

"If American women would increase their voting turnout by ten percent, I think we would see an end to all of the budget cuts in programs benefiting women and children."

- Coretta Scott King



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SERVING THE BLACK COMMUNITY WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOR SINCE 1947

April 25 - May 1, 2024

Rep. Ilhan Omar's Daughter Suspended from Barnard College Over Pro-Palestinian Protests



Isra Hirsi - Photo Credit: NNPA Files.

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior National Correspondent
@StacyBrownMedia

Representative, Ilhan Omar (D-MN) speaking at a Hillary for MN event at the U of MN, October 2018.
(Photo Credit : Lorie Shaul / Wikimedia Commons)

Isra Hirsi, the daughter of Democratic Minnesota Rep. Ilhan Omar, has been suspended from Barnard College for her involvement in pro-Palestinian demonstrations at Columbia University. Hirsi, a junior at Barnard in New York City, announced her suspension on social media, stating she was one of three students penalized for supporting Palestinians.

"I've received notice that I am one of three students

suspended for standing in solidarity with Palestinians facing genocide," Hirsi wrote on her social media platform. She highlighted her involvement with Columbia University Apartheid Divest and her clean disciplinary record during her three years at Barnard.

The suspension comes after Omar's constant calls for a ceasefire. Earlier this

Continue Omar Page 3

Texas families could lose at-home nursing under stricter Medicaid rule

Some children who receive private duty nursing, a more continuous type of medical care in their homes, could lose their ability to live at home if an HHSC rule change goes into effect.

BY NEELAM BOHRA/Texas Tribune



JaReen Williams adjusts an iPad for her 16-year-old daughter, Lydia, so she can watch one of her comfort shows "Charlie Brown" in preparation for the treatment she undergoes three times a week by a nurse.

Credit: Annie Mulligan for The Texas Tribune

As Komika Sales returns home from work, her son's nurse completes his evening routine — giving him his last medications, connecting him to his ventilation machine. After the nurse leaves, Sales and her son gather on the couch, giggling together as he uses his iPad or plays with

blocks.

A stricter rule from Texas' human services agency might make their bedtime ritual impossible. Her 16-year-old son could no longer receive nursing — therefore taking away his ability to live at home.

"It's awful because the

whole goal is to keep him at home," Sales said of her son, Micahi Neal.

A proposed rule change from the state's Health and Human Services Commission would not allow an adult "to be away from the home for any period of time" whenever a nurse is

providing services, according to documents obtained by The Texas Tribune.

Medicaid offers Neal more than 150 hours of "private duty nursing" per week, the type of care that the proposal would affect. Private

Continue Lose Page 2

President Biden Signs Legislation Banning TikTok

President Joe Biden signed a bill on Wednesday approving the ban of TikTok, adding significant pressure on the platform to find a new owner.

By Stacy M. Brown

TikTok, the clock is ticking on the popular social media app's existence in the United States. President Joe Biden signed a bill on Wednesday approving the ban of TikTok, adding significant pressure on the platform to find a new owner.

The legislation, part of a broader foreign aid package supporting Israel and Ukraine, passed the House with a decisive 352-65 vote last week and received Senate approval on Tuesday. The Protecting Americans from Foreign Adversary Controlled Applications Act is the most severe threat to TikTok since U.S. officials first raised concerns in 2020.

Under the new law, TikTok's Chinese parent company, ByteDance, has 270 days to sell TikTok to a non-Chinese entity. Failure to comply would result in TikTok's removal from U.S. app stores and restrictions on "internet hosting services" supporting the platform, lim-

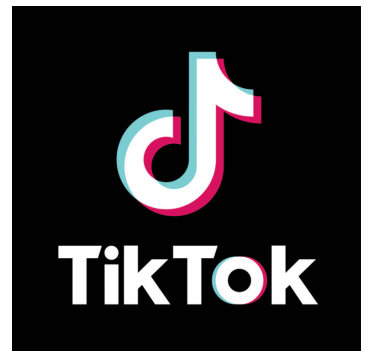


Photo Credit: NNPA Files

iting its accessibility to new users and interactions with its content.

Biden set the sale deadline for January 19, 2025, with an option to extend it by another 90 days if progress is made toward a sale. This could grant TikTok up to a year before facing a ban. TikTok CEO Shou Chew responded defiantly to the legislation, assuring users in a video message, "Rest assured: we aren't going anywhere." Chew stated, "We are confident and will keep fighting

Continue TikTok Page 5

President Biden to Deliver Commencement Address at Morehouse College

By Stacy M. Brown,
NNPA Newswire Senior National Correspondent@StacyBrownMedia
Photo Credit: NNPA Files



President Joe Biden plans to deliver the commencement address at Morehouse College on May 19, a significant event as he seeks to strengthen ties with the diverse coalition that played a pivotal role in his election to the White House.

The White House confirmed Biden's participation on Tuesday, following his planned address to the United States

Military Academy at West Point on May 25. The Morehouse address marks the second consecutive year Biden will address the graduating class of a prominent historically Black institution, having spoken at Howard University in 2023.

Morehouse College is renowned for its storied history and legacy of

Continue Biden Page 5



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EDITORIAL PAGE

~ It Is Official ~ America Is In A Political Ball of Confusion

By James B. Ewers Jr. Ed.D.



James B. Ewers Jr. Ed.D.

Being in the 4th quarter of my life has given me a perspective about what is happening in today's world. I have seen a lot and read a lot about the challenges of everyday life.

I was taught at an early age to treat all people with dignity and respect regardless of their station in life. Another life lesson that has remained with me is that there are no shortcuts to success. You must put in the time and the work to get better, no matter your craft or profession.

Many years ago, I was a college student-athlete. Practice was the only way I got better. There were no cheers or applause. The bright lights were off, not on! I learned that in compe-

dition, you must be noble in defeat and humble in victory.

I wonder if those tenets should apply to today's political scene. We are living in unprecedented times. The environment is distrustful, and we, the people, are discouraged.

The United States of America has now become the blue states and the red states. Everything that we do is in some way linked to whether we live in a blue state or a red state. Our united has now become our divided.

Elected politicians don't work together for the common good anymore. There is overt dislike for the other side of the aisle. Incivility is the call of the day. How did this acrimony begin? Another question at the gavel is will it last?

It is my opinion that the divisiveness was ever present when Mr. Trump was in office. During his time as president, he was a polarizing figure. Organizations that thrived on hate and racism constantly reared their ugly heads.

When he lost the bid for his reelection, he became

sour and sore. To this second, he does not believe that he lost the 2020 election. He has convinced a sizable part of America to go against well-defined practices and principles. Succinctly put, he cannot accept losing.

Voting rights, civil rights and human rights are being debated each day. Officials in many states are making efforts to disband DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) programs and activities. What we read and where we read can no longer be taken for granted. Our USA is becoming unrecognizable.

There are states (you know them) that are banning books about slavery. One governor who ran on the GOP ticket for president is shutting down all multi-cultural offices in his state. The NAACP has issued a warning saying that students should not attend state schools there.

This same governor lost a battle with Disney and at the end will lose the battle to close these vital state college and university offices.

Our beloved country is suffering a moral headache

and we have lost our sense of fairness and goodwill. Wrong has replaced right; evil has replaced good. Oh America, what are we becoming? We have the wrong people in many elected offices and their attitudes and positions are wrong for the American people.

What is the response for a person who is running for the nation's highest office, yet he is also running from courtroom to courtroom because of his poor decisions? Sad and misguided are two words that come directly to my mind. Those words apply to both the person and his followers.

Recently, the current Speaker of the House went to see the former president to get his approval. I believe Speaker Johnson sold his soul for a seat at a crumbling table. He may follow in the footsteps of former speaker, Kevin McCarthy.

The New York trial involving Mr. Trump has selected a jury and the trial is to begin on April 22nd. We will see. Sadly, this saga of alleged ill repute and illegalities by him will be with us for a while.

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Top Ladies of Distinction, Inc. Trinity West Chapter

Top Ladies of Distinction, Inc.(TLOD), Trinity West Chapter will host its first Battle of the TLOD Projects Walk-A-Thon on May 18, 2024, in Dallas, TX. This event is centered around raising funds for the March of Dimes and St. Jude organizations! More information about this event and how everyone can support it will be announced later.

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Continued Lose Page 1

duty nursing allows for more continuous services for medically complex children, and for Sales, it's made it possible for her to work outside the home as an x-ray technician and even work overtime to afford his out-of-pocket medical expenses.

If the rule change became official, Sales would have few options: to pay for an extra caregiver to stay home while she works, which she can't afford, to put her child in an institution like a skilled nursing home, or, to quit her job and stay home with the nurse at all times. Neal, who has a congenital heart defect, is paraplegic and has undergone chemotherapy for cancer needs constant care.

"If I don't work, then there's no roof," Sales said of being a single mom. "I don't have a backup plan or support system because I am the backup plan and the support system."

Medicaid offers Neal more than 150 hours of "private duty nursing" per week, the type of care that the proposal would affect. Private duty nursing allows for more continuous services for medically complex children, and for Sales, it's made it possible for her to work outside the home as an x-ray technician and even work overtime to afford his out-of-pocket medical expenses.

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"If I don't work, then there's no roof," Sales said of being a single mom. "I don't have a backup plan or support system because I am the backup plan and the support system."

Even parents who work from home fear the change could impact their ability to leave the house for any reason, such as buying groceries, going to doctors appointments or running other errands.

Thousands of families could face these crossroads if the rule change became official. More than 7,000 individuals received private duty nursing in 2022, according to the state, though that may include some adults who receive the services through other specialized health care programs.

When asked what spurred HHSC to propose the rule change, spokesperson Jennifer Ruffcorn said in a statement that they were "clarifying the existing private duty nursing rules and

policy."

According to the agency, this is how they've always interpreted the policy. Because of this, HHSC "is not setting new or different expectations about how this policy is monitored or reported," Ruffcorn said. But, advocates say, the formalized proposal could create confusion for nursing provider companies and affect families' eligibility for their services.

Nurse monitoring JaReen Williams' 16-year-old daughter can't use the bathroom on her own. She has a neurogenic bladder, colonic dysmotility and fecal impaction, so a nurse spends hours at their house helping with her catheter and bowel program. Sometimes, the entire process can take four or five hours.

Williams works from home and has her own disability. But under the rule change, she would have to bring her daughter and her daughter's nurse to doctor's appointments with her.

"If Mom has to go somewhere, and I'm in the middle of doing all this, I personally wouldn't be able to leave my patient and then follow Mom around," Ify Ozoh, the private duty nurse for Williams' daughter, said. "I can't do that. My patient comes first."

Some advocates have argued the rule change wouldn't just harm patients and their families — it also

denigrates nurses by equating the medical care they provide with child care, or suggesting another adult needs to be with the nurse at all times.

"I really don't want anyone hovering over me trying to watch what I'm doing. I know what I'm doing," Ozoh said. "I went to school for it. It will make me feel like, 'OK, don't you trust me?'"

Jessie Sage Cheng, a registered nurse and consultant, has a daughter with multiple disabilities, including cerebral palsy. But she can't care for her own daughter because of her work, and she needs someone else to monitor her daughter's medical needs.

"One of the pillars of nursing is autonomy," Sage Cheng said. "It is being able to make autonomous decisions that are in the best interest of the patient. If you make somebody else responsible for what the nurse is doing, you've just stripped them of their autonomy."

Sage Cheng said it isn't fair to call nursing care "child care" just because a parent is away.

This article has been shortened due to space.

This article originally appeared in The Texas Tribune at <https://www.texastribune.org/2024/04/19/texas-medicaid-private-nursing-children/>.

RELIGIOUS/NEWS

Paul's Concern for the Spiritual Welfare of the Thessalonian Believers

I Thessalonians 3:1-13

Part I



By Rev. Johnny Calvin Smith

In many ways, the church at Thessalonica was indeed an exemplary church. This church of Macedonia was founded by the Apostle Paul on his Second Missionary Campaign (Acts 17:1-14). Paul had many pleasant memories of the brief time that he spent with this infant church. In this brief but awesome instructional letter, Paul encourages the Thessalonian believers to continue to excel in their faith, to increase their love for one another, and to give thanks always for all things

in view of the Lord's imminent return.

As a spiritual parent, Paul was concerned that the infant church of believers would remain steadfast in their faith in view of the Imminent return of Christ. As we observe the text, it may be outlined as follows: I. The Revelation of the Believers' Troubled Condition - I Thessalonians 3:1-5; II. The Report That Brought Paul's Comfort - I Thessalonians 3:6-13.

I. The Revelation of the

Believers' Troubled Condition
I Thessalonians 3:1-5

Because of Paul's continued conflicts with the Jews, he only ministered in Thessalonica for less than a month ("three Sabbaths" Acts 17:2). And because of his tender and affectionate concern about the progress of the Thessalonian believers, Paul dispatched Timothy. Not able to return to Thessalonica due to opposition, Paul was unable to endure not knowing about

the spiritual welfare of the young believers in Thessalonica (v.1). Timothy, described as a "brother and a minister of God and fellow worker in the gospel," was sent forth with the mission to "establish" the believers and "comfort" them with regard to their faith.

The word establish means "to strengthen or make firm," and the word comfort means "to encourage or exhort" (v. 2). Paul's concern for the believers in Thessalonica was related to the persecution and suf-

fering they were experiencing. It was crucial that they be established in their faith so that they were not "moved by these afflictions" (I Thessalonians 3:3). "Moved" may simply mean "disturbed or disheartened." Paul was concerned that the afflictions would cause those who are not firmly grounded in the faith to be discouraged and become fainthearted.

After making a general statement that is true of all Christians - we are all "appointed" or destined for suffering of some kind (v.

3), Paul reminded the Thessalonian believers when he was with them to expect persecution (v. 4). Paul's grave concern was that these believers' faith would remain steadfast in the midst of the temptations of Satan (v. 5). Having discussed "The Revelation of the Believers' Troubled Condition" - I Thessalonians 3:1-5, let us observe "The Report That Brought Paul's Comfort" - I Thessalonians 3:6-13.

"May God Bless!"

Inspiration Meets Investment: Good Soil Forum Taps into the Rhythm of Entrepreneurship, Hosts One of U.S.'s Largest Seed Capital Competitions to Increase Small Business Ownership

A convergence of innovators and visionaries, including Pinky Cole, Tabitha Brown, Arian Simone, and Charles King to participate

DALLAS, April 24, 2024—T.D. Jakes Enterprises, a social impact company led by Chairman T.D. Jakes and the brainchild behind the Good Soil Movement, is looking to make North Texas home to a confluence of ideas, events, and business-related social hot spots ahead of Juneteenth and Black Music Month by bringing the annual Good Soil Forum to the AT&T Performing Arts Center in Dallas on June 13-15, 2024. The long-time entrepreneur and faith leader is utilizing the Good Soil Forum as a moment to highlight the nation's and particularly Dallas' thriving entrepreneurial, business and cultural scene in turn bringing thousands of people and millions of dollars to the area. Dallas consistently ranks near the top of annual economic studies, across the U.S. that cite the North Texas' region as being good for small business growth, small business employment and hourly earnings growth. Media credentialing is now open, and applications may be submitted online.

"Our mission within the Good Soil movement is to increase generational wealth and empowerment by nurturing the entrepreneurs that are often under-resourced," said Michael Phillips, chief operating officer of T.D. Jakes Enterprises. "The Good Soil Forum breaks the cycle of under-resourced entrepreneurs leaving events inspired but unequipped. Thriving despite limited resources, entrepreneurs inspire us. This June we'll celebrate past and present leaders who built a path for future generations. It's the first step in a multi-year plan to cultivate a thriving cultural hub for music, entrepreneurship, and innovation in Texas—a space where inspiration meets practical tools to empower business growth and lasting success."

With the theme of "The Rhythm of Entrepreneurship," this year will include inspiring keynote sessions in which entrepreneurs can hear from visionary leaders and industry trailblazers for insights empowering atten-

dees to navigate the entrepreneurial landscape with confidence and creativity. This year's featured participants, panelists in fireside chats and breakout sessions include:

- T.D. Jakes, NAACP Image award-winning philanthropist and CEO of T.D. Jakes Enterprises
- Tabitha Brown, Emmy award-winning actress and New York Times bestselling author & entrepreneur
- Pinky Cole, founder & owner of Slutty Vegan
- Arian Simone, co-founder & CEO of the Fearless Fund
- Richelieu Dennis, founder & CEO of Sundial Brands
- Charles King, founder & CEO of MACRO

Also serving as an effort to create a convergence of minds and missions, Good Soil Forum will feature educational fireside chats, breakout sessions and hands-on workshops in which business leaders can learn and participate in key conversations on a variety of topics from business planning and marketing strategies to financial management and leadership development, equipping them with practical skills and knowledge to elevate their business. The Good Soil Forum will also feature a vibrant marketplace with a diverse array of vendors, from tech startups to artisanal craftspeople, a unique opportunity to network, discover new products and services, and gain inspiration for attendees' entrepreneurial ventures.

"Stand Together Foundation is proud to partner with T.D. Jakes Enterprises to help more people realize their American Dream through entrepreneurship," said Evan Feinberg, senior vice president of Stand Together Foundation and chairman of Stand Together Foundation. "If successful, this effort will not only help many people realize their full potential but will demonstrate what's possible in this country when

we change our mindset away from what people lack and toward what they can accomplish."

T.D. Jakes Enterprises and the Stand Together community are also partnering on an ambitious national initiative to inspire new and growing entrepreneurs in under-resourced communities. The effort is centered around a peer-to-peer platform of entrepreneurs and connecting those on the platform to the coaching, technical support, services, and networks they need to grow their companies.

\$500K Capital Pitch Competition
Good Soil will feature the return of the annual Seed Capital Competition, in partnership with Wells Fargo, an opportunity designed to guide entrepreneurs through the crucial stages of business planning and pitching. To further empower minority entrepreneurs by enhancing their skills in crafting investable business plans and pitches, the competition boasts a grand total of \$500,000 in grants—increasing from last year's \$250,000, ranking it as the third-highest seed competition of its kind in the United States.

To participate, entrepreneurs must complete the intent-to-enter form in the Good Soil HQ app (free membership) by May 1, 2024, and be part of Good Soil's Grow community. The final submission deadline is May 23 after which a panel of judges will select finalists to present their pitches live on June 14. The competition will culminate in the awarding of seed grants to the top entrants, with the first-place winner receiving \$200,000 and mentorship from a leading business leader. Other awards include \$100,000 for second place, \$75,000 for third place, a \$75,000 Host award for the best entry from Dallas and a \$50,000 award for the most improved participant. Judges will evaluate submissions based on the soundness of the plan, results to date, the articulation of how the prize money will be utilized for

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Continued Omar Page 1

month, Omar and 55 other Democratic representatives sent a letter to President Biden and Secretary Blinken, urging them to halt arms assistance to Israel. An Israeli airstrike that killed seven World Central Kitchen humanitarian aid workers, including one American, served as the inspiration for the letter.

The representatives expressed deep concern over Israel's ongoing blockade of humanitarian aid to Gaza, which has exacerbated the region's descent into famine. They called for a comprehensive investigation into the airstrike and suggested withholding arms transfers to Israel until those responsible are held accountable.

The letter also highlighted the dire humanitarian situation in Gaza, where over 32,000 people have been killed since the conflict began, nearly half of whom are children. Omar and others noted that Israel's restrictions on aid flow have further intensified the crisis, with hundreds of aid trucks stranded at the Rafah border crossing due to Israeli constraints.

World Central Kitchen,

which has provided over 43 million meals to Palestinians in Gaza, has been forced to suspend its operations following the attacks on aid workers. They said the absence of this critical support will exacerbate the hunger crisis in the region.

The representatives concluded by urging the Biden Administration to reconsider its decision to approve new arms transfers to Israel, stressing the need for compliance with U.S. and international law.

"We again strongly urge you to withhold any offensive weapons transfers until the investigation into the airstrike is concluded. If it is found that this strike violated U.S. or international law, those responsible will be held accountable," Omar and others wrote. "And we again urge you to ensure that any future military assistance to Israel, including already authorized transfers, is subject to conditions to ensure it is used in compliance with U.S. and international law."

Omar has been advocating for a ceasefire since October 2023 and continues to voice her concerns over the humanitarian situation in Gaza.

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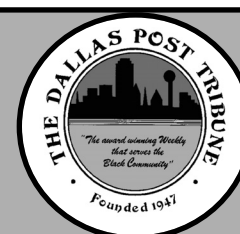
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HEALTH

STIs on the Rise: Protect Yourself!

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) like syphilis have been rapidly increasing in Dallas County since 2015, according to the 2022 Dallas County Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA).

More than 3,000 cases of syphilis were reported in 2020, and more than 688 people were diagnosed with HIV in Dallas County the same year. Statewide, 685 cases of congenital (newborn) syphilis were reported in 2021, according to the Texas Department of State Health Services, the highest one-year total to date.

“STIs are increasing, and most people who have STIs do not have symptoms. The only way to know you have an STI is to be tested regularly,” said Helen King, MD, infectious disease specialist at Parkland Health and assistant professor in the Division of Infectious Diseases and Geographic Medicine at The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center.

April is STI Awareness Month, but Parkland Health experts want to remind you that we offer testing, treatment, and STI education year-round throughout our health system, including at our 16 Community Oriented Primary Care (COPC) health centers and through our Access to Care & Coverage Program, which brings Parkland to a neighborhood near you.

“Parkland is committed to reducing STIs in our community by empowering our community members to take control of their sexual wellness,” said Dr. King. “Getting tested, getting treated, and talking to your provider and partners about options to protect your sexual wellness can keep you safe and healthy.”

Having an STI can increase your chances of acquiring HIV, according to Dr. King, who adds that anyone who is having sex should learn about their options to prevent STIs and HIV, including testing, condoms, and PrEP, the medication that prevents HIV.

For information about sexual health, STIs, testing, and treatment options, visit parklandhealth.org/sexual-health.

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Continued Forum Page 3

business growth, and the quality of presentation. The Good Soil Movement Good Soil is dedicated to creating more than 1 million under-resourced entrepreneurs in the next 10 years by providing networking and solutions for growing and scaling businesses. The inaugural Good Soil event held in Orlando last year brought more than 2,500 entrepreneurs together and organically had about 5,000 small business owners and entrepreneurs during that time join the Good Soil network. Currently the Good Soil app has more than 20,000 members and is continuing to grow by providing tangible things that are helping entrepreneurs grow. Wells Fargo, Stand Together Foundation, Travel and Leisure are all official partners of this year's event.

For more information on the 2024 Good Soil Forum, speakers and registration visit: www.prekindle.com/event/23773-good-soil2024-dallas.

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Quinn Minute

Have people improved?

By Rix Quinn

Have people evolved much? We humans possess remarkable powers. We can walk, run, swim, and even fly (if we hold a boarding pass). Other creatures aren't so adaptable. Fish can swim but walk poorly. Birds can fly but often misjudge altitude and end up as hood ornaments. Some snakes can squeeze you to death...but who wants an affectionate

reptile? Bears possess power but hibernate all winter and miss some great parties. Rabbits multiply quickly, but can't understand other math. Amoebas divide, but separate from their better halves. Beavers build constantly, but live a dam hard life. Wild pigs are unpredictable, and can boar you senseless. Turtles appear gentle, but rarely come out of their shells. However, animals can

learn by trial and error. Scientists discovered that many beasts can master complicated tricks if rewarded with food. I also love to be rewarded with food and I have personally mastered many complicated recipes. Over the centuries, folks have survived with intellect, ingenuity, and improvisation. And when cornered – unlike animals – some folks can talk their way out of trouble. That's a

skill I have not yet mastered.

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SPORTS/NEWS PAGE



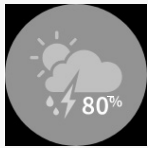
7 Day Weather Forecast for DFW

Thursday, Apr. 25



H 80°
L -69°

Friday, Apr. 26



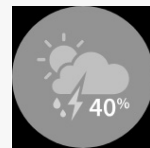
H - 80°
L - 69°

Saturday, Apr. 27



H - 82°
L - 71°

Sunday, Apr. 28



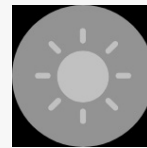
H - 76°
L - 69°

Monday, Apr. 29



H - 81°
L - 64°

Tuesday, Apr. 30



H - 82°
L - 66°

Wednesday, May 1



H -80°
L -69°

Early Voting and Election for the City of Dallas 2024 Bond Program

DALLAS - The City of Dallas has called for a bond election to ask Dallas registered voters to consider 10 bond propositions, which make up the \$1.25 billion 2024 bond program.

Early voting begins Monday, April 22, 2024, and continues through Tuesday, April 30. Find your county's early voting locations here: May2024.dallascityhall.com.

Election Day is Saturday, May 4, 2024, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Registered Dallas voters will consider up to \$1.25 billion in bond obligations. Voters will have the opportunity to vote "for" or "against" each proposition separately and each individual proposition may pass or fail.

Information about the Bond Propositions can be viewed on the City of Dallas Office of Bond and Construction Management website.

The 10 propositions (A-J) are:

- Proposition A: Streets and Transportation - \$521,200,000
- Proposition B: Park and Recreation - \$345,270,000
- Proposition C: Flood Control and Storm Drainage - \$52,100,000
- Proposition D: Library Facilities - \$43,530,000
- Proposition E: Cultural and Performing Arts Facilities - \$75,200,000
- Proposition F: Public Safety Facilities - \$90,000,000
- Proposition G: Economic Development - \$72,300,000
- Proposition H: Housing & Neighborhood Infrastructure - \$26,400,000
- Proposition I: Homeless Assistance Facilities - \$19,000,000
- Proposition J: Information Technology - \$5,000,000

2024 NFL Draft: Top prospects, storylines to watch ahead of Thursday's first round

The Chicago Bears are expected to take USC QB Caleb Williams at No. 1, but what follows?

By Greg Rosenstein/NBC NEWS

The first round of the 2024 NFL Draft takes place Thursday at 8 p.m. in Detroit, a night that could alter the future of many franchises. The Chicago Bears, Washington Commanders and New England Patriots own the top three selections, and many speculate those picks going to quarterbacks, which has happened three other times, most recently in 2021.

USC signal-caller Caleb Williams is all but certain to go No. 1, so the intrigue officially starts with Washington. Which quarterback will the new general manager, Adam Peters, take? That's just one of the many storylines to watch on ABC, ESPN or the NFL Network.

Is Williams guaranteed to go to Chicago?

Nothing is guaranteed until NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell steps up to the podium and reads his name but, essentially, yes.

Williams, the consensus top prospect, threw for 3,633 yards, 30 touchdowns and five interceptions last season. He won the Heisman Trophy as the best player in college football the prior year after taking the Trojans from four wins to an 11-win team. Williams threw for 4,075 yards, 37 touchdowns and only four interceptions over 13 games in 2022.

What will the Commanders do at No. 2?

Like the Bears, the Commanders have been desperate for a franchise quarterback for more than three decades. There was a glimmer of hope with Robert Griffin III, the 2012 NFL Offensive Rookie of the Year, but multiple injuries over the next seven seasons led to an early exit from the league. Will this finally be Washington's chance to turn around the franchise?

The Commanders have a new owner in Josh Harris and a new general manager in Peters, and both have been tight-lipped on whom they might select. But all signs point to either LSU quarterback Jayden Daniels or University of North Carolina quarterback Drake Maye.

University of North Carolina quarterback Drake Maye during the first half of an NCAA college football game in Clemson, N.C., in 2023. Jacob Kupferman / AP file

The 6-foot-4, 210-pound Daniels won the 2023 Heisman Trophy after one of the most electrifying seasons in college football history. He threw for 3,812 yards, 40 touchdowns and only four interceptions, while also adding 1,134 yards and 10 touchdowns on the ground.

Maye, at 6-foot-4 and 230 pounds, boasts the prototypical size for the position and has drawn comparisons to Los Angeles Chargers signal-caller Justin Herbert. After being named 2022 ACC Player and Rookie of the Year as a sophomore, he threw for 3,608 yards, 24 touchdowns and nine interceptions as a junior.

University of Michigan quarterback J.J. McCarthy, who led the Wolverines to their first national title since 1997, is also reportedly being considered.

Patriots could look to trade down

New England is still looking to find a replacement for legendary quarterback Tom Brady, who left the franchise in 2019. Mac Jones, a first-round pick in 2021, looked promising as a rookie but saw production drop off over the last two seasons. He was dealt to the Jacksonville Jaguars this offseason.

The Patriots signed Jacoby Brissett, though he's not expected to be the long-term starter. Will they instead take whoever is left among Daniels, Maye and McCarthy? If not, a trade down with a team such as the New York Giants, Minnesota Vikings or Las Vegas Raiders could be in play.

Volunteer Appreciation Brunch Mix & Mingle

The City of Dallas Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center staff and board would like to celebrate you! Without you, the work at the center would be lacking. You are cordially invited to a day of good food, encouraging words, networking, touring, and yes, giveaways.

Saturday, April 27, 2024
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Main Building A
2922 MLK Jr. Blvd. | Dallas, TX 75215

Please RSVP for this event by Wednesday, March 27, 2024 close of business at bit.ly/MLKVolunteerAppreciation.

For more information contact the MLK Center 214-670-8418 www.dallasmkcenter.com

FY2023-24#56

Continued TikTok Page 1

for your rights in the courts. The facts and the Constitution are on our side, and we expect to prevail."

TikTok spokespersons criticized the law as "unconstitutional," warning of its devastating impact on the platform's 170 million U.S. users and

7 million businesses operating on the app.

The bill's proponents argue that it addresses genuine national security concerns. It would allow the president, with intelligence agency input, to designate social media applications controlled by foreign adversaries as national security threats. These designated apps would then

face bans unless they severed ties with foreign entities.

Despite bipartisan support for the bill, with House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-La.) describing Communist China as America's most significant geopolitical foe using technology to undermine the U.S. economy and security, it faced notable opposition: fifty Democrats

and 15 Republicans, including Reps. Pramila Jayapal (D-Wash.), Ro Khanna (D-Calif.), and Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-Ga.) voted against it.

Critics raised concerns over potential infringements on free speech and adverse impacts on small businesses. TikTok's broad demographic reach was highlighted, with over 834

million global users, including 135 million in the U.S., predominantly under 20.

The legislation's opponents, including TikTok, argue that it risks curtailing First Amendment rights and harming thousands of minority-owned small businesses reliant on the platform. The company has launched an aggressive

lobbying campaign to combat the proposed legislation.

Paul Tran, co-owner of a skincare company that attributes much of its success to TikTok, said, "You will be destroying small businesses like us; this is our livelihood." He cautioned lawmakers against undermining the American Dream cherished by many.

Continued Biden Page 1

nurturing influential Black leaders, including civil rights luminary Martin Luther King Jr. and Georgia's first Black U.S. Senator, Sen. Raphael Warnock. It is considered a beacon of empowerment and academic excellence.

Warnock, a Morehouse alum, said he was excited

about the president's planned address. "I am thrilled to see President Biden return to our great state to deliver this year's commencement address," Warnock stated. "His administration's commitment to addressing the soaring costs of higher education and initiatives like canceling debt for over 4 million Americans have been pivotal in narrowing the

racial wealth gap."

President of Morehouse College, David Thomas, also expressed excitement for Biden's participation in the commencement ceremony, stating, "We are deeply honored that President Biden has accepted our invitation," Thomas insisted. "His presence is a testament to our institution's enduring legacy and our unwavering commit-

ment to excellence, progress, and positive transformation."

Henry Goodgame, a Morehouse alumnus and vice president of external relations & alumni engagement, said Biden's address comes during a pivotal moment for America. "We have invited the leader of the free world to address our community, tackling press-

ing issues and inspiring our next generation of leaders," Goodgame commented.

Mekhi Perrin, president of the Student Government Association at Morehouse, highlighted the college's rich tradition of hosting influential figures and shared the students' aspirations for the future. "We seek an equitable society that upholds the dignity and respect of all

individuals, irrespective of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sex, identity, socioeconomic status, or background," Perrin articulated.

Meanwhile, White House officials said Biden's address at Morehouse College reaffirms his administration's commitment to addressing racial disparities and advancing educational opportunities for all Americans.

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Mary J. Blige and A Tribe Called Quest to Be Inducted into Rock & Roll Hall of Fame 2024

The Rock Hall has announced one of its most significant inductions yet with the R&B queen and hip-hop legends joining a prestigious roster that includes Kool & The Gang, Cher, Foreigner, Dave Matthews Band, Peter Frampton, and Ozzy Osbourne.

By Stacy M. Brown

Mary J. Blige and A Tribe Called Quest are among the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame class of 2024. The Rock Hall has announced one of its most significant inductions yet, with the R&B queen and hip-hop legends joining a prestigious roster that includes Kool & The Gang, Cher, Foreigner, Dave Matthews Band, Peter Frampton, and Ozzy Osbourne.

“This diverse group of inductees each broke down musical barriers and influenced countless artists that followed in their footsteps,” John Sykes, chairman of the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame Foundation, said.

Blige, a multi-talented inspiration from the Bronx, New York, has long cemented her place in music history. Many said her journey is a testament to transformation and empowerment. A global superstar, Blige has eight multi-platinum albums, nine Grammy Awards, two Academy Award nominations, and a SAG nomination to her name.

Blige entered the scene at 18 when she signed with Andre Harrell’s Uptown Records in 1989, and introduced a unique blend of hip-hop, soul, and raw, honest lyrics by drawing inspiration from music legends like Aretha Franklin, Chaka Khan, and Gladys Knight. Her 1992 debut album, “What’s the 411?,” featuring chart-topping hits like “You



Remind Me” and “Real Love,” marked the beginning of her storied career, captivating audiences worldwide.

Meanwhile, A Tribe Called Quest, formed in 1985 in St. Albans, Queens, New York, has been hailed for their revolutionary contributions to hip-hop. Comprising Q-Tip, Phife Dawg, Ali Shaheed Muhammad, and Jarobi White, the group reshaped the genre with their innovative sound and socially conscious lyrics.

Throughout the 1990s, A Tribe Called Quest delivered a series of iconic tracks, including “Can I Kick It,” “Check the Rhime,” and “Scenario,” solidifying their

place in music history. Despite facing challenges, including the tragic loss of Phife Dawg in 2016, the group continued to push boundaries, releasing their final album, “We Got It from Here... Thank You 4 Your Service,” in 2016. A year later, they received the 2017 Brit Awards for International Group before officially disbanding.

The Rock & Roll Hall of Fame’s Class of 2024 induction ceremony is scheduled for October 19 at the Rocket Mortgage Fieldhouse in Cleveland, Ohio. Fans can catch the event live on Disney+, with an airing on ABC to follow and availability on Hulu the next day.

U.S. Coast Guard Promotes First Black Female Admiral

Merchant said she initially joined the Coast Guard with the intention of financing her medical school education.

By Stacy M. Brown

NNPA Newswire Senior National Correspondent@StacyBrownMedia

U.S. Coast Guard Capt. Zeita Merchant has made history as the first Black female admiral in the service’s 233-year history. Admiral Merchant, previously the commander of Sector New York, will now lead the Coast Guard Personnel Service Center in Washington, D.C., where she will oversee recruitment and scholarships.

Merchant said she initially joined the Coast Guard with the intention of financing her medical school education. “I always had this passion for service, but I never thought it would be in the form of military service. I really feel like this is God’s plan and not my plan,” she told the Clarion Ledger newspaper in Jackson, Mississippi.

Officials said the promotion highlights the Coast Guard’s ongoing commit-

ment to diversity and inclusion. Historian William H. Thiesen notes that African Americans have played a pivotal role in the Coast Guard’s history since its inception in 1790. “From the earliest days of the U.S. Revenue Cutter Service, Black sailors served alongside their white counterparts, with many making significant contributions during conflicts such as the Quasi-War with France and the War of 1812,” Thiesen wrote in a column for the Coast Guard’s newsletter.

He wrote that the Coast Guard’s rich and illustrious history of African American service is filled with bravery and accomplishment milestones. From Aaron Carter, the first African American to die in combat defending the Cape Florida Lighthouse in 1836, to “Hell Roaring” Mike Healy, the first African

American commissioned officer and ship’s captain, Black Coast Guard members have consistently broken barriers and paved the way for future generations.

During World War II, the Coast Guard led the federal government’s first official experiments in desegregation, commissioning its first African American officers and assigning Black officers and enlisted men to the USS Sea Cloud. By the war’s end, 5,000 Black members had served in the Coast Guard, with one in every five reaching petty officer or warrant officer levels.

In the following decades, African Americans continued to achieve notable milestones within the service. Thiesen asserted that Lovine Freamon and Bobby Wilks became the first Black graduates from Officer Candidate School in 1954 and 1956.

Merle Smith, the first African American graduate of the Coast Guard Academy in 1966, later received the Bronze Star Medal for his service in Vietnam.

Modern times have seen African Americans reach even greater heights within the Coast Guard. Vince Patton became the first Black Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard in 1998, followed by Erroll Brown, the first Black flag officer, in 2002. Jeanine McIntosh earned her wings as the first African American female aviator in 2005, and in 2009, Felicia Thomas became the first Black female to command a cutter.

Merchant’s distinguished career features key roles such as Special Assistant to the 27th and 28th Vice Commandants of the Coast Guard, Congressional Fellow for the Committees



Photo Credit: NNPA Files

on Oversight and Reform and Transportation and Infrastructure, and Executive Strategic Planner for the Coast Guard Flag and Senior Executive Service Corps.

Her educational background is equally impressive, holding a Doctor of Business Administration and a Master of Quality Systems Management from the National Graduate School at New England Institute of Business. She also earned a Master of Public Administration from George Washington University and a Bachelor of Science in Biology from Tougaloo College.

Additionally, Merchant

completed the Executive Education Leadership in Homeland Security program at Harvard Kennedy School of Government and was a Seminar XXI National Security and Foreign Affairs Fellow at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

When a reporter asked what she would tell her teenage self, Merchant replied, “We get in our own way because we think we don’t deserve the best based on where we’re from. “I would tell my younger self that you got to get out of your head, get out of your own way and the world is truly yours to conquer.”