for females in areas of employment, academia, and especially ministry became her passion and the inspiration force given her by the Holy Spirit. While teaching in economically disadvantage areas of the city she saw a need to level the playing field, trailblazing in areas of Job training, women empowerment groups, and curriculum that speaks to women evolving in their roles in ministry.

Sandra Dolly-McGlothins' educational accomplishments are as follows: Bachelors of Science - Central Michigan University Masters and Doctoral Degrees - Western Michigan University, numerous certifications and certificates in Teaching, Employment and Training, Counseling, Relationship Coaching, and Healing just to name a few. Reverend (Pastor) Sandra is an Ordained Minister and founder of Women of Faith Ministries a 501(c) 3 non for profit foundation whose mission is to empower, enlighten and heal through faith practices and the mighty power of God. Rev. (Pastor) McGlothlin has received numerous awards and recognition, and has blazed trails in the areas of Homeopathic Healing, Women in Ministry (training and ordaining women and men), Women Studies and Community Organization. She has written books and curriculum that speak to the concerns of God.

There is no greater accomplishment or reality of who this woman is but to say that she is a woman of God, she loves the Lord and her objective in life is to serve mankind.



**CELEBRATING
WOMEN'S
HISTORY MONTH**

+ COMMUNITY

She viewed TV news in Detroit, then made her mark in Saginaw

By MB STAFF

When Metro Detroiter Erica Donerson came to Channel 5, WNEM, as a news reporter, her approach was highly professional. She was neutral and stuck to the facts.

Except for one exception, with an understandable reason.

"I was hosting the Pet of the Week segment," she recalls, thinking of a special day in her TV5 tenure, which was from 2003 to 2010. "I fell in love with the cutest little puppy we featured that day. I never had a dog because I was allergic, but I wanted to adopt this puppy."

Her TV guest was Lt. Mark Wachner, Saginaw County's animal control director at the time. Each week, he would bring a pet to the downtown studio, previously abandoned or abused, to promote adoption.

But this particular week, Erica wished to keep this retriever pup for herself. She consulted with Wachner, who quietly explained the challenges of dog ownership for a single professional who worked long hours.

She was glum, but a rescue still was in the process. After Erica finished anchoring the noon news, she spoke with Gary Falkenhagen, who directed the broadcast. Gary fell in love with the puppy, too, and he and his wife already had a pet pooch. They agreed to adopt and they named the dog Griffin. Even after she departed Saginaw, Gary would update Erica about "her dog"



ERICA DONALDSON

and share photos.

"That's what I remember about Saginaw," she says, "all the great people, who made me feel at home."

This became true not only within the tight-knit studio, but out in the community.

"My sorority sister, Leola Wilson (Delta Sigma Theta), and her family were there from the start, to make sure I felt welcome," Donerson recalls, referring to the former president of the NAACP Saginaw Branch, who served for 20 years. "As an only child in Saginaw, I found myself with so many 'moms' and 'aunts' and 'sisters' due in large part to my sorority."

Donerson began her career at WNEM as a weekend morning anchor. She was promoted to weekday morning and noon anchor, and later anchored the 4, 5:30 and 10 p.m. newscasts. Erica has fond memories of working alongside the station's Sam Merrill and Katie O'Mara.

She had come to Saginaw soon after completing her bachelor's degree in journalism at Northwestern University, but after her nearly seven years at WNEM, she took a brief break to shift into communications, earning a master's in public relations at Michigan State University. She since has worked top positions with the Pontiac School District, DTE Energy and now for Detroit Metropolitan Airport.

The move also has allowed her to move back home to Detroit, close to her parents, Robert and Alona Donerson.

But it was with a grandmother, Gladys Welch, that she began her career path.

"My grandmother always watched the news," she explains, "and so I would watch with her anytime I visited, which was quite often. By the second grade, I decided I wanted to be a TV news anchor or a lawyer."

Mrs. Welch, who passed away over a year ago, favored Channel 7, WXYZ, and the station's pioneering anchor, Diana Lewis, who began in 1977, prior to Erica's birth, and remained all the way into 2012.

Donerson attended Detroit Country Day School from kindergarten through 12th grade. While there, she not only gained some broadcast experience but also invested time to write for the school newspaper.

Unlike many of her peers, she did not pursue ultimate career advancement into a major city or with a top network news operation.

"I had truly lived my dream at TV5," Erica notes, "and I was ready to try something new."

One aspect that won't change is her connection with Delta Sigma Theta, thanks to her 10 years on the national executive board. She is a diamond life member. She also has taken part in Leadership Detroit and has been honored as a Woman of Excellence by The Michigan Chronicle.

+ COMMUNITY

Saginaw's clergywoman for the children

By MB STAFF

When she was 22 years old, Leona Aldridge still didn't really know what she wanted to do.

Well, she did know one thing. She wanted to become Mrs. James Glenn, and the college sweethearts married within a week after they graduated together in 1977 from Eastern Michigan University. Down the road they would become founding co-pastors for Center of Attraction Outreach, but that road carried some mighty twists and turns.

Leona's main four-year degree in 1977, when President Jimmy Carter was elected amid national hard times, was in sociology. What kind of job can you get with that? What did she want to do?

James, a Detroit, faced a similar dilemma with his bachelor's in business. The young couple headed to Saginaw, and James got things rolling with a startup job at the newly created Good Neighbors Mission.

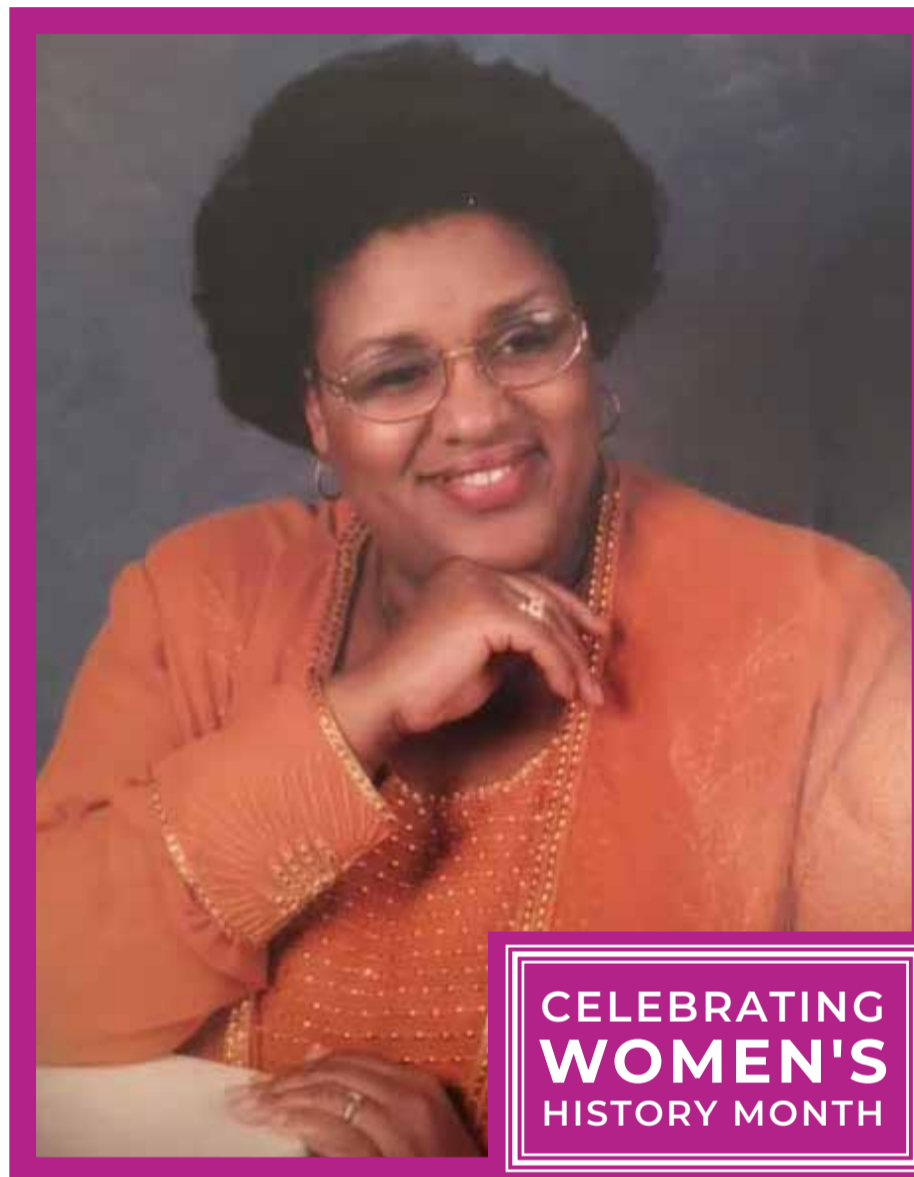
Leona? Well, she started having babies, three of them, all in a row. And she discovered joy and fulfillment in organizing and supervising activities for youngsters -- education, enrichment and enjoyment.

"It took me all the way until after I had completed college to discover that my true passion, what I wanted to do, was to work with children," she says, upon reflection.

In the end, this all made sense. Her mother, Eugena Aldridge, was a teacher. So were a number of her aunts.

But Leona Glenn didn't head back for a teaching degree that would lead to a professional classroom assignment. She possessed independent wings of her own.

Her husband advanced in his employment pursuits, first at the OIC job training center, and then as a drug counselor for SCOSAS, the Saginaw County Office for Substance Abuse Services, and finally with (Brian) Molitor International, a business



LEONA GLENN

management consulting company.

Meanwhile, good-hearted and high-energy Leona would pinch a few dollars for ad hoc children's assemblies and gatherings, sometimes tied to volunteer efforts. These sometimes were through Christ Community Church, headed by their father, the Rev. William Aldridge, and then via various Bible institutes along with the Houghton-Jones Neighborhood Task Force and Nelle Haley 4-H.

"Even when we were struggling ourselves, we would share whatever we had," she says. "We would feed the children."

Did James Glenn know what he was getting into, back in those old EMU college romance times in Ypsilanti? He answers

today with a hearty laugh, "No way, Jose."

Still, at the time, this was one more reason to form their own congregation. They began in 1983 at the Saginaw YMCA, then at a converted house on Emerson behind St. Mary's Hospital (now Greenhouse Gathering Place), conducting tent-event giveaways and community picnics.

Joining her were a trio of siblings, "sisters in education, Joyce Seals, Ouida Aldridge (now resting in heaven) and Demona Reed.

Finally, Center of Attraction found an isolated but affordable building out on South Washington near Sheridan, tackled the task for expanding it, and opened the doors in 1997.

Leona now had total free reign, and she took the lead with family and friends to form the ultimate summer children's program, with some mini-grant support. Breakfast at 9 a.m., lunches at noon,

heading-home for snacks at 3 p.m. Books and other educational materials, board games, card games, sports equipment, field trips both in town and along the highway, all supervised.

"Parent involvement is the main thing, but we reached a point where we really didn't have to recruit. They would call us," she says. "This feels like teaching school, after all."

Meanwhile, the couple's own offspring -- Jacqueline 41; Jonathan, 40; and Patricia, 38 -- all are faring well in life. In no way were they neglected while mom was out playing Pied Piper.

"Whatever project or activity that was set up," Leona Glenn says, "I would take them along. They would be a part of it."

+ COMMUNITY

She filled her favorite teacher's shoes

By MB STAFF

Dr. Elizabeth Walton Coleman's training to become a school teacher began when she was only five years old, in rural Alabama near Mobile along the Gulf Coast.

"I didn't know how to tie my shoes," she recalls. "I couldn't figure it out. Then my teacher, Miss Gassett, showed me. But she did more than show me. She took time and made me feel good about myself."

Little Beth no doubt would have become an educator anyways. Even before kindergarten, she would play the teacher in preschool games with her siblings (she had 11 of them, in all) and her friends.

"It's always been in my blood," she says.

But her experiences with Miss Gassett, which continued through the elementary grades, helped her to become a more compassionate teacher who ultimately made special education her focus. The first half of her career was northern Florida, mostly Jackson. After she married the Rev. Charles Coleman and came north with him in 2000, she served in Birch Run for a dozen more years, and then closed in Saginaw city schools, retiring in 2018 to finish a 43-year career.

With a bachelor's degree from the University of Florida, a master's from Jacksonville University, and later a Ph.D from Central Michigan University, Elizabeth combined an administrator's role with teaching in special education, especially as she moved ahead in



DR. ELIZABETH WALTON COLEMAN

experience.

"I never left the classroom," she notes, with pride.

Despite all her advanced degrees, Dr. Coleman has employed some highly simple strategies in the spirit of Miss Gassett, who once in the old days solved one child's hunger problem by bringing biscuits for all the students, thus not to embarrass the youngster in need.

And talk about creative? Elizabeth had one older student with a foul mouth who obviously had learned those words at home, so she knew she wasn't going to stop him in special ed from blurting them out. He was having trouble with division in math and so she made a rule. Each time he cussed, he would have to begin the division

CELEBRATING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

process by adding, subtracting, whatever. By this method she plugged him into a successful step-by-step approach.

"That story cracks me up," the minister's spouse admits.

In another case, a younger child always wished to stand at the front of the line. She assigned a storybook, "The Little Red Caboose." Soon the boy's humble desire was for the back of the line.

Dr. Coleman is aiming to wrap up those types of anecdotes, along with high-level advice on special ed, into a memoir.

"Guide children to be themselves," she suggests. "That's the key to any kind of education."

Meanwhile, her husband now is president of the Saginaw Board of Education, and yes, she also suggests and offers advice in that venue. But they have kept it quiet and to themselves, at least so far.

A good number of Saginawians encountered the son she brought to town two decades ago. Bakari McClendon grew up to become known for organizing open-mic poetry slams and for compiling his own booklet. His leadership extended to the Houghton-Jones Neighborhood Task Force, paving the way for the youth-in-charge urban farm gardens that still are in place near Houghton School. Bakari moved home to Jacksonville to marry his youthful sweetheart, and while he is doing well down South, he is missed up here.

Long before Dr. Seuss suddenly entered controversy, Dr. Elizabeth Walton Coleman was embracing his 1990 book, "Oh, the Places You'll Go." In her uplifting approach to teaching, she chooses to add, "Things to Do, Things to See." In the process, she concludes, adults also may learn -- not only from the places, activities and sites, but from the children they take under their wings.

+ COMMUNITY

WOC to host Online Criminal Justice Reform forum

An online forum with a Zoom format, "Criminal Justice Reform: Incarceration and the Justice System," is scheduled to convene at 7 p.m. Friday, March 26. The event organizer is Women of Colors. Featured are:

- **Charles H. Green III**, manager for the Michigan Department of Corrections and a Delta College criminal justice adjunct professor.
- **Bishop Timothy D. Holden Sr.**, Anointed Temple Ministries, Jail & Prison Ministries.

- **Twannie L. Gray**, Solutions Behavioral Health, director and licensed therapist.

The moderator will be Saginaw County District Judge Terry L. Clark.

To advance register, send an e-mail to wocforum2021@gmail.com. Information, (989) 737-9286.



CREATIVE PERSPECTIVES

COLORS



By Brigitte Johnson

Please don't judge me by the color of my skin
Dig a little deeper, search my soul within

None of us were born with a multiple choice
Black, White, Red, or Yellow, We all have a voice

Today's society is full of crime, all our people doing time
What is the lesson, we're teaching our children today
To Fight First, ask questions later, Demand to have it their way

I don't think this is how God intended it to be,
For our babies to be watching all this violence on National TV

We all need to stop, look, and listen, and hear all the cries
Stop killing, Stop Raping, Put a stop to all the drive-bys

There are innocent people dying, on a day to day basis
They are White, They are Black, and they are all different races

Why can't we solve our problems, by sitting down and talk
Learn to start stepping, add a little speed to our walk

Let's stop all the nonsense, let's put down the guns
Let's learn to relax, let's have some safe fun

Let's stop abusing our Women, Give them back their sense of pride
Whether the answer be yes, whether it be no, Respect and Abide

Let's teach our children values, and to look pass skin
Let's give them a sense of direction, Let them choose their own Friends

And when we lay down at night, let's be quiet and still
And know that peace, Can someday be real!

SAGINAW COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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+ COMMUNITY

Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum Invites Artists to Submit Work for the Regional Biennial Juried Sculpture Exhibition

The Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum invites artists working in sculpture to submit work for the “2021 Regional Biennial Juried Sculpture Exhibition.”

In 2008, the Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum established a sculpture biennial exhibition to support working artists. Now in its 12th year, The Museum invites artists working in sculpture to submit work for the “2021 Regional Biennial Juried Sculpture Exhibition.” The exhibition will be held at the Museum from July 10 through October 2, 2021. “The exhibition was to be held last year, but due to the pandemic, we postponed it to this year. It’s important that the Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum support living artists,” states Director, Megan McAdow, “and hosting a biennial sculpture exhibition is an excellent way to accomplish that goal.”

The Museum invites all artists working

in sculpture who reside within 200 miles of the Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum to apply. Their Sculpture must be entirely original, completed within the last five years, and created by the person submitting it. The deadline for submission is May 1, 2021. The Merit awards awarded by the juror include a \$2,500 first place, \$1,250 second place, \$850 third place, and \$400 fourth place.

The exhibition juror will be Stephanie James, curator of modern and contemporary art with a focus on art of the African Diaspora. She holds an MA in art history from Wayne State University and a BFA in drawing, along with teaching certification, from Eastern Michigan University. She is the Curator and Collection Educator for the Mott-Warsh Collection, Flint, MI—one of the largest privately-owned collections of African American art in the United States. Prior to her work with the Mott-Warsh Collection, she worked at the Detroit

Institute of Arts for nearly 16 years, serving as assistant curator of the General Motors Center for African American Art (2002-2009) and in various appointments in the museum’s education department (1993-2002). Additionally, she has contracted with Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of African American History and Culture as a member of their “Save Our African American Treasures” team of curators and conservators. Ms. James has organized numerous exhibitions, most recently “The Essential Self: Meditations on the Politics of Identity” at the Detroit Artists Market (2015).

For more information, call the museum’s Curator of Education, Andrea Ondish at (989) 964-7096 or email at ondish@svsu.edu. To enter online, visit the museum’s website at MarshallFredericks.org.



Remembering Blanche Clark and Betty Williams

Blanche Clark and Betty Williams are two women who made Saginaw history until they passed away in late February, both at 78.

Blanche worked as a Michigan DHHS social worker and volunteered with the Saginaw NAACP, the Underground Railroad women’s shelter, the Ruben Daniels Educational Foundation, the Boys & Girls Club, and the Saginaw Economic Development Corp., among countless worthy causes. Her main mission was in making progress in local community improvement and job creation.

Betty’s career was as a home economics teacher in the Bay City School District. Upon her retirement, she joined husband Lee Williams to open Magic Wash

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and Dry Laundry and Cleaners in 1987, with a transition to Magic Kitchen in 1994, on Wadsworth at the Sixth Street highway exit. They served Thanksgiving dinners to all in need for more than 20 years. Betty’s volunteer involvement included Habitat for Humanity, Junior Achievement, the City Rescue Mission and PRIDE (Positive Results In a Downtown Environment).

Betty Williams and Blanche Clark will be missed, but the influences of their good works always will remain.



FROM L TO R: BLANCHE CLARK AND BETTY WILLIAMS

+ COMMUNITY

Her philosophy is learning by earning

By MB STAFF

Rare is the professional educator who will say they disliked school while growing up, but Jenny Geno doesn't shy away.

In fact, she makes the point in the very first paragraph of her employment resume's biography section.

This helps to explain why she aims for attention-catching school plans, during her fourth year as the Saginaw Intermediate School District's Executive Director of Career and Technical Education.

She encourages young people to find an area of interest, and then to work at it. She believes that in order to make an informed career choice, it is imperative to experience that career in some way. That is why she is so passionate about Career and Technical Education (CTE).

"Through hands-on learning in both simulated and real work environments," she says, "students get to experience their future while simultaneously earning college credit and industry certifications that will help them jump start their careers."

This was the answer to her malaise as a pupil in Bay City public schools.

It wasn't that she was a bad student. She simply felt indifferent.

"I struggled to envision a future for myself," Geno says. "My main goal was to finish high school and to figure out the rest later."

Her big change arrived during her senior year at Bay City Central High. This was through a co-op job in a local preschool classroom for children assessed with disabilities. Magic! Jenny fell in love with the little ones (she still possesses their photos) and how it felt to help them.

"It wasn't so much because I wanted to teach, but because I wanted to find a way to help people," she reflects.

Her newly-chosen bachelor's teaching major at Michigan State University included a focus on special education. Early in her career she carried out her hands-on philosophy in an elementary setting. Supported with grant funds, she teamed with colleagues to start a school based enterprise. Students punched a clock, went to work taking and filling orders, and received "paychecks". Through it all, career exploration was the focus so that they were prepared as fifth graders to go to "work". Each student then spent six weeks with a local employer mentoring them and helping them to learn basic employability skills. Students spent time with 3-4 different "employers" within different career pathways. On each school day, her students would tell parents that they needed to get to "work" on time, forming a critical work ethic foundation. Most important, there were executive and labor mentors for each endeavor.

Geno evolved into the type of teacher who would look within herself if a student was chronically absent. It must be her own fault, she figured, if school did not spark enough interest, similar to her own childhood years.

Therefore, it should come as no surprise that Jenny's path has led her to career and technical education. The Saginaw Intermediate District, similar to ISDs across the state, promotes teamwork and provides support among Saginaw County's 12 local school systems. The SISD works in collaboration with Saginaw Public Schools to deliver in-demand CTE programs at the Saginaw Career Complex on Weiss Street near Bay. Jenny's role also



JENNY GENO

provides technical assistance and support to other local CTE programs, along with career development opportunities for all districts.

Residents may be familiar with Saginaw Career Complex (SCC) fields of study such as culinary arts, with pupils operating their own restaurant and catering service at lunch time, or nursing, animal science, graphic arts and 15 other high demand programs. Young winners of local, state, and national contests and competitions often are publicized, as SCC students do extremely well, yielding an impressive amount of scholarships.

At the same time, we hear of major shortages in skilled trades, with reports that young people could earn good money with little or no college if only they would capitalize on these chances.

She supports former governor Rick Snyder's preference for the label of "professional trades" rather than "skilled trades." She feels that wedges should not be driven, for example, between blue collar and white collar, between becoming a technician or becoming a teacher, etc.

CONTINUES ON PG 19, GENO

+ COMMUNITY

Continued from pg 18, Geno

"There are many careers represented within CTE--careers people may not even realize. Some examples include engineering, everything medical, HVAC, and even insurance," cites Geno. Various careers may require various time spans in college, she says, but the key to all is work experience within the curricula. "People often comment with regard to CTE that it is nice to have that option for kids that don't want to go to college. While not all careers require college, most require some sort of post-secondary training. And guess what? ALL CTE programs offer college credit upon successful completion saving students time and money," says Geno.

"We don't know what we don't know," she summarizes, noting that the biggest mistake can be studying into a job without first trying it on for size. "We often hear about students going off to college without even knowing what they want to do. Or we hear of students that make it through their degree and find out that they don't want to do that job. All of this could be avoided through immersive experiences such as CTE."

To prepare for her administrative role, Geno has completed advanced studies at Saginaw Valley State University, Central Michigan University and at Wayne State. For someone who didn't like school, she now serves on a vast array of improvement and oversight groups, including the Michigan Workforce Development Board, Michigan Career Education Planning Council Executive Board, Michigan Perkins V Executive Board, and the newly formed Michigan Apprenticeship Advisory Board. Closer to home, her links include the Great Lakes Bay Manufacturers Association, Great Lakes Bay Michigan Works Career Education Advisory Council, and Saginaw Future, Inc.

Jenny is married to Mark Geno. Their children are Adriana, 21, and Jacob, 15. Adriana aims for a career in medicine as a result of her high school CTE experience where she got to hold a human heart in her hands during surgery and also had a year long internship with a local radiation oncologist. That's the type of education that her mother strives to promote.

Activist 'crosses the street' into leadership

By MB STAFF

When Rhonda Webb moved to Saginaw from Detroit in 2001, she gradually became distressed to learn that at the onset of the high-tech 21st century, she wasn't getting to know her neighbors in an old-fashioned way.

She could have simply tried door-knocking herself. Instead, she launched an initiative that she publicized as "Cross the Street." She specifically picked the third Saturday in May to encourage residents to step out and pursue "harmonious relationships" with the strangers closest by.

She received reports that the initial idea sparked encounters across the city, and so she kept the concept afloat during the following years. Her main evidence of success was personal.

"My kids organized a surprise party for me," Webb recalls, "and when I opened the door, all of my neighbors were there in the living room."

She presented Cross the Street without invoking religion, but the idea reflected a spiritual emotion. Indeed, she had moved north on account of a calling from Faith Harvest Church, where she became office administrator for 15 years. She now is a secretary for the Saginaw ISD Claytor Head Start center.

She is one of five offspring of Katie McNezer, who supplemented her modest teacher-aide income by baking custom made cakes for special events and as a sales leader for Sarah Coventry



RHONDA WEBB

Jewelry, an Avon-type mail order company that existed from 1949 until 1984.

"She was instrumental in my life," Rhonda says. "She represented Sarah Coventry in a very professional manner and enjoyed the financial compensation it provided. It was a role she excelled in and it prepared her for future entrepreneurship opportunities."

Webb followed that example, operating as a licensed Cosmetologist and Make-up Artist in Detroit for 25 years after she graduated from the Motor City's Osborn High School in 1976. Her children, born in Detroit, are Brandon, 30, and Donovan, 27.

Her latest endeavor, beginning five years ago is "Kids Rule Now! Inc." Youngsters ages six to 16 are provided with opportunities to expose and grow their businesses through Business Fairs and other events. Her annual children's conference, the Kids Rule Now! KIDposium held at Saginaw Valley State University, is another outlet she provides for children to interact with entrepreneurship.

"It has really felt important," she says, "for exposure to the philosophy of enterprise to begin at a young age."

JULIAN MORRIS

SWAG MAGAZINE

S.W.A.G. Magazine (Students With a Gift) is a digital magazine for teens written by teens. It not only focuses on teens and young adults in the entertainment world and the hottest trends, but it also focuses on the health and wellness of teens, financial literacy, money management tips and college tips.

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+ COMMUNITY

I'M JUST THINKING.....

By PASTOR HURLEY J. COLEMAN, JR., WORLD OUTREACH CAMPUS CHURCH

The
closer
you get

A few years ago, I was driving on the highway in Phoenix, Arizona toward a meeting at a park called South Mountain. When I left my hotel, I could see this mountain. In the parking lot, I put my hand in front of the mountain, and I could not see it. As I drove closer to it, it became impossible to cover it with my hand.

I finally got to the mountain and began driving up toward the place where the meeting would be held. It was my first time driving at that height, and the higher I drove, the more difficult the drive became. In fact, it was my first time experience the fear of heights, with the road curving and without railings. I had to stop, and turn around. When I stopped, I looked back to where I had driven from, and I could hide the place, the resort that covered some 15 acres, with my hand. The mountain by then was overwhelming.

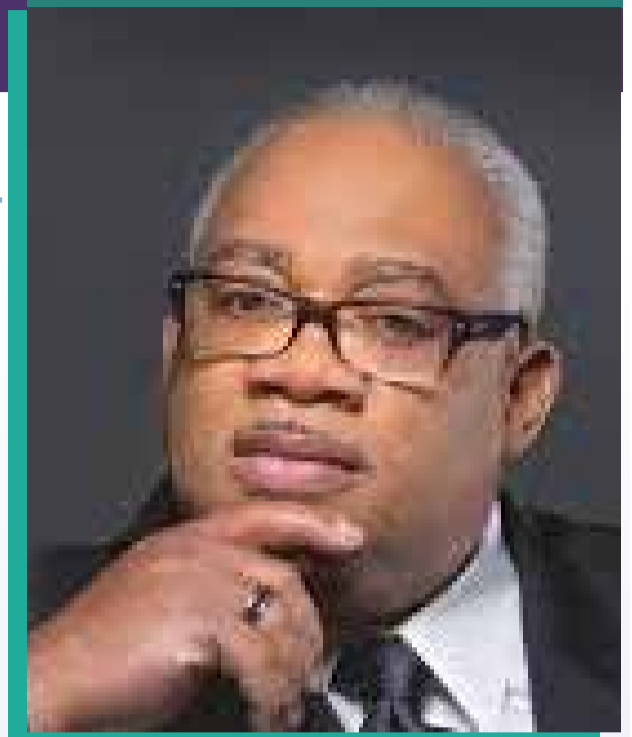
I learned a lesson that day that I never will forget. The closer you get to a thing, the larger it becomes in your life. Dreams are like that. Purpose is like that. The closer you get to a thing, the larger it becomes. It is an amazing insight, as we look at this month of recognizing the powerful women that have impacted our lives, individually and collectively. Many of the women that will be celebrated this month will be famous, people that we know from a distance.

I am challenging us to look at those who are close, who are so close to us that we cannot imagine our lives without them. The problem is that because they are so close, they can be easily taken for granted. Just like that mountain, they have always been there, and we expect that they always will.

We don't pay attention to the continuous influence that these towering figures play in our lives, too often until it is too late. Just like my trip, from a distance, that mountain looked so large, but I could easily cover it by covering my eyes, or allowing something to block it from my view. The closer I got, the more difficult it was to ignore its significance. Why is the same not true for the people who are large in our lives?

I talk to many people who are so broken when they experience the death of a mother or wife, a woman who had made such significant investment in their lives that they only realize when they look back. The school of life and the lessons we learn along the way are a record of how we grow, how we move toward our destiny and purpose. It amazing to me how that we find our selves connected to greatness, and often miss it because we are too close to it to appreciate it.

A person once told me, "The older I get, the more I look for people who knew me when I was younger." I have to add this to the conversation, "The older I get, the farther away some things become." As they become more distant in time and space, their significance changes. Some things that we once thought we couldn't



live without, are now distant memories that don't even change the pace of our lives.

Sadly, some people that we thought we couldn't live without are now just distant memories, until something happens that brings them back into focus, that brings them closer to us. The closer we get, the more we remember, the more we feel, and the more we are affected. What would happen if we treated the moments like that, if we held them in such value that we could get all that there is in them, while they are close?

I believe that it is good to remember and celebrate great women who have gone on before us, and also to appreciate great women who are contributing powerful things from a distance. I think it is even better to celebrate those who are close, because the closer we get to them, the larger they become.



+ COMMUNITY

Marijuana for sale in Saginaw, sooner or later

By MIKE THOMPSON

Saginaw is not included in a visit to spotguide.com, which lists marijuana stores in a variety of Michigan cities and towns, large and small, following November 2018 statewide voter approval for legalization.

That will change this year. City Hall began accepting applicant paperwork in January, following a September 2020 ordinance adopted by the City Council.

The process can begin with the Planning Commission for site plan review and approval by contacting the Planning Division at City Hall and/or at the City Clerk's Office by submitting the application for a Marihuana Establishment Facility License. The full review process winds through applicable municipal departments.

The total so far is 15 applications being considered, and none has received final approval. Eleven are on the West Side, four on the East Side.

Saginaw leaders have taken a more cautious approach than those in most other cities. That's why our hometown, so far, has remained absent from potguide.com. In contrast, Bay City features 16 shops that already are up and running.

Most of the stores, officially known as "marihuana establishments," will locate in remodeled buildings that are the sizes of small offices. A few will build new, typically resembling a convenience store. (State regulators for some reason are spelling marijuana with an "H" instead.)

For consumers, purchasing a package won't be quite as convenient as grabbing a six-pack of brew, or even a pint of booze. The count of marijuana dispensaries won't come close to the number of convenience franchises, a.k.a. party stores, and at the big-box megastores, pot won't be on display alongside the libations in Aisle Three. But exchanging cash for cannabis will become routine, just the same, usually within a few minutes of home.

The main difference is that locations

will be more isolated than in regular small commerce zones, to fulfill an array of buffer zones that range from schools (minimum 1,000 feet) to churches (100 feet). Others distance regulations cover hospitals or similar marijuana shops (500 feet); parks, playgrounds and "transitional" halfway houses (250 feet).

So far, one proposed location to draw major objections has been within the retail intersection of Webber at Sheridan, well more than 1,000 feet from Saginaw High but still a gathering point for students, said parents and other protesters. The other was on Court Street between the Mason and Woodbridge one-ways.

In both cases, the Planning Commission approved the site plans, in accordance to the zoning ordinance, and issued special use permits, contingent upon the issuance of business licenses by the both the city and the state.

'Yes' and 'no' in Michigan

Our state is home to 533 local incorporated governing units, equally divided between cities and townships, with a few villages mixed in.

More than 400 have rejected any sort of cannabis commerce, and these often are more affluent and conservative locations. Local examples are Midland, Frankenmuth and Saginaw County's western suburbs. In the Detroit area, opt-out exurbs include Grosse Pointe, Dearborn, Troy and Livonia.

The 100-plus communities that are open to business include Detroit and then virtually all of the medium-large towns, even Grand Rapids. Some smaller locales also have opted in. Mid-Michigan sites that may surprise readers include Chesaning and Alma and Beaverton, and in the Thumb area, Vassar and Caro.

People in opposition have stated religious and anti-drug reasons. Supporters of local options say marijuana users, similar to alcohol consumers, should not be denied their freedoms.



DISPO PROVISIONING CENTER IN BAY CITY

The two sides continue, but with legalization, applicants are governed solely by the rules in place. Reasons such as religious beliefs or anti-drug sentiment no longer are legal factors.

Supporters also point to economic gains that begin with 10 percent state excise taxes and \$4,000 a piece from local application fees.

According to a state report, reefer revenue last year was \$31 million. The sum, while impressive, amounts to a scant 0.05 percent of the \$62 billion state budget. Most of the state's gross from grass goes for top categories such as K-12 school aid and roads, \$11.6 million apiece.

From fees paid to local communities, Bay City reaped \$84,000. That's about enough, for one example, to cover a single police officer's pay, benefits, equipment and a patrol car. In other words, not a whole lot from pot.

Marijuana money is projected to increase during years to come, but it will remain a minor part of a scenario in which even the massive state lottery seems to make scant difference.

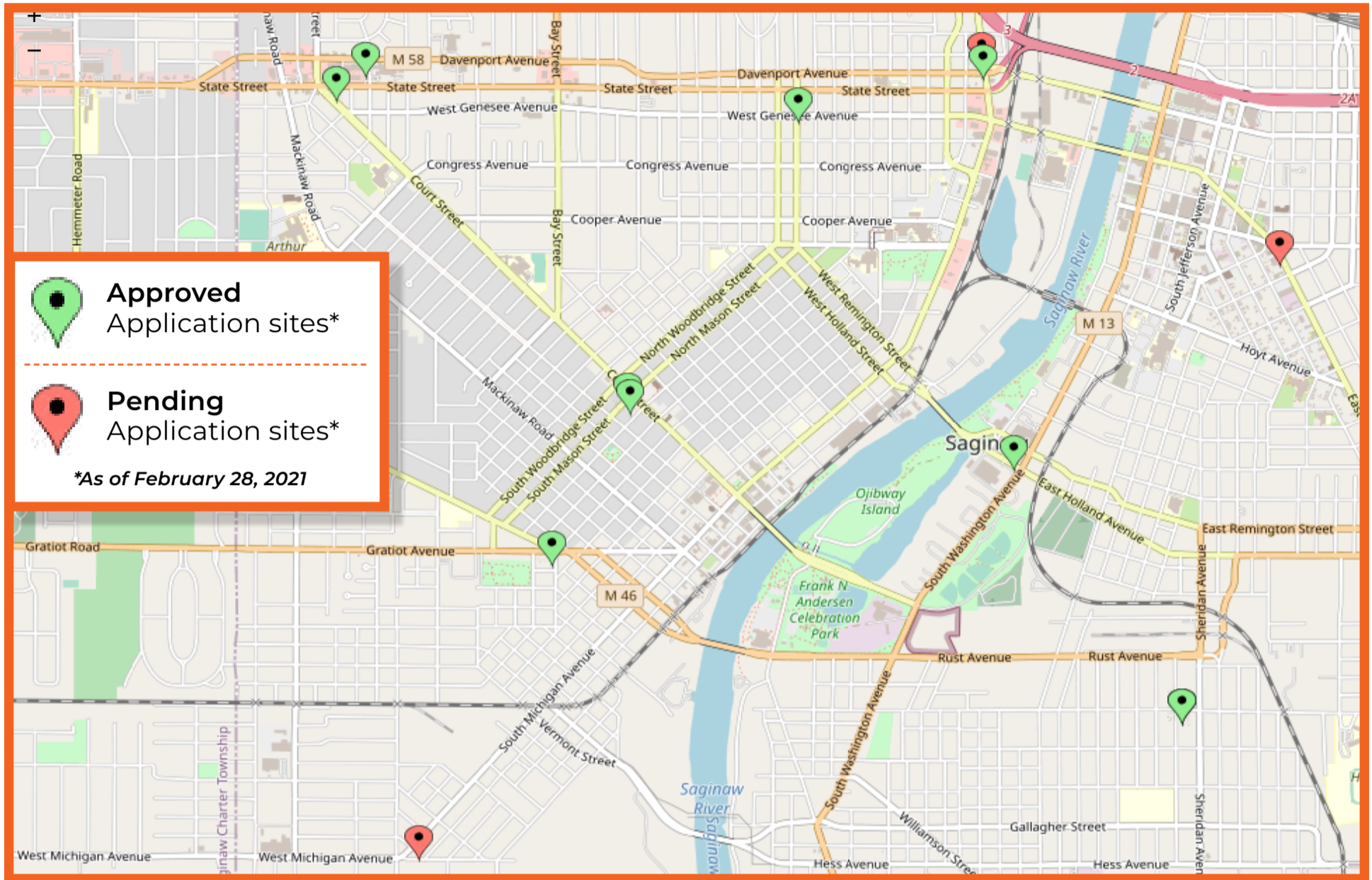
Rules and regulations in Saginaw

City administrators and staffers labored for more than a year, with regular updates to the City Council, to prepare for the potential onslaught of marihuana establishment license applicants.

CONTINUES ON PG 23, SAGINAW MARIJUANA

+ COMMUNITY

Continued from pg 22, Saginaw marijuana



MAP OF SAGINAW SHOWING APPROVED AND PENDING MARIJUANA DISPENSARY SITES

They began with larger buffer zones, but then they reduced the distances to avoid blocking the entire city acreage as out of bounds. They have required so-called "special use permits" so that property owners within 300 feet receive notice of all applications. Security requirements when operations begin, both for the physical sites and for security personnel, are stricter than for other enterprises.

Application sites receiving Planning Commission approval through the end of February, still subject to city and state licensing, are:

- 3446 State
- 700 Gratiot
- 2030 North Mason
- 110 South Mason
- 2617 Bay
- 1014 Gratiot

- 2219 Webber
- 3307 Davenport
- 1321 Court
- 2205 North Michigan
- 2219 Webber
- 2401 East Holland

No sites have been rejected thus far.

Pending proposals are for:

- 2301 North Michigan
- 2348 South Michigan
- 910 East Genesee
- 1703 East Genesee

The only proposal for growing, so far, is at 1705 Boxwood on abandoned property in small zone for manufacturing. Imagine making a right turn off of East Holland

onto Boxwood and heading a quarter-mile beyond the old fire station site.

Community groups in other cities have aired concerns that according to a statewide report on approved sites, only 3.4 percent are African American-owned and 1.5 percent are Latino-owned. No major protest on the race disparity has taken place in Saginaw.

(The Michigan Banner wishes to thank Saginaw city staffers John Stemple, director of neighborhood services; Janet Santos, city clerk; Kris Bolzman, deputy clerk; and Robert Gollin, city planner for their contributions to this article. Also, Vicki Davis, executive marketing coordinator. All under the authorization of Tim Morales, city manager.)

+ COMMUNITY

CELEBRATING
WOMEN'S
HISTORY MONTH

AVA LEWIS

From Webber Junior, a top local nurse emerged

By MB STAFF

As a student 50 years ago at Saginaw's Webber Junior High School, Ava Lewis dreamed of becoming a pediatrician.

Then she switched her youthful mind, from physician to nurse, a reverse of the usual sequence.

The scenario took root during her early teen years, when she volunteered at St. Mary's Hospital with a purpose to learn more about her chosen profession.

"I observed that the doctors' schedules only allowed them to see each patient for a few minutes at a time," Lewis recalls making clear that she understood the reasons why they were so busy. "The nurses were the ones who were in the rooms, at

the bedsides. And so between eighth and ninth grades, I changed my mind."

The long-term result is that she today is a professor at Saginaw Valley State University and coordinator of the family practitioners program.

As an adolescent, she moved with her family out M-13 to Albee Township and graduated in 1975 from Chesaning High School. She was 35 miles from then-Saginaw Valley College, actually closer to some other options, but a connection had been established. Napoleon Lewis, a former Saginaw South Side barber, was working in campus security and for the athletic program. (At least one family member has been tied to SVSU since then, for the past half-century)

Ava achieved a bachelor's degree in nursing, and another in sociology, an early

sign of the caring heart that was her lifelong characteristic. A master's came later.

"Sociology teaches us how to relate to people from all populations, and also helps show how to develop as a good leader," she explains.

Lewis took 1981 employment as a nurse at St. Luke's Hospital, which now joins neighboring Saginaw General to comprise Covenant Health Care. She accepted a teaching stint at Delta College to fill a vacancy and moved for a time to Ann Arbor, where she worked at University of Michigan Hospital, taught at Eastern Michigan and commuted to Michigan State for doctoral studies.

Her father's illness in 1994 brought her back home as a caregiver. Napoleon Lewis passed away at age 71 in 1995 but Ava discovered her ultimate niche on the SVSU faculty. She remains to this day, now helping to care for her family's 94-year-old mother, Nelia.

One of her benchmarks was assembling and leading a team of 11 nursing students in a 2005 "service learning" mission to the Hurricane Katrina disaster site in New Orleans. She has been honored with recognition not only through SVSU but also from an array of sources, including the Saginaw NAACP.

During the past decade, she has focused on local care initiatives for HIV/AIDS patients, with sources that include the Bay County Health Department and the Hearth House on Hoyt Avenue in Saginaw. Meanwhile, she has helped to lead Saginaw Valley State's involvement to promote modern health care overseas in Zambia and in Ghana.

"I'm still a nurse (even while serving as a professor)," says Dr. Lewis, who finally achieved the title as an academic with her Ph.D from Michigan State in 1997.

She feels the profession is as highly regarded as ever during the covid outbreak, with stories about nurses who have taken selfless risks and who have made sacrifices, "both old and young," sometimes ultimate sacrifices.

Her main message to her students is, "Treat everybody fairly. Answer that call light is for every single patient, whether 'yours' or not. With patient-centered care, include the whole family. Respect people and enjoy your work. Be kind to everyone."

+ COMMUNITY

CELEBRATING
WOMEN'S
HISTORY MONTH

While others departed, she stuck with Saginaw

By MB STAFF

Many of the Saginaw area's young adults, those who are educated and able, choose to depart for new horizons.

Then we have resident Marcia Thomas, now the Delta College Board of Trustees vice chairwoman, who first arrived in 1989.

"I like Saginaw," she says.

A main reason is her initial encounter with Saginaw-born Darryl Thomas, now her husband of 30 years. They met at Dow Chemical Co., where the former Marcia Perdue had been recruited from Ohio's University of Akron to begin what became an array of human resources roles. Those were benefits of her bachelor's degree in industrial management and accounting. She later earned her master's in business administration degree at Saginaw Valley State University.

Darryl was beginning the path to his Dow career, leading to his current role as global supply chain leader. As the 1990s passed, he continued his journey, while his bride experienced a life-changing event. She says her Dow downsizing "was a most traumatic moment for me."

During her employment at Dow Chemical, she believes her organizing and outreach efforts had been meaningful and



MARCIA THOMAS

worthwhile. These included, for example, her representation of Dow's leadership for such annual civil rights milestones as the annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. celebration and the United Negro College Fund banquet. She was also on the leadership team for the inaugural launch of the African American Network at Dow Chemical.

But Marcia knew how to remain on her feet. She achieved SVSU employment as director of multicultural services and then returned back to human resources, her first passion, as a Dow contractor, Tata Consultancy Services. She also achieved her professional certification in human resource management.

She now is in her fifth year at Aptar, a global product development and delivery enterprise in the manufacturing industry. At Aptar, Marcia is enjoying the experience of extensive domestic and international travel. She quickly ascended through several roles as the human resources director before assuming her current role as Aptar's global diversity and inclusion leader.

Much of her personal community and service involvement is rooted in Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc., of which she is a life member. She serves as the Michigan cluster coordinator and also has held many leadership positions in the local chapter,

Eta Upsilon Omega (Saginaw). Marcia is also a member of the Tri-City chapter of Links Inc. Her church is Zion Missionary Baptist, and she is a life member of the NAACP.

On the Delta board, she partnered with Karen Lawrence-Webster, who also became the godmother to one of her daughters. She now welcomes newcomer Arshen Prater Baldwin, appointed as Karen's replacement. She serves as board chair on the newly established Diversity & Inclusion Committee.

She is a member of the Delta College Foundation Board. She also has served on boards for SVSU's College of Business & Management, Saginaw's Underground Railroad women's shelter and Saginaw's Historical Society's Castle Museum.

Aptar derives from the Latin verb "aptare," which means "to adapt and to prepare." This is what Marcia has done.

Her LinkedIn online intro states, in part: "Solution-driven professional with strong performance in the development, management and execution of recruiting talent and operations excellence. Extensive experience in event planning for internal and external customers. Strong record of HR leadership and project management with Fortune 500 company with a well-rounded background designing and implementing programs, new processes, operating disciplines and managing tools to meet current and future client needs."

Family is very important to Marcia. Born and raised in Youngstown, she is the seventh child of nine and with over 30 nieces and nephews. Like Youngstown, Saginaw is now home. Yes, insists, she really does enjoy Saginaw life. But Darryl is the nephew of Marshall Thomas, the legendary Saginaw High teacher and coach, and this helps to make her husband the one who is "true blue Saginaw, through and through."

The couple's daughters are Erica, 28, an accountant in Atlanta; and Lauren, 25, an engineer in New York City. Both have followed their mother's footsteps to become Alpha Kappa Alpha members

And Marcia Thomas, still with good will toward her hometown of more than three decades, acknowledges, "Maybe, in retirement, Atlanta."

+ COMMUNITY



LINDA HOLOMAN

Mid-Michigan's heart behind 'Soul Issue'

By MB STAFF

When she became the hostess of "Soul Issue," a topical telecast on Delta College's QTV, Dr. Linda Holoman was near the close of career in education.

She was neither media savvy nor experienced, but she embraced the spotlight.

"As a licensed professional counselor, you're trained to listen, as well as talk to people in a way so that they will open up to you. I think I was able to use those skills to bring out the viewpoints of my guests," she says,

Then she chuckles.

"Besides, it's videotaped – and editing was my best friend," she adds, with the self-effacing modesty that was a trademark both off and on the air.

Linda's long and winding path to Delta

College started during the late 1970s. As the oldest child in a Navy family, and spending most of her childhood in California, she headed east across the nation to a leading HBCU, Norfolk State University. She met and married her college sweetheart, Smallwood Holoman, who was recruited as a chemist by Dow Chemical in Midland.

She had studied in Virginia to become a psychologist, and after the move to Midland she considered commuting to U-M or MSU for advanced studies, but the distance from Midland caused her to drop the idea and the potential career. Instead, she volunteered for local worthy causes while becoming a stay-at-home mom with sons David (1981) and Derrick (1983).

As her sons grew older, she took employment as a Saginaw Department of Social Services caseworker, where periodic statewide layoffs led to several jobs in education, including a post as Northwood University's director of human resources.

She worked one year on the staff at Saginaw High School as a temporary counselor and coach of the girls and boys soccer teams. At that time, Athletic Director Marshall Thomas required the boys football team to play soccer during the offseason, and she encountered Charles Rogers and other premiere athletes.

Smallwood served on the Delta Board of Trustees and Midland Board of Education. Through networking he met his fraternity brother, Willie Thompson, from the Saginaw Board of Education. Through that association, Linda met Dr. Thompson, who invited her to join the Delta College team, where she began as a counselor and advanced to director of multicultural affairs. These roles provided an ideal fit for her to become Soul Issue's executive producer and hostess.

And hence, semi-stardom! Linda quickly shed any stage fright for a 12-year span that concluded in 2015. Soul Issue continues with Darold Newton, Bay City NAACP president, as host.

"My main focus was to publicize the positive, often untold stories of the black community," she says.

"Of course, we also dealt with challenging social issues – like voter registration, civil rights, employment, mental health and education."

Linda also was available and helpful when local organizations and agencies aimed to spread the word regarding their projects and public services activities.

On rare occasions, she would use her media credentials to interview people of international prominence such as Maya Angelou, Earvin "Magic" Johnson, Stedman Graham, Nancy Wilson and others.

She is most proud of a grant-funded project, "Pass It On, Telling Our Stories, Sharing Our Truths: An Oral History of African Americans in Saginaw, Bay City and Midland." A trio of episodes featured documentary interviews with African American elders who were local pioneers.

"I always felt strongly," Linda says, "that our people needed to have a voice. Overall, I had a lot of fun as host of the show."

+ COMMUNITY

To become a social worker, she 'had no choice'

By MB STAFF

How did you find THAT job?

Why did you choose THAT profession?

These are common questions that each of us may encounter at one point or another.

Dana McKenzie-Simmons, a social worker and administrator for Wolverine Human Services, offers a different sort of answer.

"I didn't choose my career," she says, "my career chose me."

She does not dwell upon abuses she suffered during her childhood, but she indicates that trauma has a way of shaping and preparing oneself for life and for service.

During her initial young adult years, Simmons considered and even studied for different types of work. Business administration, for example. But in her mind, "I kept going back to my childhood and adolescence experiences, using these as a strength and not a weakness."

She also clung to the image of her maternal grandmother, Nettie McKenzie who was a social worker not by job title, but in everyday life, serving as a strong driving force and foundation for Dana, all through her life.

"My grandmother always had an open door if someone needed a place to stay, or some food to eat," Simmons recalls. "She took care of everybody, she made everything right and she made life more



bearable."

As a young adult, Dana moved to Barbados, West Indies. She returned home in 2000 with a young son under her wing.

Transformed, she headed back to school to attain a second bachelor's in social work from Saginaw Valley State University in 2008, and then her master's from Michigan State in 2011.

Her initial resulting employment started in 2006 at Saginaw's Innerlink transitional home for runaway teens, where her first guiding lights were Johnnie Gibson, the shelter's director at the time, and Archie Lawrence, a social worker.

While working and interning at Innerlink, Dana says, "I learned how to be a good listener, to see life from a different perspective, to be open, to allow yourself

to be taught instead of always dictating directions. You can't help others if you don't understand them."

At six of Wolverine's eight statewide programs, Simmons is a recipient rights advocate and the coordinator of PREA (Prison Rape Elimination Act). She is responsible for ensuring the rights and safety of juveniles while in agency custody, serving as a liaison with the State of Michigan to implement federal Justice Department policies for establishing environments free of sexual abuse and harassment. During the past three years, she has successfully reduced sexual incidents by 50 percent.

PREA remains a male-dominant field with few women assigned as coordinators. Dana is the only woman of color in this role within the Great Lakes Bay Region. She has headquarters at Wolverine's Vassar site, with an office at the Buena Vista location. For her efforts, she was honored with the Wolverine Human Services 2020 Staff of the Year Award.

Prior to her current position, Dana served as clinical therapist and provider to Oakland County's Task Force on Human Trafficking. In addition, she has worked two years at Saginaw Valley State University as an adjunct instructor for the social work department.

In 2014, she retired from the Barbados Olympic Committee, where she served as competition apparel coordinator and purchaser.

At Mount Olive Institutional Missionary Baptist Church, Simmons is leader for "The Olive Branch Ministry," which addresses mental health, grief/loss and substance abuse. Dana is affiliated with the Saginaw Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Inc. as the committee chairperson for physical/mental health and as the president of the Saginaw Alumnae Legacy Foundation.

She is as a board member of RCO (Restoration Community Outreach), a men's shelter located in the former Norman Fire Station across Sixth Street from Mount Olive.

+ COMMUNITY

MAMIE'S STORY

Diversity, from the 1960s until today

By MB STAFF

At Saginaw Valley State University, the job title for Mamie T. Thorns is Chief Diversity Officer.

Her own high school education during the late 1960s in racist Mississippi was at one of the state's only diverse, integrated educational settings, the private Piney Woods Country Life School.

Therefore, it is no small coincidence that education and civil rights became her career callings.

"Piney Woods is where I really started to receive my education," Mamie says, recalling her earlier K-8 times in totally segregated schools that dotted her rural surroundings. "There were Hispanic students, Asian American students, Caucasian students. We all would discuss the issues of the times, such as the killing of Dr. King (in 1968). Those were some courageous conversations."

When she grew up among four siblings, her single-mother, Juanita Thompson, found resources to initiate her tuition at Piney Woods. Young Mamie did her part by working on the rustic campus, 20 miles from the Mississippi capitol city, Jackson. Her chores included everything from cafeteria labor to eventually serving as a secretary in the president's office.

"My mother had only made it through 10th grade," Mamie reflects, "and she wanted us to have a better life than what she had. Unfortunately, she was unable to witness my success, because she passed away when I was a senior in high school. But my Uncle Johnny and my Aunt Edna have been there."

Despite obstacles and inequities, she completed high school and junior college at Piney Woods.

After graduating from Piney Woods, she received a scholarship to attend

Indiana's Anderson University.

"I wanted to relocate to further my education and for career opportunities," she said.

She enrolled at Indiana's Anderson University for a bachelor's degree in elementary education, followed later by a master's from Ball State University and her EdD (doctorate in education) from Detroit's Wayne State University.

"For example, when I moved into my student dorm at Anderson, it was my first time having a roommate of a different ethnicity," Thorns said. "She made it clear she did not want to room with me because of the color of my skin. She moved out, and I had a whole room to myself for the semester."

At that same university, she was the only person of color in a predominately white class.

"That was a challenge," Thorns said. "I could have easily given up and returned home, but I persisted and stayed the course. I kept my eyes on the prize, and that was to get a better education."

She started out teaching upper elementary grades in Anderson and soon advanced into administration. In 1995 she married Odail Thorns, a General Motors executive. The couple moved to Saginaw when he received a GM transfer. Odail is a product of youthful Arkansas civil rights, which helped to make their bonding an ideal fit. He later came out of retirement to serve as the city of Saginaw's economic development director.

Mamie Thorns' Saginaw Valley State University mission, in thumbnail terms, is to promote and maintain ethnic integration and equity in all aspects of campus life, starting with student enrollment and the hiring/promotion of faculty.

Dr. Thorns joined SVSU in 2002, as its Chief Diversity Officer for the Office of Diversity Programs. Over the past 19 years, she has been responsible for providing leadership and coordination of SVSU's programs related to diversity, equal opportunity and affirmative action, including oversight of the university's Title IX program.

She has served as an adjunct faculty member for SVSU's College of Business & Management, as well as an instructor for



MAMIE THORNS

SVSU's Gerstacker Fellowship Program, a leadership development initiative for K-12 educators. She is co-chair with the Saginaw, Bay and Midland Community Foundations for the Great Lakes Bay Regional Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration.

Dr. Thorns, also oversees SVSU's Great Lakes Bay Regional Youth Leadership Institute, which provides leadership development for high school students. She is a national certified diversity executive from the Institute for Diversity Certification.

She presents across the region, and state on subjects such as; equal opportunity, affirmative action, gender equity, and strategies for retaining a diverse workforce, and creating inclusive work and learning environments.

Currently, Dr. Thorns is actively involved in several local organizations such as the Saginaw Community Foundation, Saginaw Promise, Saginaw Rotary, Tri-City Links, and she is a faithful member of Bethel AME Church in Saginaw.

Additionally, she is a member of the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education (NADOHE). She is also a member of the Association's annual conference planning committee that has been instrumental in the professional development of over 600 diversity officers representing more than 250 colleges and universities.

+ COMMUNITY

I am Woman Strong

By ROSALIND H. COFFEY

During this salute to Woman, I count it a blessing to scratch the surface of my life story in the arena of Cosmetology. When I was an eighth grader, I said to my counselor I wanted to go to Murray Wright High School in Detroit to take Cosmetology, then as a junior in High School, I shared with my counselor I wanted to go to college to become a Cosmetology Instructor. Then when I completed my exit interview with the Dean's office from Ferris State College, I shared that I wanted to do graduate work in two areas, in business so I could open a chain of Beauty Salons and Boutiques and Education Administration so I could open a chain of Beauty Schools to train my own staff. Oh, the dreams that came true and the ones that took a sharp right turn, but still made life exciting and oh so worth the journey!

The first steps of the dream started with me working in salons and teaching, in the greater Detroit area. I became connected with likeminded professionals in the Wolverine State Cosmetology Association

and attended professional seminars regularly to hone my skills with all of the latest trends and products. When I moved to the Flint area, I taught Cosmetology at the Genesee Skill Center and in the early 80's opened a premier salon, Rose de Orr, on Clio Rd. then became connected with other professionals in the cosmetology field. The WSCA and the NBCL organizations had taught me to stay connected with others in the beauty industry so that we stood together as a voice in the Black Business Community! The politicians, the community leaders, the religious community, the media and the beauty industry would all come together at our conferences and success was the aroma for all. What a time, for such a time as that!

If I could dream the dream for my sisters and brothers in the beauty industry of this millennium, it would be, Get Connected! Reestablish the organizations that reconnect the dreams of working together to get things done for the industry, for business and for the community! Working together really does work! My journey returned me to Detroit and 4 college degrees and 3 beauty culture degrees later I completed 30



ROSALIND H. COFFEY

years as a public school educator, with eight years as a teacher and twenty two years as an administrator. I retired at 53 years of age and have moved to Nevada. I am a four-time cancer survivor and I thank God daily for my journey! *Willie Nelson once said "When I started counting my blessings, my whole life turned around!" I am truly proud to be a Woman in 2021!*

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+ COMMUNITY



SANDRA M. COLEMAN

Supportive, and also a leader

By MB STAFF

The more life changes, the more it changes.

She adapted to becoming a pastor's spouse, while still keeping her own voice.

When the former Sandra Morris wedded the Rev. Hurley Coleman Jr. in 1981, she knew she was marrying a part-time minister, but his main focus was on a recreation career that included directorships in Saginaw County, Saginaw City and Wayne County.

The big change took place in 2001,

approaching mid-life, when Hurley sacrificed his solid executive salary and accepted a pastoral calling at his father's congregation, Coleman Temple Church of God in Christ, then based on Wadsworth near the Buena Vista border.

"It was a difficult decision, but we took a leap of faith, knowing the Lord would be with us," recalls Sandra, a 1980 Buena Vista High School graduate. Her family had attended Coleman Temple ever since her childhood years, and her romance with Hurley took root after he graduated from Eastern Michigan University,

Sandra functioned in mostly quiet background role prior to another turning

point, the 2007 move to a larger campus and a renaming as World Outreach Church.

"By nature I am a very quiet person," she explains. "but I had become used to speaking in public to groups of people. When we made that move, it intensified."

She adds, with a chuckle, "Nowadays, I have my moments."

Those moments have included:

- Creating and supervising My Angels Day Care Center.
- Directing the Martha W. Coleman Scholarship Fund, in honor of her mother-in-law.
- Organizing Greater Women of Saginaw tribute celebrations, with the fifth annual event taking place this month.
- Authoring a book of inspirational poetry, "Still Waters," with another in the works.
- Finally, achieving two Delta College associates degrees during the past decade. Meanwhile, the couple's three children (Natoya, Hurley III, and Tasha) all have attained master's degrees.

"We have always emphasized education," Sandra says, "and part of the reason is that I gave up my college studies when we first were married."

But she never gave up her sense of humor. She recalls a religious conference at Mackinac Island while carrying and expecting with Hurley III in her tummy, and her condition caused a pre-natal hankering for the island's famous fudge. Her husband made a trip to purchase a sweet slab, but in the process he missed his announced time to speak.

Quiet, shy Sandra? Well, she spread the word that her fudge fit was the reason for hubby's absence, and upon his return he was puzzled to receive a special standing ovation.

"We still laugh about that," she says, and for once, Pastor Coleman is the serious one.

He says, "She always was incredibly supportive as the consummate 'mom' to our children, putting her own educational career on hold. She is the instigator for many of the programs at the church to benefit women and children."

+ COMMUNITY



BY DONIQUA SOVIA

If the badge could speak, I reckon it'd have a lot to say, matter of fact it could sit and write a book page by page, and I imagine this is what it would say;

My size may not be that big, and I may only be made of tin. Did you know I'm worn over a heart that I can hear beatin'?

Yes, I've heard many a heart beat, and they vary in speed at times, I've heard them even break, and stop when one has died. I've seen more than I, in my lifespan could probably tell, and these dents you see are from me going straight through hell. I've been drenched in tears, from a mother as she's told of her child's death. I've been spattered with blood, from a gunshot wound, a few times - I must confess.

I've felt the definition of disrespect as spit ran down

my face. How many middle fingers have I seen? To many for me to say. I've been left in the dark, as I'm covered for those who mourn, because of the Officer Down. I've been scraped off pavement, after being hit by a car, and landing on the ground. I've felt fear in the form of sweat from a kid grasping so tight. I've shook as a gasp was led out, from a suicide that took place that dreadful night. I'm a little bent in places from the same encounters, but just different faces.

I'm reminded daily of the word hatred.

I've had some scratches from the pavement, and from nails on hands that were in a fight. I've seen smiles on children as they played into the night. I've had the stench of smoke from fires, cigarettes and vapes, penetrate, and leave evidence of a not so good day. I've been dealt a few blows, from that of angry fists, I've felt the pressure as hands, from a push as an attempt to resist. I know something about guns now, I've looked down a barrel or two, I still can't tell a BB from a pistol, probably never will be able to.

I'm quite the heavy piece of metal, though it comes for easy lifting. I carry a lot of weight, and it slowly starts to wear on me. Now, of that I'm not ashamed, nope, not ashamed at all. I'll proudly show my dents, and scratches, and I don't mean brag at all.

If you don't take a thing from me, take this with you home; Everyday for years and years, I'm pinned to a shirt or vest, underneath all the equipment lies a human chest, and a heart that beats and emotions that peak just like the rest. For I've met some corrupt Cops, but those are far from few; The most I met we're the definition of integrity through and through. On second thought; I guess I do like to brag, because I'm mighty proud to still be shinin, for a dented up ol' badge.

Saginaw Bay Underwriters again recognized as a top-performing insurance agency

Saginaw Bay Underwriters (SBU) was recently recognized by the Accident Fund Insurance Company of America, once again receiving its President's Club Award.

This distinction is given annually to the company's highest-performing agency partners. Only 62 agencies in the entire nation received the award for 2020.

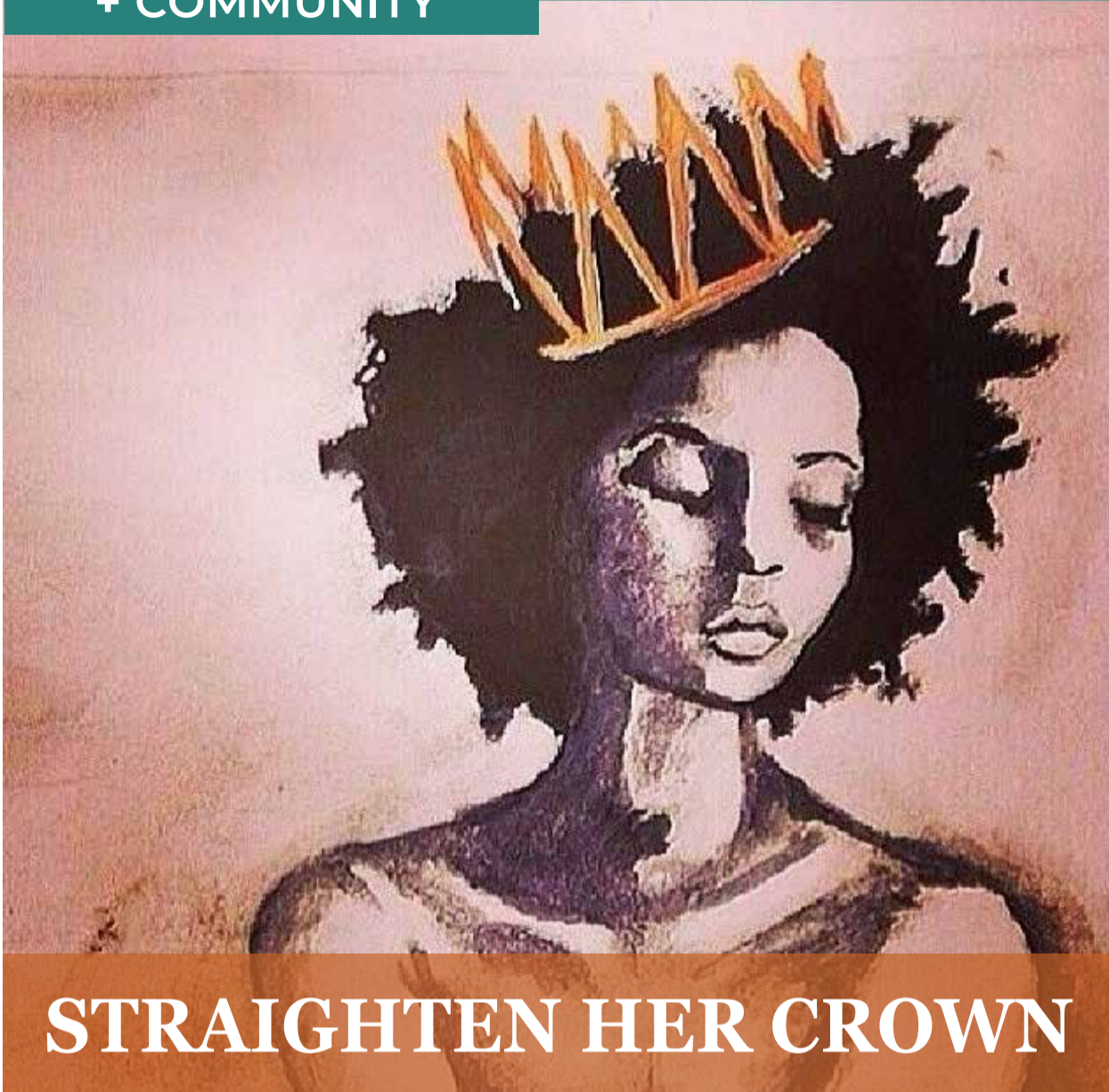
"During a difficult year, these agencies displayed tremendous commitment and dedication..." said Steve Cooper, president of AF Group's Workers' Compensation Division. "We deeply appreciate their continued support, ongoing feedback and valued insight into the individual needs of our shared customers."

"Saginaw Bay Underwriters is honored

to be recognized by the Accident Fund," said SBU President/CEO Peter N. Ewend. "Strategic partnerships are a key component of our unique approach to risk advising, The Clear Advantage™."



+ COMMUNITY



STRAIGHTEN HER CROWN

By MB STAFF

Wisdom handed down to daughters for generations has enabled women to find, embrace and share joy and peace during the challenging times of life. It has enabled us to face and overcome challenges and adversity and continue to build families, businesses, and communities in which next generations are able to thrive. One life lesson handed down for many generations is in part, a very familiar age-old adage which seems very simplistic but is simultaneously a powerful confidence builder and source of comfort. 'When you fall down, get up, dust yourself off and try it again. In other words, 'Sooner or later, you'll figure it out'. This bit of wisdom is the first part of this conversation. Another morsel of insight we will discuss is the importance of learning to be a source of support but being cautious about leaving those in need with their self-respect and dignity intact.

We must wonder about anyone who boasts of having done a good deed for someone. Was it done for the individual in need or are you the one in need – of attention? Taught at an early age, these two lessons can support efforts to build caring and compassionate communities. This month, Women's History Month 2021, let us consider incorporating these two practices into our daily routine, make it second nature – a way of life.

As with many aspects of life, the actual language has changed however the meaning remains basically the same. One example of a more recent version of the 'pick yourself up' phrase is, 'Girl, straighten your crown and keep it moving'. So, you stumbled. You made a mistake. Maybe, you walked intentionally into a situation that did not work in your favor. It was done. You cannot take it back. Do you need to apologize to someone? Is restitution necessary? Take responsibility, take care of any restoration needed (this can be costly both emotionally and financially

but cannot be avoided), and take steps to avoid that same pitfall moving forward. For many of us, some lessons will require advanced instruction before we master the class. If we are attentive to details, we discover that life lessons are transferable and over time we learn to apply the hard-earned skills in every area of our lives. We literally learn to straighten our imaginary crowns, hold our heads up and walk with confidence into any challenge we may face in life, knowing that at times we may fall short or even fall down. But we know that we have what it takes to dust ourselves off and start all over again if necessary. Straighten your crown.

How many people can I make aware of my selfless and generous nature? I gave money, clothing, food, time, a shoulder to cry on, professional guidance or any other service to others. This boasting (yes, it is boasting) is both hurtful and distasteful and should not be permitted by those of us who are considered by ourselves and others to be leaders. No one should experience the hurt or shame of receiving help or support in private but hearing about it from others because the 'giver' shared details of their kind gesture to others in public. So, when you help your sister up or straighten your sister's crown, be discreet. Another age-old idiom, discretion is the better part of valor means that we exercise caution before acting. No matter how noble or giving it makes one look or feel, we must be cautious about the things we share which might cause shame or harm to others. It is important that we teach children that this is a characteristic of any person with integrity or one who values the safety and well-being of others. This is a trait that is developed over time and possibly with a few disappointments before it is actually embraced as an important element of who we choose to be.

Finally, when all else fails, sometimes you just have to throw on your crown, throw your shoulders back and walk into the room. Even if it is a bit tilted, put on that crown and remind them who they are dealing with! It is Women's History Month 2021. Read something new, participate in an event, have a conversation with someone whom you have wanted to get to know, help someone (but do not tell others), grow. Sisters, pick up your crowns and lead the way.

+ COMMUNITY

Kids can receive free spring clothing items at Women of Colors drive-thru clothing giveaway

Women of Colors will be hosting the Children's Bounce Into Spring Drive-Thru Clothing Giveaway on Saturday, March 20, 2021 (9:00AM to 12:00PM). The event will be held at SVRC located at 1000 Tuscola Street, Saginaw, MI.

Clothing for children 12 years old and under and sizes newborn to 12 (while supplies last). New Easter dresses, sun dresses, and boys' and girls' apparel and accessories will be distributed.

This will be a drive-thru (only) event and children will have to be inside vehicles to receive clothing and provide registration forms on the day of the event. Registration forms are available on the Women of Colors Facebook page and website: womenofcolors.org.

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Children's Bounce Into Spring

Drive-Thru Clothing Giveaway

(Please do not exit your vehicle)

Saturday March 20, 2021
9:00 am to 12:00 pm
SVRC Industries Building
1000 Tuscola Street
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Sun Dresses
Easter Dresses
Boys & Girls Apparel
Girls Accessories

Clothing for children 12 years old and under. Sizes newborn to 12, while supplies last.

To receive clothing, your child/children must be present in the vehicle and must provide a completed registration form on the day of the event. Registration forms are available on the Women of Colors facebook page and website: womenofcolors.org

For more information, please call: (989) 737-9286

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She helps successful students become successful adults

By MB STAFF

Ms. Inez is currently employed by Saginaw Public School District in Saginaw, Michigan and is presently the Family & Community Engagement Specialist. She is an advocate for parent engagement, strengthening families, student and staff relationships, team building, restorative justice, professional development, strategic implementation, and partnership collaboration.

Ms. Inez is a product of Saginaw Public Schools and a former graduate of Saginaw High School. She possesses a Bachelor Degree in Family Life Education from Spring Arbor University and a Dual Master's Degree in Family & Consumer Science and Family Life Education from Western Michigan University.

Ms. Inez Williams knows that successful students become successful adults. She is the proud mother of her son Sundiata who attends Southern University Law School in Baton Rouge, Louisiana and her daughter Zakyia who attends Ferris State University in Big Rapids, MI. She is blessed beyond measure with brilliant grandchildren who possess knowledge of witty inventions, Tradarionna, Sa'Myria, Samiyah, Sariyah and Jasmine, continue to keep their grandma on her toes.

Upon returning to Saginaw Ms. Inez knew she was being directed to help and support youth and families in the community. Her passion led her to apply for a position with Houghton Jones Neighborhood Task Force and she became their Director in 2004.

Ms. Inez was blessed with the usage of a new 15 passenger van, to transport youth to various community and faith based activities. Oh it was difficult for Ms. Inez to tell a child she did not have room for them, but by the grace of God and the ingenuity of Ms. Inez she left no child behind.

Being employed by Houghton Jones Neighborhood Task Force for a short time she was impacted by members of their board and Mrs. Christina Jones the Board President. Mrs. Jones provided insight regarding the importance of community collaboration and family engagement.

Moving forward and understanding that all things work together for good to those who loved God and are called according to His purpose. In 2005 she became the founder of STRIVE Youth Group.

Ms. Inez eagerness created opportunities for youth development and parent engagement. She provided a safe haven for youth in her home as she journeyed establishing an atmosphere for learning and understanding. She believed God has the last say in a person life and giving up is not an option. Ms. Inez recognized her life was purpose driven and she knew with the strength of young people, wisdom and God help youth goals would be achieved.

Her home became too small to continue to service community youth, she was guided to Pastor Paulet at St John Lutheran Church and they blessed and donated STRIVE with space to accommodate the needs of all the youth she served. St John Lutheran Church received a new Pastor who came with new innovative ideas and STRIVE stayed there for many months and then moved on as God led them to another location.

Hoyt Library provided space for students who were enrolled and in STRIVE youth program and today we are presently located at Bethlehem Temple Church. As Ms. Inez continue moving from place to place lasting partnerships were established. While looking, listening, exploring and pursuing Ms. Inez maintained her faithfulness to God, Youth and Families.

Ms. Inez continued her journey as she looked for youth who needed help in different areas of their lives. She received a phone call from a local pastor, Pastor Larry Camel. Pastor Camel requested her services to assist with a group of young people in his church who were traumatized, she gladly accepted the opportunity to help.

Bishop Camel gave Ms. Inez a flyer



INEZ WILLIAMS

regarding The Girls Conference held at South Middle School. After attending the conference, an enormous door of opportunities was opened at Saginaw County Health Department. Dr. Cheryl Plettenberg, Lynn Brummell Presley, Gail Boomer introduce Ms. Inez to The Family Youth Initiative Program.

As God continue to order Ms. Inez steps Gail Boomer suggested that Ms. Inez apply for a Substance Abuse Prevention License with the State of Michigan. She followed good instructions and God prospered her and she was successful in receiving STRIVE Substance Abuse Prevention License from the State of Michigan in 2005 and is now a 501c3 Non-Profit Organization.

For several years STRIVE provided work experience and quality training for Saginaw County Youth. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Disability Network of Mid-Michigan, Saginaw Community Foundation, Saginaw MAX System of Care, World Outreach Campus provided funding to ensure that Saginaw County Youth were actively engaged in a licensed Summer Recreation Camp. Saginaw County Community Mental Health Authority funded STRIVE to provided a Therapeutic Camp for youth who are Social Emotional Disturbed (SED).

+ COMMUNITY

MYRTIS BRAZIL

SPSD SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER

Myrtils Brazil is a special education teacher for the Saginaw Public School District. She is Founder and Executive Director of Anchored Support Community Services (stay tuned). She was the Tim Tobin, Saginaw Valley League Teacher of the Year from Arthur Hill High School for the 2019-2020 school year. She believes in the importance of community and believes it unites us all. She is the mother of 2 children and loves to travel.



MICHIGAN DHHS Spread Hope NOT COVID
Michigan Department of Health & Human Services

OUR BEST HOPE IS THE COVID-19 VACCINE.

See how to get yours.

The COVID-19 vaccine is proven to be safe and effective. It will save lives and help Michigan move forward. Protect us all, by getting your dose of hope.

Learn more at Michigan.gov/COVIDvaccine or call the COVID-19 Hotline at (888) 535-6136 and press 1.

+ POLITICS

CELEBRATING
WOMEN'S
HISTORY MONTH

ANNIE BOENSCH

House talk leads to Council service

By MB STAFF

From her school years on up, Annie Boensch was into politics.

This wasn't simply every four years for U.S. president, like the Olympics. It could be for U.S. rep or state rep. If the city elected a dog catcher, she might have been in the middle of that one, too.

"I've always seen the political arena. My family members were always talking politics," she says, praising grandparents Ray and Dorothy Riddick as the prime instigators.

The end result is that she today is Saginaw City Councilwoman Annie Boensch.

As she entered adult life at the turn of the millennium, she transformed that talk into action. She took part in a "keep recycling" rally at the county courthouse that was organized by her uncle, Dave Riddick, and his spouse, Michelle Hurd. The event's success -- local hard-won recycling options continue today -- inspired her to more action.

Her viewpoints leaned to the Democrats' side, and so she visited party headquarters on North Hamilton Street to volunteer. As she spoke and door-knocked for virtually any and every Dem hopeful, her reputation rose.

"People would tell me, 'you should run for something yourself,' but I had never thought of being my own candidate,"

Annie recalls. "I didn't think of myself as someone who would win."

She started to more closely follow City Council proceedings, because the telecasts are aired on cable access. The Board of Education never considered such a public option, even though it manages its own SETV studio. However, Annie now was a mother 10 years ago, and so she also took an interest in the school board as well.

In the end, she opted for City Council in her successful 2011 bid as a general unknown. At the time, Saginaw and the nation were in the first stage of aiming to emerge from the 2008 economic crisis.

"It seemed that we were at the beginning of a new era," she reflects, "and I wished to be a part of it."

In spite of her opinionated past, Councilwoman Boensch focused on settling in as a team player. She organized lunches at the former farmer's market on Millard Street to bring members together in an informal get-to-know-you-better setting. Nowadays, she considers the market's move to the SVRC Marketplace (old Saginaw News building) as a main accomplishment of the past decade, along with Delta College establishing a new downtown presence.

"These were not foregone conclusions, as (the public) might have perceived," she notes.

Annie was 29 years old a decade ago when she ran her own debut campaign. She's still among the younger of the City Council members, but suddenly and ironically she is the senior in terms of experience.

She was the only woman during her first term, and the prospect of an exclusive nine men was one of her initial campaign points. Now she's among four females, along with Mayor Brenda Moore, Autumn Scherzer and newcomer Monique Lamar Sylvia.

Annie today has her hands full with a pair of school age children, but she vows to stick with her community service, both elective and otherwise.

"A female presence at the table is always important," she notes.

+ POLITICS

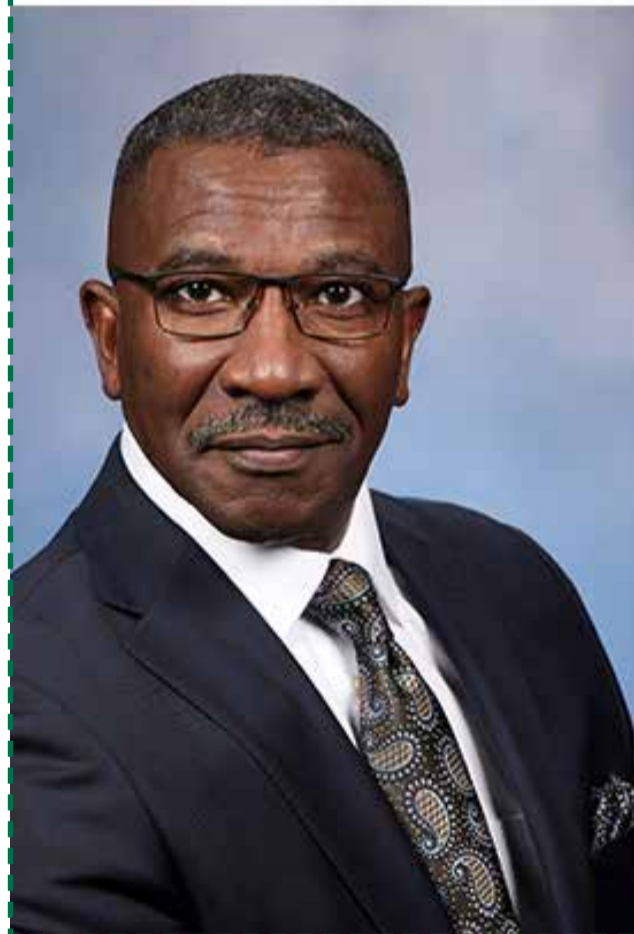
Delta College to host political forum about Capitol attack

The January 6 attack on the Capitol, and its subsequent impact on the United States, will be the topic of an event at Delta College.

The Delta Political Forum Committee will host a panel of experts on March 25 for the free event, "Recognizing Enemies Among Us and Combatting the Threat of Homegrown Violent Extremism," from 7-8:30pm on Zoom. Registration is required.

"It is always our goal to empower the Delta community with information to make informed decisions in our democracy," said Lisa Lawrason, chair of the Political Forum Committee and professor of political science. "We are thrilled about the caliber of panelists for this event and the varied perspectives they will bring to the discussion."

The panel includes Assistant Attorney General Sunita Doddamani, head of the state's Hate Crimes Unit; Rep. Amos O'Neal; Randy Blazak, researcher, national commentator on hate crimes and chair of the Coalition Against Hate Crimes; and Joshua George, assistant professor of criminal justice and coordinator of the digital forensics program at Delta. The discussion will be moderated by Angela



RANDY BLAZAK, SUNITA DODDAMANI, REP. AMOS O'NEAL AND JOSHUA GEORGE

Guy-Lee, instructor of sociology.

The forum will explore white nationalist terrorism, including its rise and use of social media, as well as the extremism in Michigan and policy actions.

Since 2007, Delta has hosted an annual political forum to engage the community in a dialogue about current events and issues. To register or learn more, visit delta.edu/enemiesamongus.



+ HEALTH



COVID CONFLICT: To vac or not to vac?

By MIKE THOMPSON

Covid-19 vaccines?

- (1) The nation ethnically is divided.
- (2) And so are black people, within.

Facts on the first point are more generally reported. Across the U.S.A., citizens of African American persuasion are half as likely to have been offered vaccines, compared to the white majority. At the same time, black people per-capita are four times more prone to be hospitalized with the virus and three times more likely to die.

On the second point of varying internal viewpoints, there is less media focus, and so the main point of this article is to explore the reasons, building upon a Feb. 16 report in the Michigan Banner archives that concentrated on the disparities.

You may (or may not) be surprised to learn:

- Among black adults, only 49 percent intend to accept covid flu shots, compared to 63 percent among whites.

- A large gap exists between age groups. Blacks ages 18-44 are almost twice as likely to be anti-vac as those age 60-over.

One of the latest comprehensive accounts was delivered recently by CNN's Nicquel Terry Ellis, senior writer on race and equality, whose name you may recognize because she's a 2006 product of Arthur Hill High School, later MSU. (Google "nicquel cnn feb 4" to find this report)

When we realize that Dr. Anthony Fauci and other experts say a minimum 70 percent vaccination rate is the bottom line to make serious inroads, we should see the health risk to the black community and the general population.

Our own local research is far more anecdotal as we seek answers to why these viewpoints exist. We rely on a mix of personal interviews and Facebook statements from African American anti-vaccers in Saginaw. We hesitate with anonymous sources, but in this case the tradeoff is to present truly honest opinions, and so we will begin with this gem from a male elder:

"Right or wrong, I ain't taking that shot. Nope... not da kid. I can just visualize the TV commercials in a couple years, saying, "If you took the covid shot in 2021, call 1-800 LEE FREE."

In addition to approaching a Trevor Noah (Daily Show) level of satire humor, the gentleman's short segment embodies many of the larger concerns: The words reflect a distrust not only of government and the health care system, but of the white establishment in general, even as the "white establishment" gradually becomes somewhat integrated.

Reasons for anti-vacs

A 52-year old father of six informs seems not to realize he received a number of vaccines as a baby and as a toddler, to prevent everything from polio to the measles. He recalls only hiding pills under his tongue and spitting them out at the first chance.

He says Michael Jackson "was ahead of his time" in wearing a mask and sleeping in an oxygen chamber as extreme measures to ward off germs.

More down-to-earth, he rattles off a list of reasons for avoiding the needle:

- *"They didn't know anything about covid, about where it came from, but then all of a sudden they came out of the sky with these flu shots. And how were they supposed to come up with two of them at the exact same time?" (This was a week before Johnson & Johnson's third vaccine emerged.)*
- *"I don't know what these vaccines are going to do, and I don't want to be the first to find out. They might cause cancer and make things worse."*
- *"People have been getting sick*

CONTINUES ON PG 39, COVID VAC

Continued from pg 38, covid vac

for years, and they will continue to get sick. Everyone has an expiration date. Whatever happens is going to happen."

He is aware of black peers who are fighting for more access to vaccines as a civil right, but he says this is not a factor in his outlook, responding, "I don't have a point to prove."

Similar to many anti-vaccers we encountered, he is not aware of the racist Tuskegee Experiment of 1932-72, in which 400 black men were not told of their syphilis infections so that research could be conducted on the long-term effects without harming or endangering the white populous.

Another conundrum is that surveys indicate that blacks comprise the largest group of vaccine skeptics, followed closely in second place by the unlikely company of whites who support Donald Trump.

Listen to the experts

David Bailey is a Delta College biology professor who has assisted in presentations to inform faculty members about varying opinions linked to covid vaccines.

He points to main villains as "misinformation on social media," which provides a "convenient source" but "is not always vetted by experts who value the responsibility of presenting accurate and complete ideas."

Bailey explains, "Unproven claims suggest that the vaccines have long-term negative side effects -- sterility, neurological damage and auto-immune disease."

Harmful motivations, he says, may include pursuits of monetary or political gain.

He says people of color who are minorities within the United States have justified cause for suspicion, and the burden for addressing these fears is on the shoulders of those with expertise, such as himself. He begins by noting that extra steps were taken to ensure that people of all groups were included in the 75,000

who volunteered for clinical trials for the vaccines, and that he and his family members have taken their shots or will do so when they become eligible.

As for anti-vaccers who perceive a rush act, Bailey says research on deadly viruses had staled years ago, and that the covid outbreak simply increased the urgency.

"The information for this research was shared between labs from nearly the beginning," he says, with the usual competition cast aside in the interest of public health.

Bailey adds that while research took place at an accelerated timetable, the advance clinical trials occurred at the standard pace.

Skeptics endure

Some surveys reflect a slow across-the-board uptick in public confidence, but not much.

Women are more mistrustful than men, especially among African Americans.

A 36-year-old local mother of two says: *"Do what's best for you and your family when it comes to the vaccine. Don't let people persuade you one way or another. Don't nobody know what's best for you."*

One respondent says she fears not only shots for herself and her children, but she also will hesitate to send them back to school. Another makes a food comparison because, "We don't know that's in our food if we ain't growing it." A third says her husband got sick and so she won't follow in his footsteps.

Still another is far more emphatic: "I'M NOT TAKING IT! God has kept me this far and I have faith that he will continue to carry me and mine. We are healthy still. THANK GOD!"

And another: "NO! We have been guinea pigs too many FAR TOO MANY TIMES!!!"

President Biden is promising a 100 percent vaccine supply for American adults by the end of May. Fewer news

reports examine how many will take the medicine, especially in the hardest-hit neighborhoods, which is where black people are congregated,

In pursuit of confidence

A response is offered from Dr. Delicia Pruitt, medical director for the Saginaw County Health Department. Dr. Pruitt writes:

"The Health Department has been working from the beginning to build vaccine confidence. We will know more about actual numbers right here in Saginaw very soon."

The benefits of vaccination outweigh the risks. There are so many good reasons to get a vaccine. It's a safer way to build immunity to COVID-19. It has been developed rapidly, thanks to years of previous research, and went through every required step in demonstrating safety and effectiveness."

"People of color have had prominent roles in the vaccine's development. It is our best hope for returning life to normal."

Partners in promoting vaccinations have named themselves "Health and Community Connected," aiming to reach skeptics from within the most socially vulnerable groups.

HCC teammates are the Health Department, Covenant HealthCare, Ascension St. Mary's, and Great Lakes Bay Health Centers along with St. Joseph Catholic Church, Mt. Olive Institutional Missionary Baptist Church, Victorious Believers Ministries Church of God in Christ, and New Birth Missionary Baptist Cathedral. Supporters also include STARS, the Saginaw Community Foundation, Saginaw African American Pastors, NAACP Saginaw Branch, CMU Health, and SVRC Industries.

Dr. Pruitt summarizes, "We will be able to determine how people were reached with information and how many actually said yes or no to getting vaccinated."

+ HEALTH

Leading physician has seen the other side

By MB STAFF

Delicia Seals was launching her medical studies at the University of Michigan during the 1990s when a physical exam uncovered a large tumor.

Surgery was routine, as the tumor proved not to contain cancer.

Still, the memory lingers.

"For the first time," she recalls, "I felt what it was like to be a patient myself. When I have to deliver bad news to people, I try to make it as compassionate and clear as I possibly can."

Today Dr. Delicia Pruitt is a family physician who serves as the Saginaw County Health Department's medical director. She's a Saginaw High School product, but she happily agreed to marry Brian Pruitt, in spite of his status as a football standout for rival Arthur Hill and now a "Power of Dad" motivational speaker. They have four children of their own, while Delicia has cared for many more young ones in her hometown.

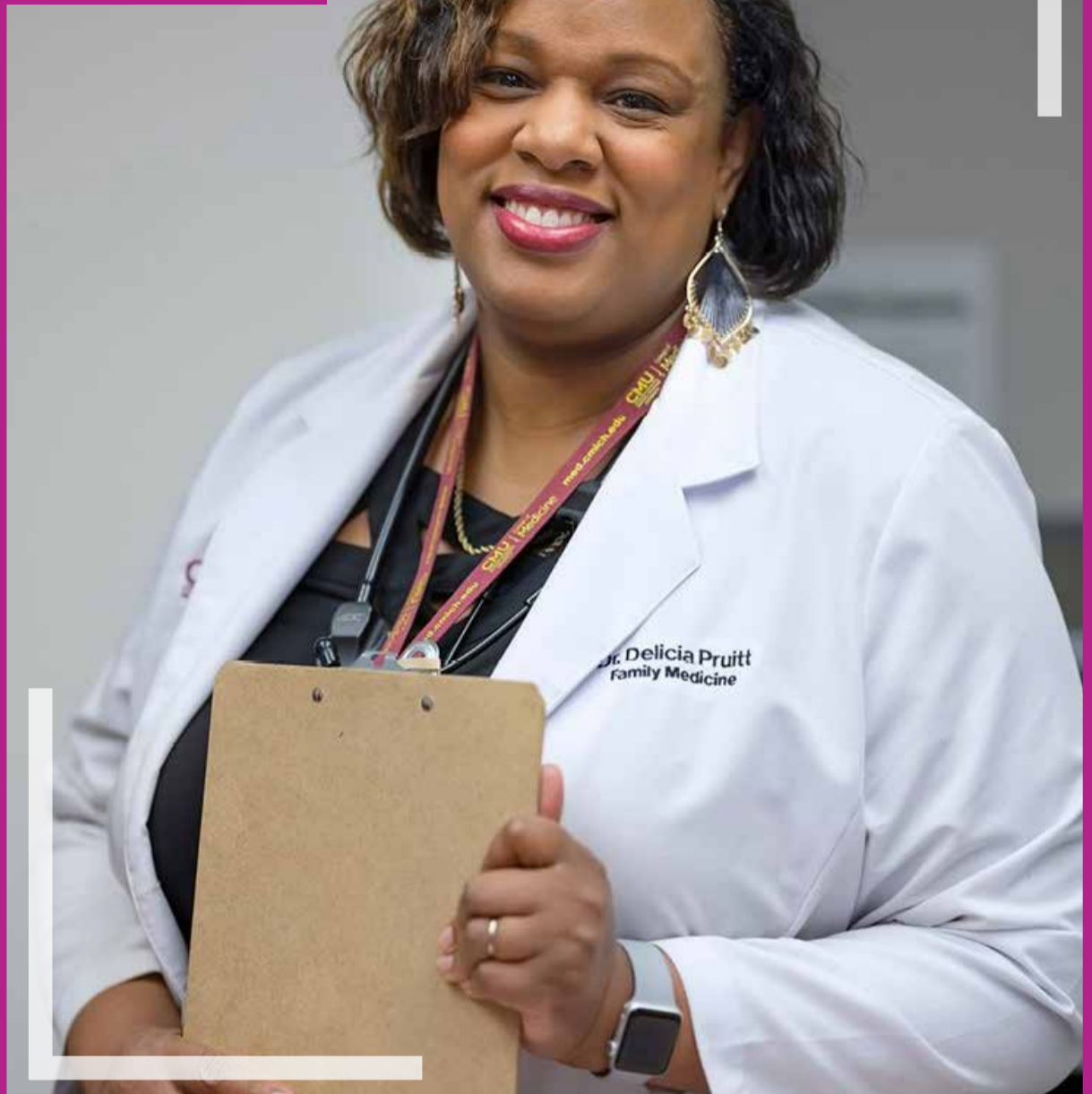
She is one of eight offspring of the retired Dr. Eugene Seals and civic leader Joyce Aldridge Seals. As a child at the South Side's former Salina Elementary School, even before her father launched his landmark middle-aged medical studies, she felt her own interest.

"Instead of going and playing outdoors," she says, "I was into books about how the body works, and what the body looks like inside."

She grew older and became her dad's homework study teammate.

"When I got my medical degree (Wayne

CELEBRATING
WOMEN'S
HISTORY MONTH



DR. DELICIA PRUITT

State, 2000) I was only 11 years behind my father," Dr. Pruitt says. "I saw the entire process that he went through and the time that it took. This helped me to understand the cost (in personal effort) of what it would take, and so it all was not so intimidating or new to me."

For the summer after she finished 11th grade, her family asked her to spend the vacation weeks in Chicago as the prime caregiver for an elder aunt.

"This involved everything from waking her up to packing her wounds," she notes. "When my aunt was at Cook County Hospital for chemotherapy I was able to observe all the doctors and nurses who were working so hard to serve the patients, and this reinforced what I wanted to do

with my life."

She joined her father's family practice until his 2016 retirement. She became the county's medical director a year ago, at the same time as the Covid-19 outbreak began. She has taken a top role, first in testing for the virus and now in vaccine administration, promoting equal outreach and education even as critics -- both nationally and some locally -- speak of race bias in the pandemic response.

Meanwhile, Dr. Delicia Pruitt continues to aim for excellence. She is studying at Central Michigan University for a master's in public health administration, and only a single "B" grade has limited her grade-point to 3.89.

+ HEALTH

Community health centers announce COVID-19 vaccine online registration

Great Lakes Bay Health Centers (GLBHC) is now offering online registration for individuals wanting to register to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. The online registration is open to anyone 50 and older.

The registration form is available on the GLBHC website.

People registering online will be called when it is their turn to receive the vaccine, and given instructions on when and where the vaccine will be administered. Please be sure to answer your phone, including phone numbers that are not familiar with you.

GLBHC is following vaccine

distribution guidelines as set by the State of Michigan. Those registering do not have to be patients with the health centers.

Getting the vaccine is only one of the tools to end this pandemic. Please continue to follow safety guidelines and wear your mask, avoid gatherings and stay 6 feet apart. Get tested if you have been exposed to someone with the virus.

The hours of operation at the COVID-19 drive-through testing site at 501 Lapeer in Saginaw have changed to 9 am to 1 pm Monday, Tuesday and Thursday.



COURTESY PHOTO



Once you get your dose of hope, mask up while others get theirs.

One day in the future, we won't need to wear masks. But for right now, we all need to keep wearing masks. Even after you get vaccinated. The virus is still out there. Help protect your friends, family and neighbors.

Learn more at Michigan.gov/COVIDvaccine

Spread Hope
NOT COVID



THERE'S NOTHING MORE EXTRAORDINARY THAN A CARING COMMUNITY.

Thank you from everyone at Covenant HealthCare.

Covenant HealthCare prides itself on delivering extraordinary care. But lately, we've been on the receiving end. Our community has given us:

- 20,000 N95 masks
- 11,000+ handmade masks
- 10,750 face shields
- 10,000 ear loop/tie masks
- 50,000 gloves
- 2,000 pairs of goggles
- 312 gallons of sanitizer
- 5,000 caps and hair nets
- 4,100 shoe/boot covers
- Thousands of donated meals
- Thousands of dollars in gift cards and monetary donations
- Countless prayers and messages of encouragement

Our heartfelt thanks go to everyone who has supported us. You are all extraordinary.



Congressman Kildee announces \$14.5 million in federal grants to local health centers

Funds Will Help Mid-Michigan Health Facilities Continue to Provide Health Care Services During Pandemic

Congressman Dan Kildee (MI-05), Chief Deputy Whip of the House Democratic Caucus, announced that \$14,526,290 in federal grants will be awarded to three local health centers in mid-Michigan.

The federal grants, awarded through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, will support the continuation of primary care, dental and behavioral health care services to families, particularly those who are medically underserved, as well as veterans.

- **Great Lakes Bay Health Centers** in Saginaw will receive \$6,994,610

- **Hamilton Community Health Network** in Flint will receive \$2,919,421
- **Sterling Area Health Center** in Sterling will receive \$4,612,259

“I am proud to announce this federal support to help local community health centers serve patients, help distribute vaccines and combat the spread of coronavirus,” said Congressman Kildee. “This federal funding will help provide continued access to affordable and high-quality health care services in our district. I will continue to work in Congress to bring critical resources to mid-Michigan.”

Earlier this week, Congressman Kildee voted to pass the American Rescue Plan, a \$1.9 trillion emergency relief package to support American workers, families and small businesses during the pandemic. The package provides billions in additional aid to accelerate vaccine distribution. It will also take measures to combat the virus, including scaling up testing and tracing, addressing shortages of personal protective equipment (PPE) and other critical supplies, investing in high-quality treatments and addressing health care disparities.

Michigan Expanding Access to Safe, Effective COVID-19 Vaccine to Michiganders Ages 16 and Older with Medical Conditions, Disabilities Starting March 22

All Michiganders age 16 and up to become eligible on April 5

To continue progress toward state’s goal of vaccinating 70% of Michiganders over age 16 and bringing a quicker end to the COVID-19 pandemic in Michigan, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) officials announced the state is expanding vaccination eligibility for Michiganders ages 16 and older with disabilities or medical conditions that put them at high risk of negative COVID-19 outcome beginning Monday, March 22. The state is also announcing that beginning Monday, April 5, all Michiganders age 16 and up who were not previously eligible will be eligible to receive a vaccine.

With the expanded vaccine eligibility, providers are still encouraged to schedule appointments and allocate vaccinations to

residents based on highest risk, including older residents, essential workers, and frontline workers. The most recent vaccine prioritization guidelines can be found on Michigan’s COVID-19 website.

This is in addition to a recent announcement that MDHHS was moving forward with vaccination of Michiganders age 50 and older with medical conditions or disabilities and caregiver family members and guardians who care for children with special health care needs as of Monday, March 8. Also beginning Monday, March 22, vaccine eligibility is expanding to include all Michiganders 50 and older.

All vaccine providers may begin vaccinating the new priority group of 16-49 with medical conditions or disabilities by Monday, March 22. MDHHS is accelerating

vaccination of these individuals due to concern around disparity in life expectancy and in an effort to remove barriers to vaccine access. Based on the anticipated amount of vaccines becoming available to the state and President Biden’s directive that all adults should be eligible by May 1, Michigan has decided to move forward with allowing all Michiganders who were not previously eligible to begin receiving vaccine on Monday, April 5. As providers are scheduling appointments, they should consider an individual’s risk of exposure due to their employment and their vulnerability to severe disease in determining how to schedule appointments. It is anticipated that it may still take several weeks beyond April 5 for everyone who wishes to receive a vaccine to have an appointment.

+ EDUCATION



CELEBRATING
WOMEN'S
HISTORY MONTH

LISA HALL

Saginaw Township's modest K-12 pioneer

By MB STAFF

In 2004, when Lisa Hall was elected as the first African American trustee on the Saginaw Township Board of Education, she didn't slip in among the middle of the pack.

She was the top vote-getter.

And it was only her second year in a predominantly white school district with

a history of ethnic incidents, including a brawl at Heritage High School. The previous year, a black teen said he had been packing a gun in fear of a lynching-type attack, which prompted a series of community forums in which many of the residents denied that racial tensions existed

"I was already highly involved as a parent, and that incident prompted me to run for the board," Hall says. "I didn't want to be just another complaining parent. I wanted to make a difference

But during campaign chat she didn't raise the issue, unless asked.

"To go door-to-door was my favorite part," she recalls. "I would introduce myself with a great big smile, and start by saying, 'I have children in the schools, and I am very active as a volunteer, and education for all of the children is very important.'"

Lisa joined a board that generally was sympathetic, although one trustee strongly opposed proposals to accept students from adjacent districts, mainly the City of Saginaw, describing new youngsters as "aliens."

She didn't hold back, focusing on "the need for diversity of the student population and staff, reflected in curriculum, textbooks, and graduation rates."

Her school board tenure was for 10 years, and her impact was both immediate and long-term. Township voters in 2008 passed a building upgrade millage in spite of lingering never-say-die complaints that the improvements would mainly benefit those incoming "alien" cross-district pupils. This year's student count is 18 percent African American and 14 percent Lantinx, causing the region's largest suburb to catch up with Carrollton and Bridgeport in terms of integration.

Lisa Hall resided for 13 years in Saginaw, earning enough friends and acquaintances to last for a lifetime, through both her Board of Education tenure and her general community involvement.

The former Lisa Blaylock grew up

in Anderson, Indiana, a town similar to Saginaw in size and manufacturing decline, and graduated from Highland High School in 1984. She then achieved a bachelor's degree in public affairs and financial administration from the state's alphabet-soup college, IUPUI, Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis.

On a blind date, Lisa met Glen Hall, who was working with the Boy Scout of America. Soon the newlyweds started a family, and Glen began his Delphi career. He received an option to transfer to Saginaw, which had become a career-closing home for his highly-traveled military parents, Air Force Gen. David Hall and spouse Jacqueline.

Lisa was an active stay-at-home mom who stepped out enough to volunteer with local worthy causes, including the Saginaw Community Foundation and the Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN) Council.

Their first child is Hayes, now 28, and followed Haley, now 25, who both have become successful young adults.

Life changed suddenly with Glen's too-young death in 2005 at only 43 years of age. Lisa, now a breadwinner, worked in program administration at the Underground Railroad women's shelter and at the Andersen Enrichment Center, home of local grants and activities for the cultural arts.

When the job market continued calling, she departed in 2015 for the Detroit area, first with InForum Michigan, which promotes women in leadership, and now with Detroit's public television station and public radio station, where she organizes everything from community participation to lobbying legislators for hard-won funds,

She maintains her friendships in mid-Michigan, and concludes, "Saginaw was a very nice place to raise a family."

Career advisor focuses on college prep, test-taking

By MB STAFF

Felesia M. Harrel serves Arthur Hill High School students as a college and career advisor for the countywide Saginaw Intermediate School District. She has 20-plus years of experience in education and she describes herself as is a "hidden figure" in the school system and as a "test prep guru." She is a native of Helena, Arkansas.

Harrel's life took a drastic turn after the death of her mother, Mattie Campbell, when she was three years old. During the years after her mother passed away, she says she experienced "childhood trauma" that caused her "to feel invisible, as if my life was a mistake, and as if my life was insignificant." Although the earlier part of her life was traumatic, she says things eventually got better.

Felesia attended a number of Saginaw elementary schools and then South Middle. She is 1986 Arthur Hill High School alumni who attributes part of her current success to two of her former teachers, Fred Case and Edward Whitney. Case was her biology teacher who awakened the intellectual side of her. Whitney was her algebra teacher who nurtured her love for mathematics and challenged her to dig deeper and to work harder.

"They made me feel like my life mattered and that there was nothing that I couldn't achieve," she explains.

Harrel started her post-graduation years at Delta College because she believed she simply wasn't ready for a four-year university. As her self-confidence grew, she continued her education at Saginaw Valley State University,



where she majored in graphic design and doubled-minored in psychology and sociology.

She took some time off from her educational journey to begin raising her children. She is currently enrolled in Purdue University (Global Campus) where she is pursuing her masters degree in educational psychology. She takes pride in the fact that she is one of the top African American students at the top of her class maintaining a 4.0 GPA. She will graduate from Purdue in August and start the next phase of her educational journey at Harvard University Extension Program, where her concentration will be masters of government and political science. Her plan is to earn a Ph.D as well.

Ms. Harrel has worked as a substitute teacher for Saginaw Public Schools and PCMI, a 21 Century site coordinator for Saginaw Public Schools, a tutor and structured learning assistant for Delta College, and a part-time instructor for Delta College.

Arthur Hill High School students who aim for bright futures under Felesia Harrel's

leadership and guidance, often will find themselves in the media spotlight via her social media feature called "Shoutout Tuesday." She uses this platform to honor student academic achievements and to show the community what Saginaw inner-city students have to offer. The features include all of the colleges and universities they have been accepted into, and their college scholarship offers as well.

In May, she does National College Decision Day features to showcase and announce what colleges the students chose, their college major, their scholarship total, and their academic achievements. During the 1999-2000 school year, Arthur Hill

students earned more than \$4.5 million in scholarship offers.

"I look at the student from a holistic lens," she explains. "Students cannot function in school if their needs have not been met. We must meet them where they are in order to get them to where we want them to be."

In 2012, Harrel established FMH Test-Taking Consultants, LLC, and College Bound Academic Learning Center, a test prep and college readiness company "that has produced some of the top-performing students in this region," she says.

In 2018, her company transitioned to an online platform to service more students nationally. Readers may find highlights of her students on her Instagram and on her Facebook page.

Harrel expresses thanks to her five children and her three grandchildren for being her "greatest supporters," joined by her sorority, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc., Zeta Omega Zeta Saginaw Chapter.

+ EDUCATION

SVSU to offer free tuition to qualifying students in Michigan



SVSU

Saginaw Valley State University is expanding its longstanding dedication to making a first-class college education accessible to Michigan families by offering free tuition to qualified students throughout Michigan. A new initiative known as the SVSU Cardinal Commitment will remove barriers to higher education for many students, starting with the fall 2021 semester.

“We are proud of our role in welcoming students from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds and providing them with a high-quality education that prepares them for meaningful careers,” said Donald Bachand, SVSU President. “We have maintained the lowest tuition in the state for many years, but the sticker price still causes many families to think an SVSU degree is out of reach.

“We want those hard-working students to fully understand they can complete an SVSU degree and that we are putting resources into this program to support them every step of the way. I hear from employers every day who are counting on us to grow the talent pipeline, and we are committed to doing our part by breaking down barriers.”

The SVSU Cardinal Commitment financial

aid package provides free eligible tuition and mandatory fees to qualifying first-time undergraduate students with student and family adjusted gross income of \$50,000 or less. Full criteria are available at www.svsu.edu/cardinalcommitment.

SVSU has partnered with community organizations for many years to improve college access. The leaders of three regional community foundations applauded this latest initiative.

Diane Fong, president and CEO of the Bay Area Community Foundation:

· “The Bay Area Community Foundation applauds SVSU's efforts to make college accessible to all. Only 11% of young adults from low-income families earn a degree by age 24 compared to 58% from high-income families. One's ability to achieve an education should not be dependent on their family's income. The SVSU Cardinal Commitment is an important step to removing that barrier.”

Renee Johnston, president and CEO of the Saginaw Area Community Foundation:

“The Saginaw Community Foundation is extremely proud of Saginaw Valley State University for their ongoing ‘Commitment’ to equity and access to higher education

for all. And, with the recent announcement of the ‘Cardinal Commitment,’ they have recognized the need for long-term support for many students in need of assistance to complete college degrees. The Saginaw Community Foundation is also excited to have the opportunity to leverage our scholarships with the Cardinal Commitment to further assist these students with other academic needs. Thank you SVSU for being an amazing community partner!”

Sharon Mortensen, president and CEO of the Midland Area Community Foundation:

· “Midland Area Community Foundation is excited to learn of the Cardinal Commitment. We recognize the critical importance of post-secondary education to help build a community and region where all can thrive. With Michigan's goal of 60% of residents with a post-secondary degree or credential by 2030, we appreciate Saginaw Valley State University's commitment to assist students with the cost of higher education.”

Questions regarding the SVSU Commitment can be made by calling the SVSU Information Line at 989-964-2110 or e-mailing the SVSU Campus Financial Services Center at cfsc@svsu.edu.

Saginaw County Elementary Students Celebrate March is Reading Month with Local Employers

March is nationally designated as “March is Reading Month.” To celebrate, over twenty employers in Saginaw County have committed to giving time for reading to elementary school children. Heather Phelps, Saginaw Intermediate School District’s Director of Instruction, describes reading aloud as “a valuable tool with exponential possibilities for expanding children’s knowledge.” Thanks to a collaboration between Saginaw Intermediate School District’s Career and Technical Education and Instructional Services Departments, community readers will be sharing books that pertain to careers focused on developing critical career awareness at a young age.

“Learning about what people do in their communities helps students develop an awareness of the world around them,” said Jenny Geno, Saginaw ISD Executive Director of Career and Technical Education. She added, “Career awareness activities help children think about their strengths, what they enjoy doing, and the different kinds of jobs that exist. This helps them begin to form an awareness of what type of career they may wish to have when they get older. These skills are foundational to the development of important decision-making skills. The more experiences we can provide to children of all ages, the more suited they may be to make informed career decisions later in their lives.”

To date, reading participants include representatives from the following businesses and organizations: Saginaw Valley State University, Saginaw Intermediate School District, Sarah Fechter Fitness, Pit & Balcony Theatre, Saginaw Art Museum, Great Lakes Bay Manufacturing Association members, Temple Theatre, Renue Physical Therapy, Saginaw County Government, Nexteer Automotive, Associated Builders & Contractors, Saginaw County Sheriff’s Department, Amigo Mobility, Great Lakes Bay Health Centers, Bavarian Inn Lodge, Saginaw Children’s Zoo, R.C. Hendrick & Son, Inc, Therapeutic Hope LLC, Fullerton Tool Company, Public Libraries of Saginaw, SVRC Industries, and Isabella Bank. Additionally, special guest Representative Amos O’Neal will also be reading to students!

Interested individuals that wish to participate may contact Dennis Barlow, 989-399-6150, dbarlow@sisd.cc or Tia Hahn, 989-714-4105, thahn@sisd.cc.

Saginaw Promise ...an economic initiative working to affect Saginaw’s future!

A college scholarship for students who live and graduate in Saginaw!

The Saginaw Promise is an economic initiative working to impact the economy and quality of life in Saginaw through postsecondary education. The Saginaw Promise is an initiative intended to affect Saginaw’s economy and quality of life by promoting and supporting a culture of postsecondary education for all of its graduating students through information, programming and a “lastdollar” scholarship. Since 2012, the Saginaw Promise has awarded \$1,025,049 in scholarships to 590 scholars; an investment in the future of Saginaw and the lives of its students through postsecondary education. The Saginaw Promise believes that postsecondary education is the “change agent” to produce change in Saginaw. The organization backs up their belief in education with a “residence based” scholarship for students who live in and graduate from a high school in the Saginaw Promise Zone. The premise is to provide an incentive and benefit for families who live in the Saginaw Promise Zone. The Saginaw Promise scholarship benefits students who reside in and graduate from a high school in the Saginaw Promise Zone (which includes the cities of Saginaw, Zilwaukee, Kochville and that area of Buena Vista designated to the Saginaw Public School District). While supporting higher education, the scholarship is intended to stabilize and grow Saginaw’s population, attract new businesses and affect the overall economic environment in Saginaw, which will also impact surrounding communities and the entire Great Lakes Bay Region.

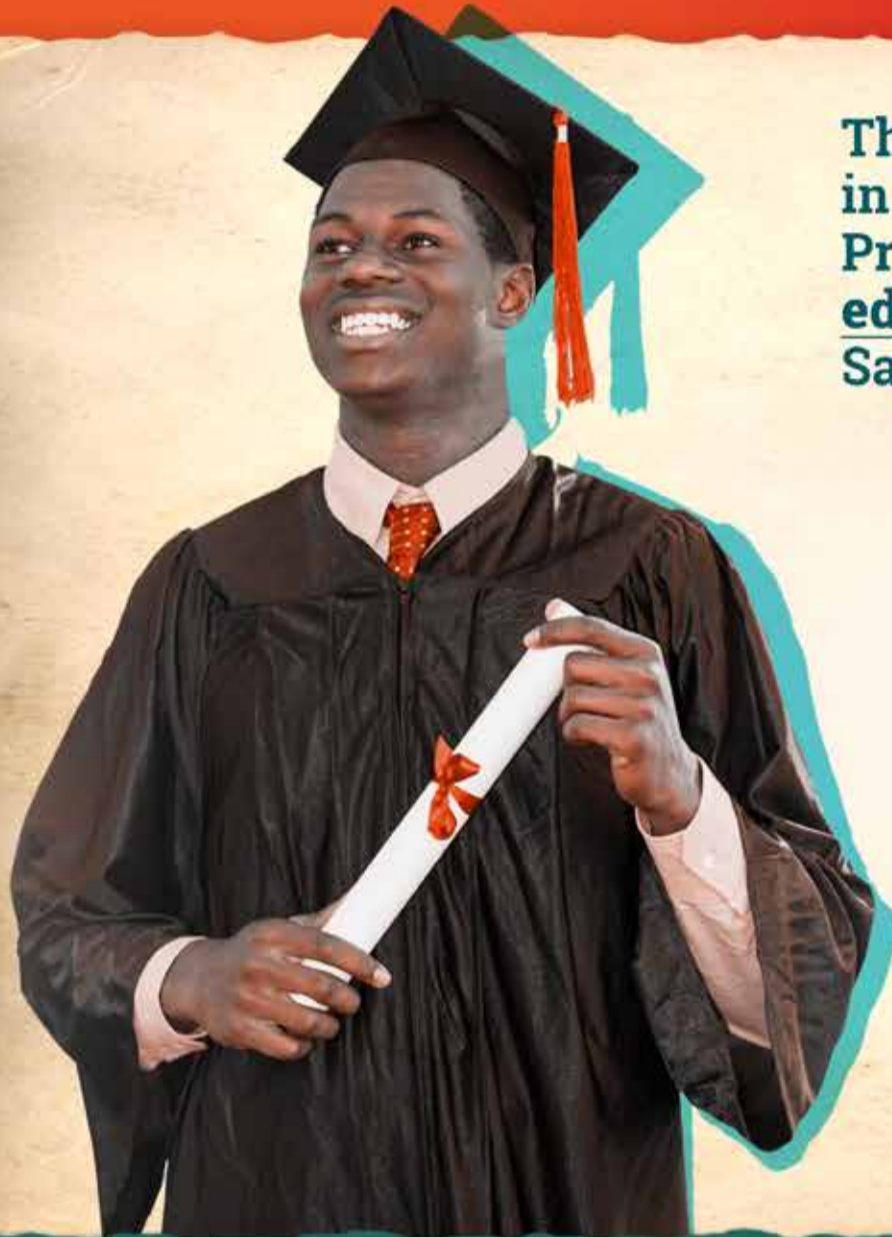
Saginaw is one of 13 communities in Michigan designated a “Promise Zone” through the Michigan Promise Zone Authority Act, enacted in 2009 by then Governor, Jennifer Granholm. The Saginaw Promise is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. The Saginaw Promise scholarship can be used at community colleges, universities and technical trade schools in the State of Michigan for tuition and mandatory fees only and is renewable up to two years. Program and operational funding are raised annually from corporate, individual, foundation donors and special events. To support the work of the Saginaw Promise and invest in Saginaw’s future through postsecondary education, visit the Saginaw Promise website; www.saginawpromise.org or telephone (989) 791-1640.

For information or how to apply for the scholarship: visit the Saginaw Promise website at www.saginawpromise.org or telephone (989) 755-0545. To make application, students, in their senior year, must complete the online Saginaw Community Foundation scholarship application at saginawfoundation.org/site/scholarships/. The scholarship is renewable up to two years and must be applied for annually. Students must also complete FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) at <https://fafsa.ed.gov>.





An Economic Initiative and investment in Saginaw's economy and quality of life!



The Saginaw Promise believes in investing in the future of Saginaw! The Saginaw Promise believes that **postsecondary education is the "change agent"** to affect Saginaw's economy and quality of life.

- ▶ The Saginaw Promise scholarship is a "residence based" scholarship; a benefit for families who live in the Saginaw Promise Zone (which includes the cities of Saginaw, Zilwaukee, Kochville and that area of Buena Vista that is designated to the Saginaw Public School District).
- ▶ The Saginaw Promise scholarship is a scholarship for students who live in and graduate from a high school in the Saginaw Promise Zone.
- ▶ The class of 2021 will be the tenth class of scholars to receive the Saginaw Promise scholarship!

A promise made and a promise kept. Since 2012, the Saginaw Promise has awarded \$1,025,049 in scholarships to 590 scholars!

Join us...Make your investment in Saginaw and the Saginaw Promise today!
Visit www.saginawpromise.org to donate or for information.

Saginaw Promise | 1 Tuscola St., Suite 100, Saginaw, MI 48607 | (989) 755-0545



+ EDUCATION



CHELDORA HAYNES



Bridgeport Spaulding Community School District Educator of the Year

Bridgeport Spaulding Community School District Educator of the Year 2021 is Ms. Cheldora Haynes, a 3rd grade teacher at Atkins Elementary School. Ms. Haynes is known throughout the community for going above and beyond for her students and co-workers. Her passion for learning translates into an amazing classroom environment filled with activities and fun for each and every one of her students. She is a shining example of what makes Bridgeport a School and District that truly finds every possibility to

success for her children.

From home visits to late night zoom calls to help with home work, Ms. Cheldora Haynes has really put kids first over the past year. Among her peers, Mrs. Haynes is well respected for her dedication and hard work day in and day out. It's hard to find a time when she isn't 100% focused on our Bearcat students and their family's staying engaged in high quality, and fun learning activities that are always accompanied by the most infectious smile and enthusiasm

(this year her smile has been hidden by masks and still you can tell!).

Congratulations to Ms. Cheldora Haynes on her nomination and selection as the 2021 Bridgeport Spaulding Community School District Educator of the Year award. Ms. Haynes will be publicly honored at the Best of the Best Awards on March 10, sponsored by the Bridgeport Birch Run Chamber of Commerce. Please join me in recognizing her as she represents Bridgeport and Atkins Elementary School.



About Saginaw ISD HE/EHS

Established in 1965, Head Start promotes school readiness for children, ages three to five, in low-income families by offering educational, nutritional, health, social and other services.

Head Start programs promote school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children through the provision of educational, health, nutritional, social and other services to enrolled children and families.

Early Head Start, launched in 1995, provides support to low-income infants, toddlers,

pregnant women and their families.

EHS programs enhance children's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development; assist pregnant women to access comprehensive prenatal and postpartum care; support parents' efforts to fulfill their parental roles; and help parents move toward self-sufficiency.

Together Head Start and Early Head Start have served tens of millions of children and their families.

At Saginaw ISD Head Start our attentive staff is available Monday through Friday to answer all your questions and make every effort to ensure you are 100 percent satisfied.

Saginaw ISD Head Start
Claytor Administrative Building
3200 Perkins Street
Saginaw, MI 48601
Phone 989.752.2193
Fax 989.921.7146

Office Hours
Monday: 8 AM - 4:30 PM
Tuesday: 8 AM - 4:30 PM
Wednesday: 8 AM - 4:30 PM
Thursday: 8 AM - 4:30 PM
Friday: 8 AM - 4:30 PM
Saturday: 8 AM - 4:30 PM
Sunday: 8 AM - 4:30 PM

For additional information concerning Saginaw ISD Head Start visit: www.saginawheadstart.org

Source: www.saginawheadstart.org



Sabrina Beeman-Jackson

Saginaw ISD Head Start/Early Head Start Program Director

“Head Start graduates are more likely to graduate from high school and less likely to need special education, repeat a grade, or commit crimes in adolescence.”

Joe Baca, former Dem. Calif. Congrmn., Dist. 43.

“Our mission is to provide high quality services, developing school readiness and family empowerment for prenatal to age five children and families by working in partnership with parents and the community.”
-Saginaw ISD HE/EHS

+ BUSINESS

GM and Flint & Genesee Chamber announce a second round of Moving Flint Forward Small Business Grant recipients

General Motors and the Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce recently announced that 15 small businesses in Flint were awarded a total of \$150,000 from the Moving Flint Forward Small Business Grant Program. It is the second round of grants from the GM-funded initiative, which supports revitalization efforts across the city's neighborhoods by strengthening local businesses.

The grantees comprise a range of businesses, including: a hardware store, fitness facility, computer repair shop, a custom jewelry boutique, a bookstore, an online retailer, childcare facilities, restaurants, and personal and professional services. Of the grantees, 80 percent – 12 of the 15 – are minority-owned enterprises. To help address racial disparities in the community, GM had earmarked at least 10 of the grants for minority-owned businesses, as defined by race and ethnicity.

“We’re thrilled to extend our support of this innovative program into a second year,” said Terry Rhadigan, GM’s executive director of corporate giving. “The Moving Flint Forward Small Business Grant Program is successful because it helps small businesses build resilience and create inclusive and sustainable solutions to common problems.”

“On behalf of our small business community and the people they employ, I again say thank you to General Motors for its investments in Flint and Genesee County,” said Chamber CEO Tim Herman. “The grants announced today will do much to strengthen Flint’s small-business sector, particularly for our minority-owned and neighborhood businesses.”

The Moving Flint Forward (MFF) grants must be used to support existing

operations, such as financing expansion plans, making repairs and leasehold improvements, purchasing inventory and equipment, or making façade improvements.

The recipients are:

- The Historic Bryant’s Barbershop
- Cafe Rhema
- CompuNinjas (computer repair)
- Beauchamp Ace Hardware
- Curtis Accounting & Tax Services
- Flint Trading Company
- Bella LLC (a food truck)
- Prism Lacquers (an online nail polish retailer)
- Sal’s Gym LLC
- Yum Vittles
- Comma Bookstore & Social Hub
- A Kut Above Barbershop
- MaMang
- Sunny Patch Learning Center
- Sweet Tee’s Kid Spa
- MFF Grantees: Business Profiles

Technical assistance will be provided to assist with the implementation and tracking of grant activities to ensure requirements are met and businesses are

using funds appropriately. Grantees will also be connected to resources to help bolster the capacity of their businesses beyond the grant period. Grantees will have access to networking opportunities and workshops on various topics, such as online digitization of services/goods, leadership styles, navigating access to capital, workers’ compensation and labor laws.

More than 80 businesses applied for this latest round, which was announced in December 2020. The applications were evaluated by a review panel comprised of representatives from GM, the Flint & Genesee Chamber, the City of Flint, local grant-making organizations, community organizations and a business owner who was a 2019 grant recipient. Grants were awarded on a competitive basis.

The program was open to anyone who owns and operates a small business within the city of Flint. The business could have up to 25 employees and could not be a franchise operation.

In December 2019, a different group of 15 small businesses in Flint were awarded a total of \$150,000 from the grant program.

“From the capital investments in its automotive operations here to its corporate philanthropy that greatly impacts the lives of our residents and institutions, GM continues to be an invaluable corporate citizen and partner in our region’s progress,” said Herman.

More information about the Moving Flint Forward Small Business Grant Program is available at FlintandGenesee.org/Moving-Flint-Forward.



+ BUSINESS

COURTESY PHOTO

Be Our Guest: Genesee County hotels seek to fill open positions at virtual job fair

As the hospitality industry approaches its busy season in Genesee County, 10 area hotels will meet with job seekers during the Flint & Genesee Virtual Hospitality Job Fair—the first in a series of industry-specific job fairs to be hosted by the Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce in 2021.

The job fair, which will be held Thursday, April 8, 2021 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., follows a tumultuous year for the hospitality industry. As of December 2020, 63 percent of Michigan hotels reported they had fewer than half of their typical staff working full-time due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, according to a survey from the Michigan Restaurant and Lodging Association. Now, with social distancing protocols loosening and several conventions and sporting events scheduled soon, local hotels are finding themselves with multiple positions to fill.

“While many challenges remain for tourism and hospitality, reports show that the hotel industry will begin to rebound starting this year,” said Alaina Wiens, director of the Flint & Genesee Convention & Visitors Bureau at the Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce. “However, for our

hotels to take part in that recovery, it’s critical that they be fully staffed so they can continue to deliver exceptional service and meet the needs of our visitors.”

According to Wiens, the virtual job fair aims to support local hotels by giving them a platform to meet with job seekers. There, they can discuss job opportunities including banquet, front desk, housekeeping and executive housekeeping, laundry, maintenance, night audit, restaurant servers and shuttle drivers.

Employers participating in the event include:

- Courtyard by Marriott Flint Grand Blanc
- Fairfield Inn & Suites by Marriott Flint Fenton
- Fairfield Inn & Suites by Marriott Flint Grand Blanc
- Hampton Inn and Suites Flint/Grand Blanc
- Hilton Garden Inn Flint Downtown
- Holiday Inn Express & Suites Grand Blanc
- Holiday Inn Flint – Grand Blanc

Area

- Home2 Suites by Hilton Grand Blanc Flint
- Hyatt Place Flint/Grand Blanc
- Residence Inn by Marriott Flint Grand Blanc

Not only are these types of jobs important to supporting an industry critical to our economic health, but they can also serve as the first step in a meaningful career path. Just ask Courtney Neely, who originally served as a front desk agent for the Holiday Inn Flint – Grand Blanc Area while studying social work at Michigan State University in the mid-2000s. She loved the job so much that she ended up staying in the industry, where she has since held several positions, including general manager and operational manager, at multiple properties over the course of the last 12 years.

“You always start somewhere in hospitality and then you grow like a tree into the different branches, depending on what parts interests you,” said Neely, who is now dual director of sales at the Residence Inn by Marriott-Flint/Grand Blanc Area and Courtyard by Marriott Flint Grand Blanc. “Even was I was working front desk at the beginning, I showed that I had an interest in sales and asked to be cross-trained on certain things. That kind of initiative really helps in your career growth.”

And according to Neely, that’s not an uncommon story for hospitality employees: “You’re never going to meet a general manager that came fresh out of college—everyone starts at the front desk or someplace similar.”

To help prepare job seekers for the event, the Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce will offer preparation resources in the weeks leading up to the virtual job fair. This includes resume-writing and interview refresher courses on March 27, March 29, March 30 and March 31. Attendees may sign up for one or both sessions during the registration process, although participation in the workshops is not required to attend the job fair.

Given the virtual format of the event, space is limited and registration is required to attend. To register by the April 5 deadline, visit flintandgenesee.org/jobfair.

+ BUSINESS

Jolt Credit Union building new administrative Building in Saginaw



JOLT CREDIT UNION RENDERING

Jolt Credit Union is investing in a new administrative building in Saginaw.

The 28,000 square foot building will be built adjacent to its State St. location

with a tentative groundbreaking ceremony taking place this April. Designed by TSSF Architects, Inc., construction will be done by Spence Brothers.

The building will unite more than 40 team members from five departments who were operating from separate buildings and locations. The goal is to improve communication and collaboration within the business. The building will also feature a training and conference area for financial literacy community programs and periodic all-staff training after indoor gathering restrictions are lifted. Areas where team members worked beforehand will be repurposed for additional member service space.

Construction of the new administration building is expected to be finished by the summer of 2022.

You can learn more about Jolt Credit Union at joltcu.com.

ABC Greater Michigan members named a top-performing U.S. construction company by ABC

ABC Greater Michigan Chapter today announced three member companies were named to Associated Builders and Contractors' 2021 Top Performers list, which recognizes ABC member contractors' in safety, quality, diversity, project excellence and special designations, ranked by work hours. Published as a supplement to Construction Executive magazine, the ABC Top Performers lists identify the Top 200 Performers, Top 75 Trade Contractors, Top Electrical Contractors, Top Plumbing/HVAC Contractors, Top Specialty Contractors and Top 100 General Contractors and Top General Contractors Up to \$50 million, all of which have earned the elite Accredited Quality Contractor credential, as well as the Top Performers With Special Designations.

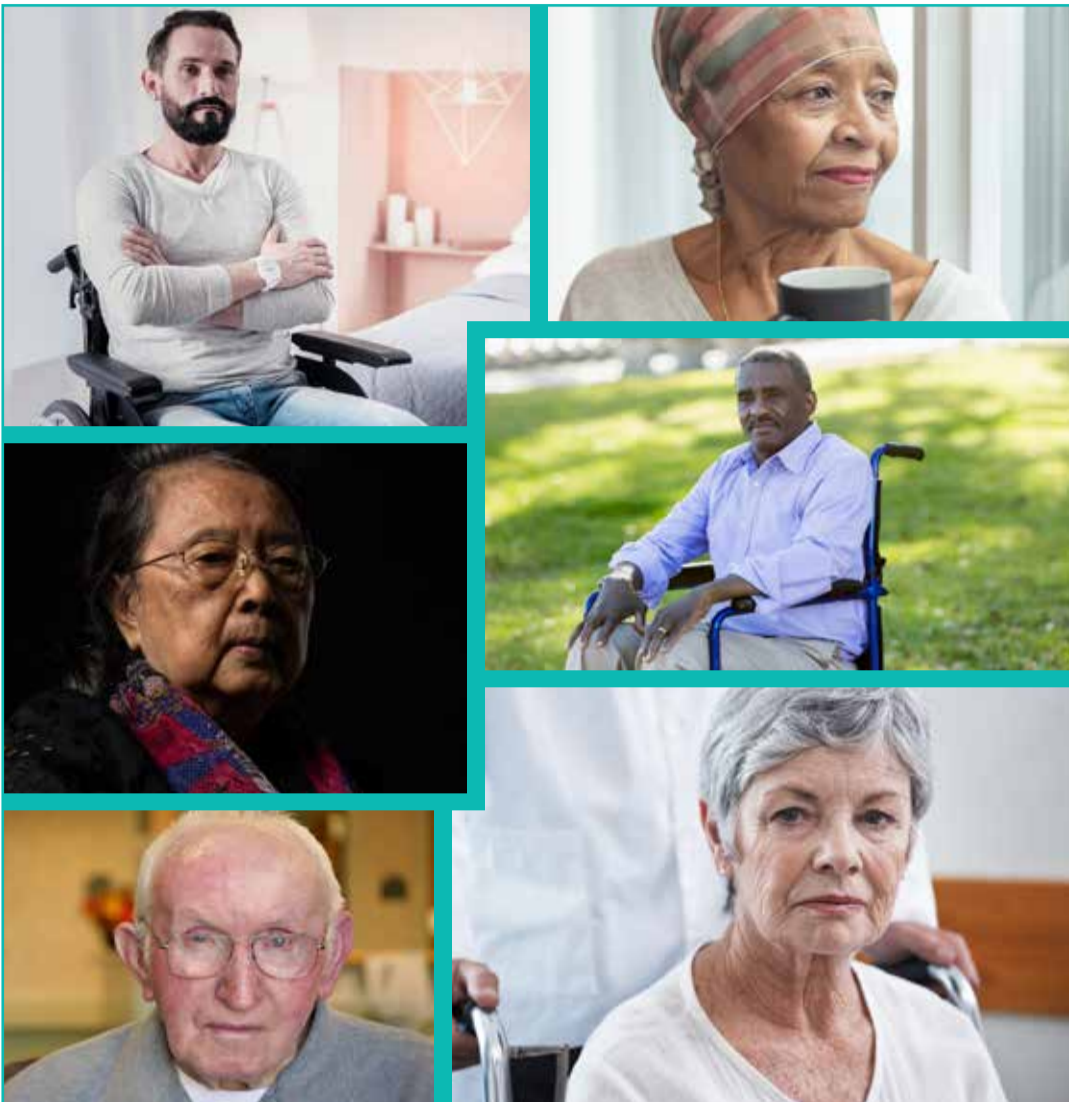
"We applaud Alloy Construction

Service, Inc., Architectural Metals, Inc. and Blasy Electric, Inc. for their commitment to safety and the community. Our members strive to put safety first and always be a productive worksite in their respective trade. We are proud of their efforts every day," said Angela Madarang, president of ABC Greater Michigan Chapter.

To be eligible, ABC Greater Michigan members demonstrated world-class safety performance by achieving Gold status or higher in ABC's STEP Safety Management System, which makes the top-performing contractors up to 655% safer than the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics industry average, according to the ABC 2021 Safety Performance Report. The Top Performers were ranked by size based on the number of hours worked in 2019, as reported in their 2020 STEP applications. ABC

members that earn the AQC credential certify their commitment to quality, safety, craft and management education, talent management, inclusion, diversity and equity and community relations.

"The common priorities in our third annual list of ABC Top Performers include culture, safety, innovation, workforce development and driving market value," said Michael Bellaman, president and chief executive officer of ABC. "Collaboration and adaptation created a safer, more productive jobsite and workplace for Greater Michigan Chapter members, and I applaud these association leaders for setting the standard in developing people, winning work and delivering that work safely, ethically and profitably."




No one should have to face this pandemic alone.

34,000 job opportunities are available for caregivers.

In their faces, you may see your mother. Your grandfather. Your neighbor. If you have the heart of a caregiver, someone needs you. Due to this pandemic, there is a critical shortage of caregivers. Whether you have a few hours a week to spare to pick up groceries or make meals, or can give care full-time, earn income while making a difference.

Register at ConnectToCareJobs.com.






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+ FUNDRAISING GOODTIMES

Growing a diverse donor base

PART TWO OF A TWO-PART SERIES

By MEL AND PEARL SHAW

While paying close attention to historic donors, organizations need to simultaneously cultivate new audiences, build relationships, and grow new donors.

Organizational changes in governance, culture and fundraising start at the board. Staff and funders can play an important role in challenging who governs and who provides funding, but ultimately it is the board's responsibility to set the tone and make policy that informs culture. It is a balancing act: how does an organization deliver on its mission while in the midst of change that may not be embraced by all. Especially when "all" includes members of the board or funders.

Here are a few suggestions for walking into change. Make diversity, equity, and inclusion priorities for the board. Allocate time to ongoing conversations on the meaning and impact of diversity at all levels within your organization. Define what these terms mean for your nonprofit; take a baseline measurement of where you are today; and reach agreement on quantifiable milestones. Importantly, engage someone from outside your board who has experience to facilitate conversations and help you see what you may not be seeing.

This is about racial equity. It's also about addressing sexism, anti-LGBT sentiment; the intersection of religion

and public policy; changing demographics and more. Nonprofits have to balance the power and voices of funders, board members, people served, and those not served. It's about change, and how change impacts our economics.

Organizational leaders need to analyze what the financial impact of a specific change might be. They need to look at how to increase gifts, grants and donations as they grow, and how to mitigate an anticipated or unanticipated loss of funding.

One way to do this is to examine who is giving to your organization and at what levels; that includes paying close attention to major donors. These are individuals, foundations, or institutions that provide a majority of funding and who can be difficult to replace. They can represent years, if not generations, of cultivation and relationship building. Most didn't become major donors overnight. Many have also given time, resources and relationships.

At the same time we all have to focus

on cultivating tomorrow's leaders and major donors. That means allocating time and resources to this work even if it won't "pay off" for years or generations. And it starts with the board.

An organization cannot "demand" that fundraisers diversify their fundraising. They must first build diversity and equity into the very DNA of the nonprofit. This should be done with care and the goal of keeping all parties at the table including long-term donors and those new to the organization.

Fundraising – and diversity and equity – must be grounded in an organization's strategic plan and the very core of its programming, leadership, and community engagement: building a diverse donor base is a strategic priority and not something communicated and driven by fundraisers without full organizational support. The board is ultimately responsible for the financial health of the organization – it's a challenge but one that all of us are up



Copyright 2021 – Mel and Pearl Shaw

Mel and Pearl Shaw are authors of four books on fundraising available on Amazon.com. For help growing your fundraising visit www.saadandshaw.com or call (901) 522-8727.

+ CHURCH DIRECTORY

B



Bethel AME Church
Rev. Dennis Laffoon
535 Cathay St.
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-755-7011



Bethlehem Temple Church of the Apostolic Faith
District Elder Curtis E. Johnson, Pastor
3521 Webber St
Saginaw, Michigan 48601
989-755-8381



Bread of Life Harvest Center
Senior Pastor Rodney J. McTaggart
3726 Fortune Blvd.
Saginaw, MI 48603
989-790-7933

C

Christ Disciples Baptist Church
Founder Pastor Eddie Benson
Pastor Genevieve Benson
3317 Lapeer Street
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-754-2444

Christ Fellowship Baptist Church
Rev. Robert Davis, Jr.
818 N. Washington Ave.
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-754-4435
PastorD818@gmail.com

F



Faith Harvest Church
Bishop Ronald E. Chipp
1734 N. Mason
Saginaw, MI 48602
989-799-4200
faithharvestministry.org
office@faithharvestministry.org



Faith Ministries Church
Dr. Anthony Revis
3420 E Ashman St.
Midland, MI 48642
989-837-7777
faithministrieschurch.org

G



Glimpse Of Hope Ministries
Pastor Leslie D Lewis
2211 S. Outer Dr.
Saginaw Michigan 48601
989-755-9237
g.ministries@aol.com

Grace Chapel Church
Pastor James Nelson
2202 Janes Ave.
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-755-3212



Greater Renaissance
Pastor Cedric R. Cheatham
1535 S. Warren Ave.
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-752-1455
260-515-6456

Greater Williams Temple
608 E Remington St
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-755-5291

J



Jacob's Ladder
Bishop Elect Dempsey Allen
1926 Fairfield Street
Saginaw, MI 48602
989-799-6601

L

Life in Christ Ministries
Pastor Dennis Cotton, Sr.
2915 S. Washington Road
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-401-4465
LifeInChristMinistries07@gmail.com

M

Messiah Missionary Baptist Church
Pastor Otis Washington
2615 Williamson Road
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-777-2636
Fax: 989-777-2640
messiahmbc@att.net
messiahsag.org



Mt. Olive Baptist Church
Pastor Marvin T. Smith
1114 N. 6th Street
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-752-8064

N



New Beginnings Deliverance Ministry
Pastor Roy & Evelyn Baldwin
2609 E. Genesee
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-777-8272
Pastorbaldwin@charter.net

New Beginnings Life Changing Ministries
Pastor Otis Dickens
2312 S. Washington Ave.
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-755-3650



New Birth Missionary Baptist
Pastor Larry D. Camel
3121 Sheridan
Saginaw, Michigan
989-327-1755



New Covenant Christian Center
Pastor Ron Frierson
2395 S. Outer Drive
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-752-8485



New Hope Missionary Baptist Church
Rev. Dr. Willie F. Casey
1721 Tuscola Street
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-753-7600

New Life Baptist Ministries
Dr. Craig Tatum
1401 Janes Ave.
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-753-1151
newlifelcm.com

New Mt. Calvary Baptist Church
Pastor Alfred "AJ" Harris Jr.
3610 Russel St.
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-754-0801

New Way Ministries
Pastor Dwight & Princess Dobbins
29200 Shiawassee St.
Farmington Hills, MI 48336
(248) 987-2434
thenewwayministry.org

P

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

R



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

S



Saginaw Valley Community Church
Pastor Richard Sayad
3660 Hermansau
Saginaw, MI 48603
989-752-4769



Saint Paul Baptist Church
Rev. Dr., Vincent D. McMillon
120 North 15 St.
Saginaw, MI. 48601
stpaul2@yahoo.com
Facebook: St Paul MBC Family Connection



Second Baptist Church
Pastor-Elect Marcelle T. Smith
1770 W. Youngs Ditch Rd.
Bay City, MI 48708
989-893-8631

St. John Ev. Lutheran Church
Pastor Carl Ballard
915 Federal Avenue
Saginaw, MI 48607
989-754-0489
stjohnlutheranelcasaginaw.weebly.com

T



Transforming Life Ministries
Pastor William Brown
523 Hayden
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-754-9573



True Vine Baptist Church
Pastor Paul E. Broaddus
2930 Janes Street
Saginaw, MI 48601
989-752-0751

V



Victorious Belivers Ministries Church
Pastor Chris V. Pryor
624 S. Outer Dr.
Saginaw, MI
989-755-7692

W



World Outreach Campus of Greater Coleman Temple Ministries
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+ SPORTS

MHSAA announces sites, schedule details for Winter indoor sports finals

The Michigan High School Athletic Association has confirmed sites for its indoor Winter sports championship rounds, including an adjustment for the Individual Wrestling Finals that will allow more fans to attend that event after an increase in spectators limits was put into effect March 5 by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS).

The Individual Wrestling Finals previously were announced to be competed in full at Wings Event Center in Kalamazoo. However, a change moving two divisions to Van Andel Arena in Grand Rapids will allow for more fans, primarily immediate family, to attend. Previously, wrestlers were to be limited to one spectator per participant; with multiple sites, wrestlers will be allowed multiple spectators each.

Similarly, Van Andel and the Breslin Center in East Lansing will host additional events to allow more fans to attend championship rounds in competitive cheer and girls and boys basketball. Both facilities have capacities of more than 10,000 spectators and may host up to 750 per MDHHS guidelines.

The Competitive Cheer Finals will move to Breslin Center to allow more fans to attend compared to other venues that were being considered. Semifinals in girls and boys basketball will be split by divisions between Breslin Center and Van Andel Arena, in part to provide for greater attendance and also to keep those rounds scheduled to just two locations instead of spreading games across a number of others.

The following are sites and schedules for Finals weekends for the remaining MHSAA Tournaments this winter, with further updates to be posted to the MHSAA Website (<https://www.mhsaa.com>):

Girls Basketball

Where: Division 1 and 3 Semifinals at Breslin Center in East Lansing. Division

2 and 4 Semifinals at Van Andel Arena in Grand Rapids. All four Finals will be played at Breslin Center.

When: Semifinals are April 7, with Divisions 3 and 4 beginning at 10 a.m. at their respective sites followed by Divisions 1 and 2 at 3:30 p.m. Finals on April 9 will be played at 10 a.m. (D4), 12:30 p.m. (D1), 3 p.m. (D3) and 5:30 p.m. (D2).

Boys Basketball

Where: Division 1 and 3 Semifinals at Breslin Center in East Lansing. Division 2 and 4 Semifinals at Van Andel Arena in Grand Rapids. All four Finals will be played at Breslin Center.

When: Semifinals are April 8, with Divisions 3 and 4 beginning at 10 a.m. at their respective sites followed by Divisions 1 and 2 at 3:30 p.m. Finals on April 10 will be played at 10 a.m. (D4), 12:30 p.m. (D1), 3 p.m. (D3) and 5:30 p.m. (D2).

Girls & Boys Bowling

Where: Division 1 at Thunderbowl Lanes in Allen Park, Division 2 at Century Bowl in Waterford, Division 3 at Jax 60 in Jackson and Division 4 at Super Bowl in Canton.

When: Team Finals are Friday, March 26, and Singles Finals are March 27. Both events begin at 8 a.m.

Competitive Cheer

Where: Breslin Center, East Lansing

When: Friday, March 26 – Division 3 at 10 a.m., Division 1 at 3 p.m. Saturday, March 27 – Division 2 at 10 a.m., Division 4 at 3 p.m.

Gymnastics

Where: Rockford High School

When: Team Finals on Friday, March 26, beginning at 2 p.m. Individual Finals on March 27, beginning at noon.

Ice Hockey

Where: USA Hockey Arena

When: Semifinals on Thursday, March 25, for Division 2 beginning at 4:30 p.m., and March 26 for Divisions 1 and 3 with first games for those divisions beginning at 10 a.m. and 1:30 p.m., respectively. All three Finals will be played March 27, at 11 a.m. (D2), 3 p.m. (D3) and 7 p.m. (D1).

Boys Swimming & Diving – Lower Peninsula

Where: Division 1 at Hudsonville High School, Division 2 at Jenison High School, Division 3 at Hamilton High School (diving) and Holland Aquatic Center (swimming).

When: Diving on Friday, March 26, and all swimming Finals are March 27. Start times are being determined.

Girls & Boys Swimming & Diving – Upper Peninsula

Where: Marquette High School

When: Diving this Friday, March 12, 2:35 p.m. Swimming is Saturday, March 13, beginning at 11:05 a.m.

Wrestling – Team

Where: Wings Event Center in Kalamazoo, Divisions 2 and 4 in the Arena and Divisions 1 and 3 in the Valley for pre-Finals rounds. All Finals in the Arena.

When: March 30. Quarterfinals will be followed by Semifinals and Finals, with start times to be determined.

Wrestling – Individual

Where: Divisions 1 and 3 at Wings Event Center in Kalamazoo. Divisions 2 and 4 at Van Andel Arena in Grand Rapids.

When: Divisions 2 and 3 on Friday, April 2. Divisions 1 and 4 on Saturday, April 3. Starts times are being determined.

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VOLUME 3 • NUMBER 6

On the Job: Ross McEacheron V



ROSS MCEACHERON V

Grand Blanc High School graduate Ross McEacheron V is working hard toward his dream career in human resources. Currently studying at the University of Michigan-Flint for a double major in human resource management and marketing, McEacheron has found many opportunities to build his skill set outside of school.

“I was working as a manager of a pizza place when I applied for a project manager position at 100K Ideas (a nonprofit with a mission to help innovators launch their businesses),” says McEacheron. “While working there, I connected with individuals in the Office of Economic Development at the University of Michigan-Flint, which is how I got a position there.”

McEacheron works as a research assistant for the UM-Flint office now, but he didn’t stop there.

“Through networking virtually, I was able to get a co-op position with Emerson Commercial & Residential Solutions working in human resources,” says McEacheron. “I am currently working on their employee relations department.

Then, after May, I will work with the talent acquisition department.”

McEacheron, who’s also a TeenQuest alum, hopes these steps will help him find a career in human resources – a field that he believes will challenge him and provide new experiences each day.

What does a typical day look like for you?

For my job at Emerson, I start my day by deciding what projects I should focus on. Then, I collaborate with departments and employees to figure out solutions for my projects. I do a lot of data analysis and interpretation. After that, with my research assistant job. There, I work with the team on a variety of projects.

How did the lessons learned in TeenQuest help you on your path to where you are now?

One of the biggest lessons was communication. I was nervous before TeenQuest but practicing interviewing

and public speaking really helped me get to where I am today.

What skills do you use from TeenQuest when interviewing for a position?

Practicing group interviewing. It is something that is much more prevalent than I thought.

What advice would you offer current TeenQuest students?

Work on communications skills and make sure you network. You may meet one person and think you’ll never meet them again, but chances are you will.

What is your proudest moment since TeenQuest?

Making it this far, especially during a pandemic, as far as continuing my education and being able to work at Emerson and the Economic Development Office.

LOCAL TEEN SPOTLIGHT:

Quintaja Hayes

GRADE: 12TH // AGE: 17

SCHOOL:
ARTHUR HILL HIGH SCHOOL AND
SAGINAW CAREER COMPLEX
CULINARY PROGRAM



QUINTAJA HAYES

have that looks like a galaxy and has tiny specks on it like glitter.

How long have I been baking:

I have been baking since I was 10 years old, so about 7 going on 8 years now.

What I make:

I specialize in cakes, cookies, cupcakes, party treats and much more. Everything I make is made from scratch.

How I got started:

Growing up one of my biggest influencers was my granddad, Al Holiday. He used to make lots of homemade recipes that I enjoyed to try and help prepare. After dinner I always wanted something sweet but my grandfather was never a baker. So around the age of 10 I ventured off into the baking field to try something different. With the help of a few baking shows like Nerdy Nummies, Cake Boss, and Cupcake Wars my passion for baking started to grow. As I grew older mentors came along the way. I made my first German Chocolate cake with my grandma's best friend Deborah Williams. A few years later I met 3 fantastic ladies who I will forever remember. Levetta Garcia, Alandya Taylor, and Lucinda Taylor who welcomed me into their home with open arms to pursue my dream. They were the most kind and sweetest people you could ever meet. They were the ones who always had something baked when you came over. Whether it was a Tea Cake, Pecan Pie, or a Triple Chocolate Cake there was always something there.

Other hobbies:

Playing volleyball, watching movies, traveling, and spending time with family

Where I can be reached:

I can be reached on my Facebook business page 'Galaxy Glitter'

Parents:

Quincy and Brandi Hayes

in Louisville Kentucky studying Baking and Pastry

Church and Pastor:

Zion Missionary Baptist Church
pastor Rodrick A Smith

Business:

I currently own a baking business known as "Galaxy Glitter Gourmet Treats".

After graduation plans:

I plan to attend Sullivans University

How I came up with the name:

The name came from a cutting board I



PICS OF THE WEEK LOCAL COVID VACCINATION EVENT

New Birth Missionary Baptist Church partnered with Great Lakes Bay Health Centers to host a covid-19 vaccination event, administering hundreds of vaccination shots to people in the Saginaw community.



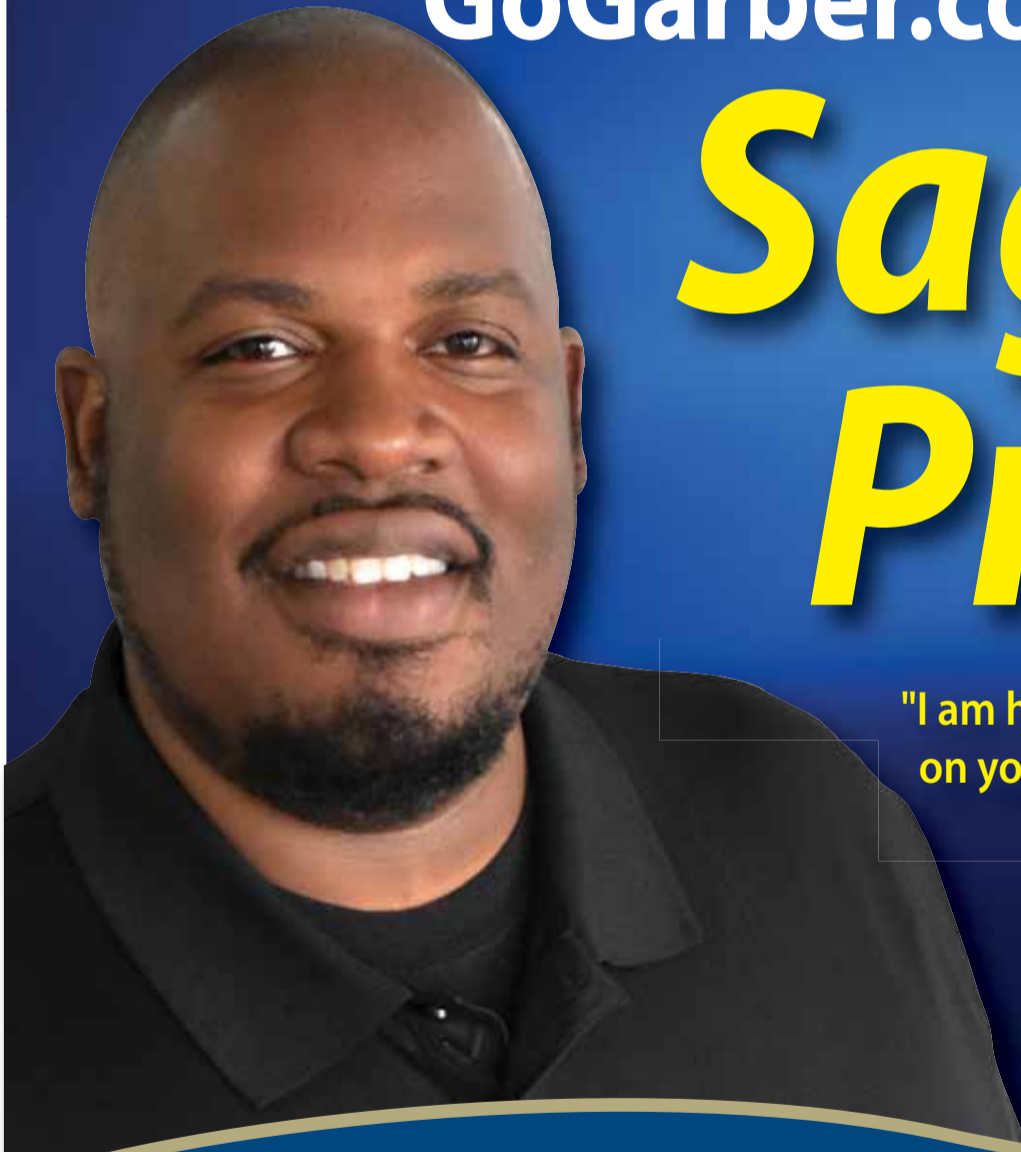
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Brittany Saunders is ready to pay it forward. The Chicago native enrolled at SVSU with ambitions to pursue a teaching career. Brittany was encouraged and invigorated by other passionate educators who worked closely with her to ensure she would accomplish her goals. And she is. Even before she was set to graduate, Brittany could boast a résumé with a paid internship in a school district along with K-12 classroom experience. **Now she can't wait to begin a professional career, inspiring students with the same kind of one-on-one attention she received from her professors at SVSU.**



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