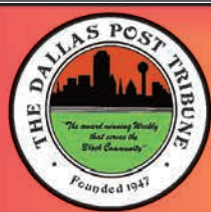


TO ALL MOTHERS:  
“Happy Mother’s day”



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VOLUME 77 NUMBER 35

SERVING THE BLACK COMMUNITY WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOR SINCE 1947

May 8 - 14, 2025

## Target CEO Attempts Damage Control After Weeks of Silence and Mounting Backlash

By Stacy M. Brown  
Black Press USA Senior National Correspondent

Target CEO Brian Cornell acknowledged in an email to employees this week that a months-long lapse in communication has

created uncertainty. The retailer is grappling with falling foot traffic, public boycotts, and criticism over its retreat from diversity

goals. According to the Minneapolis Star Tribune, Cornell’s message to staff

Continue **Target** Page 2



Target Corporation is an American retail corporation that operates a chain of discount department stores. (Photo by **Bg Walker**)

## ‘Love Must Be Louder Than Hate’: NAACP Raises Over \$340K for Black Child Targeted in Racist Verbal Attack

By Stacy M. Brown

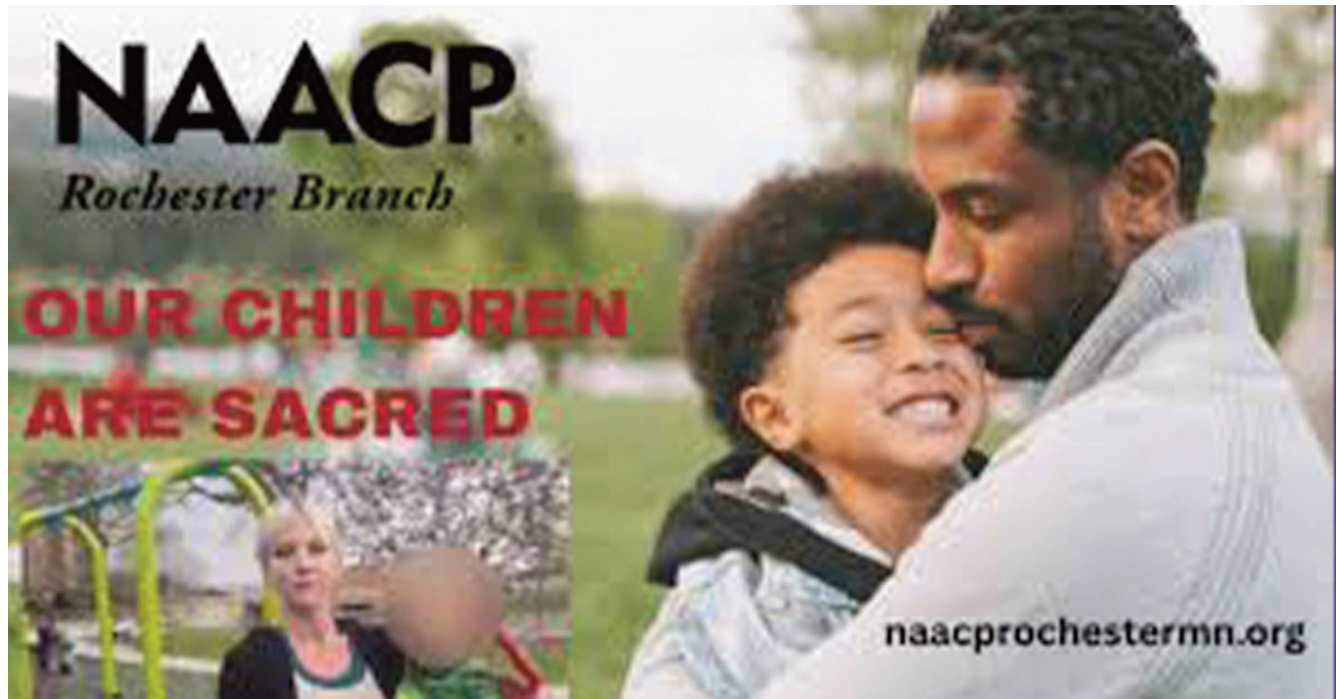


Photo Credit: NAACP Screenshot

Outrage has turned to action in Rochester after a white woman launched a racist verbal assault on a 5-year-old Black child at a public park—an incident that has sparked national condemnation, a surge of community support, and a flood of donations aimed at helping the young victim heal. The Rochester Branch of the NAACP said the incident, which occurred on April 30, was a deliberate and threatening act of racial hate—not a misunderstanding

ing or isolated outburst. According to the organization, the child, who is also reportedly on the autism spectrum, was targeted with repeated racial slurs, including the n-word. The woman did not express remorse and doubled down when confronted by a bystander. “This was not simply offensive behavior—it was an intentional racist, threatening, hateful, and verbal attack against a child, and it must be treated as such,” the Rochester

Branch of the NAACP said in a statement. “Public parks should be safe, inclusive spaces for children and families—not sites of hate and trauma.”

A widely circulated video of the incident drew sharp backlash, as did the woman’s subsequent move to launch a fundraising campaign for herself. She identified herself as Shiloh Hendrix and claimed she needed financial help to relocate in the aftermath. In less than 24 hours, her cam-

paign raised nearly \$150,000. As of this week, it has surpassed \$600,000, with many of her supporters openly defending her use of racial slurs and demonizing the child. In response, the Rochester Branch of the NAACP acted quickly, launching a GoFundMe campaign to support the young victim and his family. That campaign has since raised \$341,484 in just two days,

Continue **Love** Page 5

## Don't have a REAL ID yet? That could cause you travel headaches after May 7

By BRIDGET BROWN Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The deadline to get a REAL ID is almost here, after nearly two decades of postponements and delays.

While it was initially said that you would not be able to fly domestically without a REAL ID or other TSA-approved form of identification once the May 7 deadline hits, the head of Homeland Security said Tuesday that travelers will still be able to fly, but should be prepared for additional steps at TSA.

If you still don't have your REAL ID and are confused about how to get one, or are wondering why you even need one in the first place, here are some things to know:

### What is a REAL ID?

It's a federally compliant state-issued license or identification card that the DHS says is a more secure form of identification. That's because getting a REAL ID requires more personal documentation than what's required to obtain a regular license.

Besides needing a REAL ID to fly domestically, you

will also need one to access certain federal buildings and facilities.

### Why is this happening?

When the REAL ID Act was signed into law in 2005, it enacted a recommendation from the 9/11 Commission that the government set security standards for state-issued driver's licenses and IDs.

"REAL ID is a coordinated effort by the federal government to improve the reliability and accuracy of driver's licenses and identification cards," John Essig, the Transportation Security Administration's Security Director for airports in the New York City region said in a press release on April 3. "The improvements are intended to inhibit terrorists' ability to evade detection by using fraudulent identification."

The REAL ID Act was supposed to begin rolling out in 2008, "but has faced repeated delays due to state implementation challenges and the COVID-19 pandemic," said Nina Ruggiero,

Continue **Real ID** Page 3

## Let It Be Known: “They Voted to Deport Us”

Black Press USA Staff Report



Let It Be Known (05/01/25)

The May 1 edition of Let It Be Known began with a pair of videos featuring journalist Charles Blow and U.S. Rep. Jasmine Crockett, who delivered searing critiques of a House Judiciary Committee vote that, as Crockett described it, gives former President Donald Trump the power to deport U.S. citizens. Crockett, visibly outraged, revealed the shocking development during a live markup session, warning that constitutional protections are being

gutted in real time. “They just voted to give Trump the legal ability to deport U.S. citizens,” Crockett said. “They did it during the same week we learned a four-year-old American child with cancer was deported, separated from her father, and cut off from her treatment.” Crockett, joined by fellow Rep. Deborah Ross and others, said Republican lawmakers refused to support an amendment she

Continue **Deport** Page 5



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# EDITORIAL PAGE

## The NFL Draft Gave Athletes Memories To Last A Lifetime

By James B Ewers Jr. Ed.D



James B. Ewers Jr. Ed.D

The NFL Draft was held recently. Let us all not waver and just say with unbridled joy that the NFL knows how to put on a spectacular show. The glitz and glitter were all in place as the names of the draft choices were called. I would opine that the marketing of the National Football League never stops. There is always something to capture our attention and imagination. At some point, as fans, we always say “wow” or “that’s great”. The changes in the production of the NFL Draft have been significant throughout the years. The first NFL Draft was held on February 8, 1936, at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. According to reports, “The draft was a response to the disparity in player acquisition caused by the financial advantages of some teams.” NFL Operations reported, “That the Philadelphia Eagles who finished last in the 1935 season had the first pick and selected Heisman Trophy winner, Jay Berwanger from the University of Chicago. However, he never played in the NFL, opting for a career in sales instead.” Salaries during this period were not as generous as they are today thus many players decided on other opportunities. Charlie Ward, former quarterback for Florida State University, won the Heisman Trophy in 1993. However, he never played in the NFL. He became a star player in the National Basketball Association with the New York Knicks and played for 11 seasons. Ward is now the new basketball coach at Florida State University. This year’s National Football League Draft was held at Lambeau Field in Green Bay Wisconsin. There were draft parties and festivities held across America. The draft party for the New Orleans Saints was held at Five O Fore+ Entertainment.

We attended this event. The excitement was at an all-time high. Fans were on the edge of their seats with every name called. During the 3-day draft, there were approximately 250 players drafted. The number 1 draft choice was Cam Ward, quarterback from the University of Miami Hurricanes. He was chosen by the Tennessee Titans. Leading up to this year’s draft, there was a lot of prognostication and speculation that Abdul Carter, linebacker from Penn State University and Shedeur Sanders, quarterback from the University of Colorado might be selected as the number 1 pick. Abdul Carter was selected in the first round by the New York Giants and Shedeur Sanders was selected in the fifth round by the Cleveland Browns. We know the story lines and comments about Shedeur Sanders and his rise and fall in this year’s draft. Everyone has been talking about it. Enough said. The important part of the Sanders story is that he was drafted and now must prove he belongs in the NFL. Being a number 1 draft

choice in the NFL doesn’t always mean you will be successful in the league. JaMarcus Russell (2007) and Courtney Brown (2000) were drafted as number 1 choices, yet neither lived up to the expectations that everyone had for them. In comparison, being a low draft choice doesn’t mean you won’t be successful in the NFL. Roosevelt Brown, an offensive lineman for the New York Giants, was selected with the 321st overall pick in the 1953 draft. The record shows he had a great career and is a member of the NFL Hall of Fame. Chris Hanburger, a linebacker for the franchise named the Washington Redskins, now Commanders was drafted with the 245th overall pick in the 1965 draft. He played for 14 seasons and is also in the NFL Hall of Fame. It’s not where you start, it’s where you finish. Ryan Succop, Mr. Irrelevant in the 2009 NFL Draft, won a Super Bowl with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. Mr. Irrelevant in the 2025 NFL Draft was Kobee Minor. Be on the lookout for him.

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Continued Target Page 1

admitted it has been “a tough few months.” It said media coverage, social media chatter, and internal conversations “may have left you wondering.” He insisted, however, that Target’s values have not shifted. “I recognize that silence from us has created uncertainty, so I want to be very clear: We are still the Target you know and believe in,” Cornell wrote. Since the beginning of the year, the retail giant has faced a storm of challenges. President Donald Trump’s tariffs on global imports have squeezed the company’s margins. Target’s decision to scale back its diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives prompted widespread backlash from Black leaders and organizations. “Black consumers helped build Target into a retail giant, and now they are making their voices heard,” said Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr., president and CEO of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA). The NNPA is a trade association representing the 198-year-old Black Press of America. Earlier this year, the Black Press began a public education and selective buying campaign in response to Target abandoning its commitment to Black America. “If corporations believe they can roll back diversity commitments without consequence, they are mistaken,” Chavis stated. The company has yet to respond to repeated requests for meetings and comment from The Black Press. Target has lost more than \$15 billion in revenue this year, seen its stock price fall by as much as \$27.27 per share, and is facing multiple lawsuits tied to its DEI policy changes. Cornell’s email still struck a tone of reassurance, calling the company’s values of “inclusivity, connection, drive” non-negotiable. “We’re committed to sharing more of that impact with you and our guests because it reinforces our values and shows the real heart of our team,” he wrote. Still, retail analysts were sharply critical. Neil Saunders, managing director at GlobalData Retail, said the email fails to address the root causes of public concern. “They say, ‘Our products and experience are second to none.’ Well, actually, no, they’re not. That’s not true anymore,” he said. According to data from Placer.ai, foot traffic to Target stores has dropped for 11 straight weeks, with only a slight uptick during the week of April 14 and April 21. Overall, foot traffic declined 3.3% in April. In recent weeks, Cornell met with Rev. Al Sharpton and leaders of the boycott movement to discuss Target’s DEI pullback. He also met with Trump to outline the damaging impact of tariffs on retailers. Neither meeting was believed to have been mentioned in his message to employees. Rev. Jamal Bryant, who launched a national Target Fast to protest the company’s direction, has called for continued mobilization and accountability. Retail consultant Carol Spieckerman said the CEO’s email failed to take responsibility. “His email acknowledges but doesn’t take responsibility for any of the concerns and controversies surrounding the company,” she said. “The tone implies that things are happening around and to Target that are out of its control.” Both Spieckerman and Saunders described the message as unfocused. “It’s a really jumbled email,” Saunders said. “And you know if it’s come from Brian Cornell, it’s probably been through about 30 different people and various PR teams, and it still comes out as this big, jumbled mess.”

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## Student Loan Repayment Notices Start May 5

By Lauren Burke

Millions of student loan borrowers in default will begin to get notices starting May 5, that they are being placed into a collections process. The student loan repayment system has always been confusing to many. Delays related to COVID and other policies passed by the Biden Administration were meant to assist borrowers. But now the grace period for student loan borrowers is over after a five-year pause in collections. From 2021 to 2024, federal student loan debt grew by more than \$60 billion annually. According to NBC, only a third of “the nearly 43 million borrowers who have student loan debt have made regular payments.” On April 21, the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, Linda McMahon, announced in a statement that the Trump Administration would restart the payments. In late February of this year, the Department of Education ended the process for loan repayment plans. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit agreed with a suspension of the Saving on a Valuable Education plan — also known as SAVE. The income-driven repayment program, which was a key initiative of the Biden Administration with over eight million borrowers enrolled,

Continue **Loan** Page 5

# RELIGIOUS/NEWS

## Living by Biblical Faith

Hebrews 11:20-22

In retrospect, we were introduced to the tremendous wonderment of faith exhibited in the life of Abraham (Hebrews 11:8-19). Abraham was an outstanding example of one who demonstrated unusual faith in God’s promise to grant him a son when he and Sarah were past age. Abraham’s supreme test of faith came when God told him to offer up his promised son Isaac upon the altar!

With unhesitating obedience, Abraham set forth to offer to God the dearest treasure of his heart! Although the promise of a great progeny was to be fulfilled through Isaac, the promised seed; however, Abraham believed firmly that if God required him to slay his son, God would raise him from the dead in

order to fulfill the promise. His faith in the promise of God drove him to the conclusion that God would have to raise Isaac! A most remarkable statement regarding the sterling faith of Abraham is found in Genesis 15:6 “And he (Abram) believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness.”

In leaving the outstanding example of faith in the life of Abraham in verses 8-19, we come to the interesting offspring of Abraham, namely: Isaac, Jacob and Joseph. Isaac, the beloved son of Abraham achieved a place in faith’s hall of fame because he invoked future blessings on Jacob and Esau (v. 20). Before both Jacob and Esau were born, the Lord announced that two nations were in the womb of Rebe-

kah and that the elder (Esau) would serve the younger (Jacob).

In verse 21, despite the fact that there are several inglorious chapters written in the book of Genesis regarding Jacob’s life, nevertheless, he is honored as a hero of faith. Jacob’s early life was an apt illustration of one who ventured to live his life in a carnal manner. He is really an illustration of human nature and of the fact that it is by grace that we are saved. If it had not been for the grace of God, Jacob would be lost.

Both he and Esau struggled in their mother’s womb, with Jacob coming out last, holding on the heel of his brother. Jacob was the heel-grabber, wrestling for supremacy! You remember, that God had promised Jacob the bless-

ing, but he could not wait on it. Rebekah and Jacob deceived Isaac and took the blessing from Esau. Jacob was forced to go and live with Uncle Laban when the trickster got tricked.

In returning to go back home, the Lord wrestled with Jacob that night at the brook Jabbok and crippled him. Now at the closing scene of his life, we find him “blessing both sons of Joseph, learning upon the top of his staff” (v. 21). Jacob who lived a life of sin and deception, was changed by God’s grace. As a heel-grabber and deceiver, we now see faith in the life of Jacob as he blesses Joseph’s sons!

In verse 22, in contrast to his father, Jacob, we come to the sterling life of Joseph. Much can be said

that his brothers’ jealousy prompted them to put Joseph in a pit; and while in Egypt, he was accused and placed in prison; however, he rose to be in a palace in Egypt. However, despite all of Egypt’s pomp and splendor, his heart was not there, for he believed God’s promise that He would deliver the people of Israel out of Egypt.

You would have thought that at the end of his life he would be satisfied with Egypt; however, he said: “When the day comes that the children of Israel leave this land, be sure and take my bones with you” (Genesis 50:25).

Just as Joseph’s brethren fulfilled his request, for Joseph’s body was carried and buried in Shechem (Joshua 24:32), the Lord will not forget us. The



Rev. Johnny Calvin Smith

hymn writer wrote:

### He Will Remember Me

*When on the cross of Calvary, the Lord was crucified;*

*The mob stood 'round and mocked him until He died.*

*Two thieves were nailed beside Him to share the agony,*

*But one of them cried out to Him, O Lord remember me.*

*Will the Lord remember me when I am called to go?*

*When I have crossed death's chilly sea, will He His love there show'*

*O yes, He heard my feeble cries, from bondage set me free,*

*And when I reach the pearly gates He will remember me.*

**May God Bless!**

Continued **Real ID** Page 1

senior editorial director for Travel + Leisure. "The combination of varying state processes and shifting deadlines has added to the overall confusion around REAL IDs and likely led some travelers to take the deadlines less seriously."

### How do I know if I already have a REAL ID?

If you've gotten a new ID in the last few years, it could already be REAL ID-compliant.

"I also hear from travelers who are confused as

to whether or not they already have a REAL ID," Ruggiero said. "Some people who have recently renewed their license may already have a compliant ID and not know it," so you may want to double-check yours before starting the process.

A REAL ID-compliant driver's license has a symbol (in most states, a star) in the top corner of the card.

If you live in Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Vermont or Washington, it's possible you could

have an "enhanced" ID card instead, which permits you to both fly domestically and cross land and sea borders into Mexico and Canada from the U.S. It does not, however, allow you to fly into either of those countries.

Enhanced IDs will have an American flag icon, as well as the word "enhanced" at the top of the card.

### If I don't have a REAL ID, how do I get one?

The requirements vary by state, so you will need to visit the website of your

state's driver's licensing agency to find out the specific steps, including whether you'll need to make an appointment at a DMV and what documentation you'll need when you get there.

### What happens on May 7? What if I don't have a REAL ID by then?

Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem said Tuesday that those who still lack an identification that complies with the REAL ID law "may be diverted to a different line, have an extra step."

Noem also said that security checkpoints will be accepting passports and tribal identification when the deadline hits Wednesday in place of a REAL ID.

"But people will be allowed to fly," she said. "We will make sure it's as seamless as possible."

### The deadline has already been pushed back so many times. Could it be delayed again?

In mid-April, a group of state senators from Kentucky asked the agency to delay implementing the

new requirements yet again. They said the state has limited appointments available to people seeking the new cards and that there has been a rush to meet the May 7 deadline.

However, TSA spokesperson Dan Velez told the AP that the agency does not intend to delay the REAL ID deadline again.

As of late April, 81% of travelers at TSA checkpoints were presenting acceptable identification, including a state-issued REAL ID, according to DHS.

### ~ SOUNDTRACK SONGS ~ (Solution, will appear on page 5, May 15)

#### ACROSS

- Potato chip, in U.K.
- \_\_\_\_ capita
- "\_\_\_\_ the night before Christmas..."
- Popular garden perennial
- George Gershwin's brother
- \*"Follow the Yellow \_\_\_\_ Road"
- Brickowski of "The LEGO Movie"
- Pick up a perpetrator
- Hindu sage
- \*"Flashdance... What a \_\_\_\_"
- \*"Stayin' Alive" band
- Actress Gasteyer
- Windshield option
- Undergarment
- Teenager's woe
- \*Solfège-themed "The Sound of Music" song
- Capital of Latvia
- Pilgrimage to Mecca
- India bigwig
- Fusses or stirs
- Belted starman
- Charged particles
- Binturong's cousin
- Type of salmon
- Sol, or la, or ti
- \*Eponymous 1978 Franki Valli song
- To, archaic
- \*Ryan Gosling's 2023 "I'm Just \_\_\_\_"
- Part of a jousting outfit
- Tax pro, acr.
- \*"I Will Always Love You" of "The Bodyguard" singer
- \*"(I've Had) \_\_\_\_ of My Life" of "Dirty Dancing"
- Desert wanderer's hope
- Morning condensation
- Waterwheel
- Rosetta Stone, e.g.
- U.N. working-conditions agcy.
- Perform in a play
- Through, to a poet
- First responders' acronym
- Force units

#### DOWN

- Carny in "The Bear"
- "Emily in Paris" new location
- \*"This \_\_\_\_" of "The Greatest Showman"
- #69 Across, alt. sp.
- Green layer on copper
- Contact on social media
- E in B.C.E.
- Torah teacher
- H.S. math class
- Solomon-like
- Advil target
- Sleigh runners
- Poet and "Surrealist Manifesto" author André \_\_\_\_
- Jack Black's Libre
- Tight one, in football
- Tiresome
- Health food pioneer of liquid aminos fame
- Peter Fonda in 1969 role
- In the past
- DEA agent
- \*Prince's "Purple \_\_\_\_"
- Digital tome
- \_\_\_\_ Carlo
- "A Doll's House" playwright
- Away from port
- \*"The Lion King" composer
- Ax mark
- Sleeping sickness vector
- Kind of trip
- Not closed
- Not mainstream
- Lack of muscle tension
- Terry Crews on "America's Got Talent"
- The Hippocratic one
- \_\_\_\_-friendly
- Farmer's storage
- Scarce bills
- Formerly Persia
- Three blind ones
- Chows down
- Freddy Krueger street

### Statepoint Crossword Puzzle Theme: SOUNDTRACK SONGS

CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8			9	10	11	12
13						14					15			
16						17					18			
19						20			21	22				
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35			36			37			38		39			
40						41				42		43		
44					45		46					47		
48					49		50				51		52	
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57	58	59	60					61				62	63	64
65							66	67			68			
69							70				71			
72							73				74			

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7 Day Weather Forecast for DFW

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Houston sent to early playoff exit with 103-89 loss to Warriors in Game 7

By **KRISTIE RIEKEN** AP Sports Writer

HOUSTON (AP) — With a chance to close out their first-round playoff series against the Golden State Warriors, the Houston Rockets instead delivered a playoff flop to end their season Sunday night.

The Rockets won consecutive games to claw back from a 3-1 deficit and force a Game 7 but played their worst game of the series to be sent packing with a 103-89 loss.

"We had our chances in this series," coach Ime Udoka said. "We all expected to continue to be playing so it's a letdown. It's going to sting now but use it as motivation and let's all come back better. Don't be satisfied."

Houston won 52 games to capture the No. 2 seed in the Western Conference and return to the postseason for the first time since

2020. The seven seed Warriors eliminated the Rockets in the playoffs for a fifth time after doing so four times between 2015 and 2019.

"We had whatever amount of wins and second place and all that, but nobody cares about that right now," Udoka said. "It's about where we finished."

Stephen Curry scored 14 of his 22 points in the fourth quarter and Buddy Hield made nine 3-pointers and finished with 33 points to lead Golden State to the win.

Hield was 9 of 11 from 3-point range, setting an NBA record for a Game 7 and making more 3s than the Rockets, who were 6 of 18 from long range.

They didn't lead after the first quarter and allowed Curry to get going in the second half to put the game

away after Hield carried the team in first two quarters.

Fred Vleet scored a combined 55 points in the last two games to help Houston extend the series. But he was limited to 17 points on 6-of-13 shooting Sunday as the Rockets were sent home early.

He was far from the only Rockets player who struggled. Big man Alperen Sengun had 21 points and 14 rebounds. But he missed several easy shots on a 9-of-23 night.

Despite the loss, Sengun was proud to see the growth of the team which won just 22 games in the 2022-23 season.

"We learned how to play together," he said. "We talk every day. It was a hard series for us. Obviously, we're upset right now, but it's going to be a great off-season for us and it's going

to make us better next year."

Jalen Green, who had 38 points to lead Houston to a Game 2 win, finished with eight points.

"First playoffs is no excuse," he said. "I've got to be better."

Green, who was the second overall pick in the 2021 draft, was criticized during this series for not doing more to lead the team after scoring fewer than 10 points in four of the seven games.

But VanVleet took up for his teammate.

"Everybody's journey is different," he said. "The weight of the world seems to be on his shoulders at times, but he played well. We knew they were going to load up on him. On the path to greatness, there's going to be stumbles and failures."

- Continued Page 2 -  
Student Loan Repayment Notices Start May 5

By **Lauren Burke**



A student Loan Payments Resuming Notice in Envelope on top of other mail. (Photo by **Richard Stephen**)

offered lower monthly payments than previous plans. However, the SAVE plan faced legal challenges in the spring of 2024 because of high costs. States led by Republican Governors and Attorney Generals sued and argued that the administration had exceeded its legal authority. The argument of the executive branch “exceeding authority” hasn’t come up from those same Republican-led states. But President Trump is moving facts to mandate that those who have a student loan outstanding must repay it.

According to the information provided by the Student Borrower Protection Center:

- A typical current student loan borrower with a college degree will be forced to pay an additional \$2,928 per year in student loan payments should Congress enact this proposal, when compared to the Saving on a Valuable Education (SAVE) plan.
- A typical current student loan borrower with some college but no degree would be forced to repay an additional \$1,761 per year in student loan payments should Congress enact this proposal, when compared to the SAVE plan.

Virginia Rep. Bobby Scott, who is the ranking member of the House Edu-

cation Committee, has been a vocal advocate for student loan borrowers. He introduced legislation aimed at lowering the cost of college and assisting with loan repayment. His legislation has included the Lowering Obstacles to Achievement Now (LOAN) Act, which aims to double the Pell Grant, improve Public Service Loan Forgiveness, lower interest rates, make loans less expensive, and repeal origination fees. Rep. Scott also supported proposals to expand access to Pell Grants, make student loans more affordable, and improve the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program. But in a survival of the fittest world in part created by citizens united, having access to large amounts of money is typically a huge factor in attending college. “Forgiving student debt would be a great gift to graduates, but so would having your mortgages, car loans, and credit card debt forgiven. Debt forgiveness is a slap in the face to all who sacrificed and worked extra jobs to pay off their student loans,” argued businessman and media owner Armstrong Williams on social media on May 5. But the question of whether those in default can repay at an unpredictable economic time is unknown.

Continued **Deport** Page 1

introduced only because, she said, “ICE is doing it anyway.” “I entered into the record that ICE cannot legally detain or deport U.S. citizens, and they still voted no,” said Crockett. “Some didn’t even show up to vote—too cowardly to go on record.”

The broadcast picked up with Let It Be Known hosts Stacy Brown and Niele Anderson expressing disbelief over the vote and noting the racial dynamics at play. “There’s a reason they don’t care,” Anderson said. “It’s because they know who will be targeted—Black and brown people, people with accents, those with darker skin.” Brown and Anderson drew attention to the House’s refusal to provide due process protection, de-

scribing it as dangerous and unconstitutional. Brown compared the current moment to the cruelty of America’s past. “It used to be that the U.S. brought in children from other countries for cancer treatment,” he said. “Now, they’re sending American children away—sick, four-year-old cancer patients.” The hosts also discussed the global rise of far-right authoritarianism, highlighting recent events in Burkina Faso, where U.S. involvement is being blamed for fomenting unrest. Anderson noted the parallels with Project 2025 in the U.S., saying the movement isn’t just national but global in scope.

Vice President Kamala Harris’s first major speech since leaving the White House also came up. Harris warned that Trump is “a

vessel” for a long-planned extremist agenda. “Fear isn’t the only thing that’s contagious,” Harris said. “Courage is contagious, too.” Anderson credited Emerge CEO A’shanti Gholar for the platform that helped amplify Harris’s voice. “Emerge has been training women to lead, and it matters that a Black woman leads that organization,” she said. The show touched on youth cell phone bans in schools, eliciting passionate opinions on both sides. Some viewers supported the bans because they reduced distractions, while others, including Brown, expressed concern over safety during school shootings.

Also covered: the lawsuit filed by a Black couple in Texas after their newborn was taken away due to a home jaundice treat-

ment; the ongoing “State of the People” tour mobilizing Black voters across the country; and sports headlines involving Shaduer Sanders and the racial disparities in how athletes are treated. The episode wrapped with a celebration of coach Dawn Staley’s new statue in South Carolina and a tribute to Essence magazine co-founder Clarence O. Smith, who died at 93. Hosts also recognized Mound Bayou, Mississippi, as the correct answer to the day’s Black trivia question: the town founded by formerly enslaved people in 1887, once known as the “Jewel of the Delta.” “A lot is happening across this country and around the globe,” Brown said. “But what’s clear is that we must stay informed, engaged, and ready.”

Continued **Love** Page 1

thanks to an outpouring of support from across the country and around the world. The NAACP has since closed the fundraiser at the family’s request. “From the beginning, this campaign was rooted in a powerful truth: no child should ever be dehumanized, and love must always be louder than hate,” the NAACP said. According to the organization, 100% of the funds raised—minus standard platform fees—

will be placed in a trust account solely managed by the child’s parents. “No member of the Rochester Branch of the NAACP has received—or will receive—funds from these donations,” the organization clarified.

The incident has drawn attention to a rising tide of hate and bigotry not only in Rochester but across the nation. Over the past year alone, the Rochester NAACP has documented a troubling number of racially motivated acts in the

area, including racist slurs painted on a bridge near Century High School, a noose and effigy used to intimidate a Black family, and swastikas and racial epithets spray-painted on the home of a local representative. Islamophobic and antisemitic acts have also increased. “This is not an isolated incident,” the NAACP said. “It is part of a troubling and painful trend that continues to escalate across the country.” Community members seeking to do more are en-

couraged to support the NAACP’s ongoing work through the Rochester Branch’s Fighting Fund for Freedom at <https://rochesterbranchnaacp.betterworld.org/donate>.

“This is about more than one incident. It’s about who we are as a community and what we choose to stand for,” the Rochester Branch of the NAACP said. “Help us match the funds raised in defense of hate with an equal force of love, justice, and action.”

Statepoint Crossword Puzzle  
Solution: May 1 - Theme: MOTHER’S DAY

W	O	R	M	S		N	F	L			B	A	G	S
A	X	I	A	L		I	R	A		S	U	N	U	P
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J	O	B		H	O	L	E		E	L	A	P	S	E
O	V	I	D		M	A	R	Y		E	R	I	C	A
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Y	I	P	S			S	E	E		E	L	B	O	W



# Sergio Hudson Owned the MET Gala 2025

By Dawn Montgomery, Culture Critic



John Imah and Sergio Hudson making an entrance

This year’s MET Gala was for us—for the culture—and a powerful moment for Black fashion designers to shine. Every year, the first Monday in May brings chaos, glamor, and a flurry of looks that flood our timelines. We all turn into judges, weighing in from our couches, revering the creativity that takes center stage on the red—or, in this case, blue—carpet.

The 2025 theme, “Superfine: Tailoring Black Style,” celebrated Black Dandyism and was inspired by the work of Monica Miller, professor and chair of Africana Studies at Barnard College, and her book *Slaves to Fashion: Black Dandyism and the Styling of Black Diasporic Identity*. This theme invited attendees to reimagine how they see themselves and to honor our legacy in fashion history.

And no one met the moment like Sergio Hudson.

The Ridgeway, South Carolina-born designer, and

a lean team that understands every stitch, dressed over 15 attendees for this year’s gala. Each look was a masterpiece of intention and identity. The design sketches provided us with early glimpses, but witnessing them come to life on the carpet was unforgettable.

Fashion stylist Trenez Scott, originally from Farmhaven, Mississippi, put it best: “I call this Sergio Hudson’s MET Gala 2025. With over 15 looks curated for this historic moment, it’s an experience I’ll treasure for years to come. Though we’re a small team, our impact is undeniable—proving that anything is possible with belief in your gift and relentless persistence.”

As Black creatives, we’ve long believed in our gifts, even while navigating limited resources and industry gatekeeping. Hudson’s rise has always illuminated the inequalities embedded in the world of fashion. And

yet, it took one monumental event—the MET Gala—for fashion’s elite to give him a pound or his proper due.

Hudson and his team made sure every person they dressed received the same level of care and attention to detail. If I had to grade the execution, it would be an easy A+.

The effort, strategy, time, and Blackness—the precision of staying on theme while dressing over a dozen people—says everything about the Sergio Hudson Collection and how they stepped up and showed out.

“My mother, she always wore a suit. Hudson once told the *Free Times* that she consistently wore “a man’s shirt and a pencil skirt.” “That’s how I define who the Sergio Hudson woman was. So when you see my shows, and you see the women in these really tailored suits ... I know my clients feel very empowered.”



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Photo by Jin Kim

Photo Credit: The HUB

## Leaving a Legacy: CI East student paves the way in cybersecurity

By Justin Amaro

At W.W. Samuell High School-Career Institute East, Javondrick Earl D. is already breaking barriers in the world of technology, before even receiving his diploma.

Javondrick recently made history as the first student in all of North Texas to earn his CompTIA Network+ certification as a junior, followed by the CompTIA Security+ certification as a senior. These are prestigious, industry-recognized credentials that put him on par with entry-level professionals in the IT field.

“The reason why I pursued and attended Career Institute East was because I wanted to better myself and make sure I could have a comfortable future, not just for myself, but also for my friends and family,” Javondrick said. “They’re what is currently driving me and motivating me to keep pushing forward.”

Now a senior, his journey into tech was sparked by gaming, but fueled by curiosity.

“What probably got me into IT was gaming. I would think to myself, ‘what would

the future be like,’ ‘what could we do with better technology,’” he said. “Tearing apart computers, I got to know what each feature does, from the motherboard to our CPU. It’s all interesting, how these parts work together to give us the technology we use every day.”

Javondrick’s certifications weren’t easy to earn. He faced hurdles, including three attempts to pass the Network+ exam, but perseverance paid off.

Now, he’s eyeing a future in cybersecurity or possibly launching his own tech business. Colleges like University of Texas at Austin, UT Arlington, and UT Dallas are among his top choices, but he’s also considering jumping straight into the workforce.

Javondrick’s success is grounded in strong support systems, especially his cybersecurity and software development instructor, Carver Malone, and his family.

“I’ve been with him for three years, and he has done nothing but support us in ways that I can’t describe,” Javondrick said. “Even

doing Saturday school, he took his own classroom time to help us. I can’t say anything but be grateful for him.”

Carver introduced CompTIA certifications to the program and saw Javondrick’s potential early on.

“He [Javondrick] kept up. He could take whatever I was doing as far as pushing him from a technical perspective, and he’s done nothing but shine ever since,” Carver said. “I definitely pray that he comes back here, so I can say, ‘this dude sat right where you’re sitting, and look what he did with the opportunity.’”

For Javondrick, the motivation to succeed is deeply personal.

“I have an amazing mother who pushes me to be the best that I can be,” he said. “She thinks it’s awesome. She’s been pushing me to do better, and hey, I’m trying my best.”

When asked what advice he’d give other students, Javondrick’s message is simple.

“Go for it. There’s nothing you can’t do. If you can believe, you can do it.”