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Elevate Your Excellence:
From Comedy Stage To
Global Empire, Byron
Allen Is Taking Over The
Media Space



Byron Allen Folks, widely known as Byron Allen, is an American comedian, producer, and entrepreneur who built a sprawling, multibillion-dollar media empire from a foundation in syndicated television.

As the founder, chairman, and chief executive officer of Allen Media Group, formerly Entertainment Studios, Allen oversees a global media company with assets in film, tele-

Byron Allen - page - 14

Bishop William Barber Announces National Voter Mobilization Tour

By Atlanta Tribune on August 21, 2026



Nationally renowned civil rights leader and Repairers of the Breach President Bishop William J. Barber II today

announced a multi-state speaking tour in support of his 100 Days; 1,000 Marches to the Polls voter mobilization initiative



organized by Repairers of the Breach and the Moral Monday Public Pulpit.

The tour, announced at a news conference with

National Voter Mobilization- page 4

Black lives are being undervalued': NAACP Legal Defense Fund calls for federal, U.N. investigations into suspicious deaths of Black people

The Legal Defense Fund submitted letters to Congress and the United Nations requesting investigations into the growing number of suspicious deaths of Black people in the U.S.



NAACP Legal Defense Fund calls for federal, U.N. investigations into suspicious deaths of Black people (Photos: Getty Images & Adobe Stock)

Nolan Wells, Daniel Erving, To'nea Miller, Demartravion "Trey" Reed, Tasia Fortune, Tyler

Smith, Demetrius Fleming, Juliana Umba Nzita, Rasheem Carter, Torrance "Tory" Medley, Dennoriss Richardson—these are

only some of the names of Black men and women who have either disappeared or been found dead under mysterious circum-

Black Lives/NAACP-Page 4

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NEWS
NOTES

‘Decades in Sports’: How Colin Kaepernick taking a knee in 2016 revived athlete activism in sports

by Emile Nuh CNN SPORTS



Colin Kaepernick and Eric Reid of the San Francisco 49ers kneel on the sideline during the national anthem on September 1, 2016 in San Diego, California. Michael Zagaris/Getty Images

Editor’s note: Watch CNN Original Series “Decades in Sports” on the CNN app. Across six episodes, the series explores the defining moments, athletes and cultural shifts that shaped sports over the past six decades, from the television revolution and Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s to the impact of social media on today’s biggest stars.

Almost 10 years have passed since former San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick first took a knee during “The Star-Spangled Banner” before a preseason game against the San Diego Chargers on September 1, 2016.

Before ever taking a knee, Kaepernick’s protest actually began when he remained seated during the national anthem prior to the 49ers’ first preseason game against the Houston Texans on August 14.

Although he did the same the following week against the Denver Broncos, few took notice, as the quarterback didn’t suit up against Denver or Houston.

That all changed on August 26. Kaepernick was back in uniform and set to make his first preseason appearance against the Green Bay Packers. As he had done before the previous two games, he remained seated during the national anthem.

Only this time, it caught the attention of millions across the country. When asked after the game what drove his demonstration, Kaepernick didn’t pull any punches:

“I am not going to stand up to show pride in a flag for a country that oppresses Black people and people of color,” he told longtime NFL reporter Steve Wyche.

“To me, this is bigger than football and it would be selfish on my part to look the other way. There are bodies in the street and people (are) getting paid leave and getting away

with murder.”

His message could not have been clearer. After opting to take a knee alongside teammate Eric Reid against the Chargers, the entire sporting world took notice of what would become one of the defining images of 2010s sports culture.

The then-28-year-old was coming off a disappointing, injury-riddled 2015 season in which he lost his starting job. But football was no longer his primary concern.

It is easy to forget just how high racial tensions ran in America during that decade.

The Black Lives Matter movement gained national prominence in 2013 following the acquittal of George Zimmerman, a 28-year-old neighborhood watch volunteer who fatally shot 17-year-old Trayvon Martin in Sanford, Florida, the previous year.

Nearly 50 years had passed since Martin Luther King Jr. stood on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial and shared his dream with the world. Yet in the 2010s, that dream remained unfulfilled as racial inequality and police brutality remained widespread across the U.S.

Racial tensions peaked in July 2016 following the deaths of Alton Sterling and Philando Castile at the hands of law enforcement just a day apart. Castile’s death prompted then-Minnesota Governor Mark Dayton to publicly question the role race played.

“Would this have happened if the

driver and passenger were white?” Dayton asked rhetorically at a press conference. “I don’t think it would have. So I’m forced to confront, and I think all of Minnesota is forced to confront, that this kind of racism exists.”

Kaepernick had been outspoken about both killings on social media, describing Sterling’s death as a modern-day “lynching” and stating he had been “executed.”

After Castile was killed less than 24 hours later, Kaepernick said it was “clear as day” that African Americans in the country were “under attack.”

It was against this backdrop that he decided to act during the 2016 NFL preseason. Although “it was a quiet protest and he wasn’t being disruptive, people focused on it, (and) it just took on this sort of life of its own,” says Renée Graham, Associate Editor & Columnist at The Boston Globe.

When the regular season began, the former 49ers quarterback continued his silent boycott of the national anthem.

It led to him being booed in stadiums across the country, receiving several death threats, and facing sharp criticism from then-Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump, who called the protest a “terrible thing” during an interview with KIRO radio in Seattle, suggesting Kaepernick should “find a country that works better for him.”

U.S. Supreme Court blocks Trump’s USPS mail voting restrictions: ‘Big victory for voters’

by Gerren Keith Gaynor



Current U.S. Supreme Court Justices

○ Appointed by a Republican president

○ Appointed by a Democratic president

John G. Roberts, Jr. Chief Justice Appointed by President George W. Bush in 2005	Clarence Thomas Appointed by President George H.W. Bush in 1991	Samuel A. Alito, Jr. Appointed by President George W. Bush in 2006
Sonia Sotomayor Appointed by President Barack Obama in 2009	Elena Kagan Appointed by President Barack Obama in 2010	Neil Gorsuch Appointed by President Donald Trump in 2017
Brett Kavanaugh Appointed by President Donald Trump in 2018	Amy Coney Barrett Appointed by President Donald Trump in 2020	Ketanji Brown Jackson Appointed by President Joe Biden in 2022

Courtesy: Steve Delaney/Photo 12, and Fred Schilling/Collection of the Supreme Court of the United States

The high court rejected the Trump administration’s effort to impose new USPS requirements on mail ballots just weeks before the midterm election.

The U.S. Supreme Court blocked President Donald Trump’s executive order that sought to dramatically change how voters cast their mail-in ballots just days away from the midterm election.

In a majority opinion issued Monday evening, the court rejected the Trump administration’s effort to restrict how state mail-in ballots are received by the United States Postal Service. The Trump order handed unprecedented control of mail voting to the USPS by empowering it to resue to deliver ballots sent by anyone not included on a newly created federal mail voter lists.

In Monday’s opinion, the high court majority denied the Trump administration’s application for stay of a lower court order that ruled “the executive branch has no authority to regulate elections.” The lower court also noted that the Trump order would cause “irreparable harm” to voting rights groups and voters by creating confusion about mail ballots that millions of voters rely on just before a major election.

The case was referred by Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson. Justices Clarence Thomas and Samuel Alito were the only two dissents.

In his concurring opinion, Justice Brett Kavanaugh, who was appointed by Trump, said that while,

in his view, there is “at least a fair prospect that the final rule falls within the Postal Service’s statutory authority,” its implementation just weeks away from Election Day would be “arbitrary and capricious in violation of the Administrative Procedure Act because state and local election officials do not have sufficient time to reasonably implement the rule before the elections.”

In a statement provided to theGrio, Kristen Clarke, NAACP General Counsel, celebrated the ruling.

“This decision is a big victory for voters this midterm election season,” said Clarke, a former attorney general for civil rights during the Biden administration. “The Supreme Court rightly rejected an effort that would have made it harder for millions of Americans to participate in our elections. Mail voting is safe, secure, and deeply rooted in our nation’s history.”

Clarke added, “The Court’s decision preserves a critical pathway to the ballot box and reaffirms that our democracy works best when every eligible voter can participate. We will continue to use every tool available to support Americans in registering their voices and their ballots this midterm election cycle.”

The NAACP and other voting rights groups had on the frontlines fighting against Trump’s order on mail-in voting, filing lawsuits and amicus briefs arguing that the executive action was a violation of the

law. The Constitution grants states authority over the administering of federal elections, not the federal government.

Damon Hewitt, president and executive director of the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, said the mail-in ballot restrictions threatened to disenfranchise millions of eligible voters who rely on mail voting to “participate in our democracy while balancing work, caregiving responsibilities, disabilities, and other realities of daily life.”

“The Trump administration is trying to limit access to the ballot, sow confusion at the polls and to use the ensuing chaos as an excuse to exert power over agencies and processes in a politicized way,” said Hewitt, who noted that Black and brown voters are “frequently targeted by voter suppression schemes.”

NAACP President Derrick Johnson said Trump’s “repeated attacks on his own citizens’ voting rights are straight out of an authoritarian ruler’s playbook.”

The civil rights leader said of the president: “Every time he has tested the limits of his powers, the resistance movement has grown stronger.”

He added, “People have turned out, marched, sued, and organized. With less than fifty days until the November 3rd election, now is not the time to slow down — it is time to double down.”

Bishop William Barber Voter Mobilization from page 1

a diverse coalition of faith leaders and activists, begins this week with events in Kentucky, New Jersey and Georgia where he will give a national sermon at Atlanta's historic Big Bethel AME Church laying out how low wage and Black voters are the true swing vote in the South and that turning out the vote is the key to the people owning their power. From there, the tour will continue across the South and in battleground states leading up to Election Day, November 3, 2026.

This is the latest step Bishop Barber and Repairs of the Breach have taken to promote 100 Days; 1,000 Marches initiative designed to mobilize 5 million low wage in-

frequent voters, particularly in the South and battleground states, utilizing peer-to-peer text messaging, grassroots phone banking, door-to-door canvassing and more in addition to the marches to the polls.

To date, more than 40 different organizations have already joined the project and more than 200 local groups who have announced that they are organizing individual marches. That total continues to grow daily.

"In the last election, 90 million people didn't vote while the majority in Congress was decided by just 7,000 votes," Barber said. "We don't need to march on Washington right now. All of our money, energy and

effort needs to be marching, walking, running and riding to the polls. We must meet this constant and visible attempt to suppress the vote with the most massive voter mobilization we have seen in recent history."

"I'm talking about organizing marches or hundreds and thousands of people or just getting five or ten neighbors walking together. I'm talking about multiple marches in every city and community, down every street and side road. I'm talking about moral fusion, multi racial, non violent and non partisan marches across America from the first day of early voting and beyond."

NAACP calls for federal, UN investigations/ suspicious deaths of Black people from page 1

stances across the United States in recent years. And as more and more news reports of these types of deaths surface, calls for justice have amplified from social media users, community leaders, and organizations like the NAACP Legal Defense Fund (LDF).

"Thinking about the image, the brutal image of a Black person hanging or dead under seemingly suspicious circumstances. That's not an image that exists isolated from the present. Rather, it invokes a history of racialized terror, and it contributes to this collective unease that Black people and Black communities have been facing for centuries," LDF attorney Alyssa Gordon told theGrio. "And given that history, we believe that it's incredibly important that every suspicious incident is thoroughly and independently investigated in every single case to make sure that the truth is uncovered, addressed, and these families are made whole as much as possible."

And to do so, the Legal Defense Fund has called on Congress and the United Nations to conduct these investigations. This week, the LDF submitted letters to both entities urging officials to take immediate action in examining the growing number of suspicious deaths of Black people across the United States.

"It's been 250 years since the United States became a new nation, and one thing that has not changed throughout all this time is the persistent devaluation of Black lives," Gordon noted. "in recent years, there's been more and more reports of Black people found dead under suspicious circumstances, a number of deaths, including hanging from trees, and what we're seeing here is an apparent indifference from state authorities, local authorities, and federal authorities. So this is not

only an affront to the families of these victims, but to the American people at large."

"To that end, it is important that federal resources are invested to conduct a rigorous inquiry to ensure that the past is not prologue. The past is not the present — and to get to the truth of what's happening, we really need our federal government and international bodies to act. But we're just not seeing the level of momentum that's necessary to address the scope of the problem," she continued.

The letters call on Congress to create a congressional commission and ask the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism and Independent Expert Mechanism to advance Racial Justice and Equality in Law Enforcement to conduct thorough and unbiased investigations into the series of suspicious deaths of Black individuals across the country. Despite the existence of studies like JULIAN's "Crimson Record," which found 70 modern-day lynching cases in the South and the growing number of cases of Black people being found hanging from trees and dying suspiciously, no federal actions or investigations have been made into what has become a disturbing pattern. Through Congress and the UN's investigations, the LDF hopes these unbiased probes will produce data that prove the influence of racial bias in these cases.

"We need to concretely be able to show and statistically be able to show that racial bias is at work and it's skewing the investigations and the numbers. Once we create that as our foundation, we can then capitalize on that. Now that we know that this is true, we would be able to recommend remedies in terms of how law enforcement can change the way

that they classify these deaths and how they investigate these deaths. We could create model legislation that could be used in states across the country to militate against this from occurring. But it's just really important to get the unbiased data first because that would be able to inform later solutions."

In the letter addressed to Congress, LDF president Janai Nelson urged that the findings of the Congressional commission be made public. Making a similar request to the UN, the organization also asked that "the U.N. Independent Expert Mechanism to advance Racial Justice and Equality in Law Enforcement to evaluate whether American law enforcement is failing to investigate these deaths due to racial bias, and if so, recommend remedies."

"When domestic institutions fail, it is the responsibility of our international bodies to come in and investigate because we need unbiased investigations that are not tainted by the racialized history of America's past and America's present, and because of that, it is essential not only that we bring in these federal resources, but that we bring in international resources as well," Gordon shared explaining the decision to submit a request to the UN. "It's not an either/or; it's a both/and. We are calling for as many resources to be used as possible to help address this horrific issue that just continues to happen."

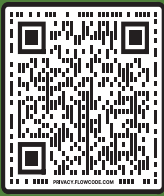
Though the letter references the ongoing investigations into the deaths of individuals like Wells, Erving, and more, Gordon explains that the LDF's request does not hinder nor create any preliminary conclusions in these cases, but rather amplifies the nuances of these cases.

"What we are seeing is growing evidence that racial bias in law en-



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ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

YANCEYVILLE CENTER HVAC REPLACEMENTS

Sealed proposals will be received until 3:00 PM on October 20, 2026, in Dehuguley Building 602 North Benbow Rd., Greensboro, NC 27411, for the construction of North Carolina A and T Yanceyville Center HVAC Replacements, at which time and place bids will be opened and read aloud.

Electronic specifications (PDF) for this project can be obtained from

Contact **Teresa White**, teresa.white@rmf.com

An open pre-bid meeting will be held for all interested bidders on Sept 29, 2026, at the NC A and T Yanceyville Center located at 2105 Yanceyville Street, Greensboro, North Carolina 27405 at 3:00 AM. The meeting will address project specific questions, issues, bidding procedures and bid forms.

The state reserves the unqualified right to reject any and all proposals.

The Pre-Bid Meeting is Mandatory.

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The Shout-Out Line

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Good afternoon, I want to let your readers know that I received and e-mail informing me that City’s Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) will hosts its 11th-annual Purple Tree Lighting Ceremony at 6 pm on Wednesday, October 7, on the front steps of the Melvin Municipal Office Building, 300 W. Washington St. The event commemorates Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October. Participants are encouraged to wear purple to acknowledge domestic violence survivors and victims. The CSW partnered with the Guilford County Family Justice Center, The Greensboro police Department, the Greensboro Department of Human Rights and the Guilford County’s Sheriff’s Office in this event. I hope all who are interested or are victims of domestic violence will attend.

Shout-Out

What up, G-times? There will always be a man richer than your boyfriend/husband and there will always be a lady hotter than your girlfriend/wife. Help your man become your choice help your woman become your queen. It only takes one special woman or man who loves you and cares to make you happy and be a positive and spiritual part of your life. Just remember, happiness starts with you not with your relationships , not with your job, not with your money but with you. There are many people with money who complain and whine all the time. Relationship goals starts with you. Have a great day and stay blessed everyone.

Shout-Out

Hello, I want to shall my thoughts reviewing African Achivies. “Slavery is white history. How we survived it is Black history.” The words make an important distinction about how the history of slavery is often taught. Enslavement was not something Black people created or chose for themselves. It was a system built, enforced and profited from by people and institutions that turned human beings into property for profit and greed and made racial inequality part of law and society. But Black history cannot be reduced to what slavery did to us. It also includes what enslaved Africans and our descendants did in spite of it. They preserved families and traditions, created new cultures, practiced their faith, learned and taught one another, resisted their enslavers and built communities under conditions designed to deny them control over almost every part of their lives. Resistance took many forms. Some escaped slavery throught networks of assistance or created independent Maroon communities. Others organized revolts, secretly learned to read, preserved African traditions, negotiated for greater control over their lives or simply refused to allow slavery to completely determine who they were. Survival itself required extraordinary adaptation across generations. The history of slavery must be remembered in all its brutality, but so must the people who survived it, resisted it and created lives beyond it. Their story is not only about what was done to them. It is also about what they built, protected and passed down despite everything that was done to prevent them from doing so.

Shout-Out

Good morning, G-times, you know, Trump’s Motto got to be, promise everything, deliver nothing and blame someone else. I voted for him. What the hell was I thinking.

Shout-Out

Hello, For some Hispanic Americans who supported Donald Trump in 2024, today’s aggressive ICE crackdown may be a painful reckoning. Expanded arrests and deportation operations have increasingly swept up people without criminal records, including longtime residents with families and jobs. Reports of forceful raids, detention, and controversial enforcement tactics have intensified fears in Hispanic communities including in North Carolina and Greensboro. What some voters expected as immigration enforcement has become, for them, a harsh reality affecting neighbors, relatives and friends. Their regret reflects the realization that political choices can carry consequences far beyond election day. Just today ICE unjustifiably shot a Hspanic immigrant in the back in Austin Texas. He was legally here with a work visa, had no criminal record and was working for Door Dash and was making a food delivery when ICE, without provocation, shot him. Who you vote for can have life or death consequences. ICE killings, the Iran War and millions of Americans bing kicked off of Obamacare are very telling examples of this reality.

Publisher's View



**Earl Jones, Publisher
The Greensboro Times**

2026 Midterm Elections Most Consequential for African-Americans

GUILFORD COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS
VOTE EARLY VOTING
November 3, 2026 General Election

EARLY VOTING
October 15–October 31, 2026

SCAN QR CODE FOR:
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 - Election Updates
 - Interactive Map
 - Sample Ballot
 - Site Information
 - Voter Registration

NEED MORE INFORMATION?
www.guilfordelections.org
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EARLY VOTING SCHEDULE

DATES	HOURS
Thurs., Oct. 15 & Fri., Oct. 16	8:00 AM - 7:30 PM
Sat., October 17 - Sun., Oct. 18	CLOSED
Mon., Oct. 19 - Fri., Oct. 23	8:00 AM - 7:30 PM
Sat., Oct. 24 & Sun., Oct. 25	10:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Mon., Oct. 26 - Fri., Oct. 30	8:00 AM - 7:30 PM
Sat., Oct. 31 (Final Day)	8:00 AM - 3:00 PM

ELECTION DAY
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2026
Vote at your assigned precinct
6:30 AM–7:30 PM

VOTING LOCATIONS MAP

17 EARLY VOTING LOCATIONS

1. Old Courthouse (Carolyn Coleman Conf. Rm.) - 301 W. Market St., Greensboro
2. Ag Center (Barn) - 3309 Burlington Rd., Greensboro
3. Barber Park (Pavilion) - 1500 Barber Park Dr., Greensboro
4. Brown Recreation Center - 302 E. Vandala Rd., Greensboro
5. Bur-Mil Club - 5834 Bur-Mil Club Rd., Greensboro
6. Charlotte Hawkins Brown (Woodlawn Hall) - 6134 Burlington Rd., Gibsonville
7. Craft Recreation Center - 3911 Vanceville St., Greensboro
8. Deep River Recreation Center - 1529 Skeet Club Rd., High Point
9. Jamestown Town Hall - 301 E. Main St., Jamestown
10. Leonard Recreation Center - 6324 Ballinger Rd., Greensboro
11. Lewis Recreation Center - 3116 Forest Lane Dr., Greensboro
12. Oak Ridge Town Hall - 8315 Linville Rd., Oak Ridge
13. Pleasant Garden Community Center - 5024 Alliance Church Rd., Pleasant Garden
14. Roy B. Culler, Jr. Senior Center - 921 Eastchester Dr., Ste. 1236, High Point
15. Stokesdale Town Hall - 8325 Angel-Pardue Rd., Stokesdale
16. Union Square Campus - 124 E. Gate City Blvd., Greensboro
17. Washington Terrace Park - 101 Gordon St., High Point

Map images not shown in image

THE PULPIT FORUM OF GREENSBORO & VICINITY
NAACP Greensboro Branch

B.A.M.
A COMMUNITY & CONGREGATIONAL MOVEMENT TO RECLAIM VOTING!

BLACK ACTION MARCH
SOULS TO THE POLLS

FAITH-ACTION RALLY
WED. OCT 21, 6P

PROVIDENCE BAPTIST CHURCH
1106 Tuscaloosa St.
Join the pre-march FAITH FAMILY REUNION
Featuring choirs, keynote speakers, and food vendors!

MARCH
SUN. OCT 25, 1P

MEET AT NEW LIGHT BAPTIST CHURCH
1105 Willow Road
MARCHING TO BARBER PARK POLL

You can REGISTER same day & VOTE at the march!
GSOPULPITFORUM.ORG

North Carolina midterm 2026 elections are one of the most consequential for African Americans since the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Democrats gaining control of the North Carolina General Assembly, and US Congress is essential to begin to end the Trump administration's trickle-down racism from the White House to the North Carolina General Assembly. President Trump has issued racist Executive Orders dismantling anti-racist DEI programs and initiatives reversing decades of federal policies addressing racial inequity. His Executive Orders are a racist attack on racial equity, reparative justice and gains of the Civil Rights Movement. The North Carolina Republican controlled General Assembly has acted in concert with the Trump's racially discriminatory Executive Orders. They passed North Carolina House Bill 171 and North Carolina Senate Bill 227. The Bills restricted institutional efforts to address racial inequality. Governor Josh Stein vetoed the Bills. However, the State legislature overturned Stein's Veto on July 1st. Stein criticized the overrides in part as "stok-

ing the cultural wars that divide us." He went on to say, "...they are overriding my veto on bills to whitewash the diversity that make our state strong..."

For African Americans, the midterm elections results will determine whether government laws and policies expand or restrict the tools available to challenge racial inequality. It is essential for the Democratic Party to win control of the North Carolina House and Senate, as well as both chambers of the U.S. Congress. Unfortunately, over the past decade, the Republican Party—the Party of Lincoln—has become the party of George Wallace. Wallace, the former governor of Alabama, famously declared, "Segregation now, segregation tomorrow, and segregation forever" during his inaugural address on January 14, 1963. That statement became a rallying cry for those opposing desegregation during the Civil Rights Movement. Trump has welcomed the Proud Boys and other white supremacist groups into his political camp. Many participated in the January 6 insurrection and were pardoned by Trump. His

Executive Orders have restored unconstitutional racial discrimination and ended merit-based equal opportunity. These Orders and policies deliberately mislead the public and weaponize civil rights laws meant to prevent discrimination and ensure every American has a fair chance to compete. We must also not forget the nationwide efforts, led by the White House, to suppress the Black vote by advancing racial gerrymandering.

The 2026 midterm elections come as a defining moment for racial equality in North Carolina and America. In 2026, one seat on the North Carolina Supreme Court will be up for election. This seat is currently held by Anita Earls, a Democrat, who is seeking re-election and whose seat expires at the end of the year. For African Americans, the 2026 midterm elections will determine who writes, who defends, and challenges civil rights laws and policies. Voter registration, civic organizing, and voter turnout will have a direct impact on both North Carolina and the United States civil rights policy.

NAACP calls for federal, UN investigations/ suspicious deaths of Black people from page - 1

forcement, in medical examination, things like that, have skewed the results of suspicious deaths to where a lot of medical examiner offices are actually classifying what should be a homicide as suicides for various reasons," she explains citing a 2025 Maryland audit of cases handled by former Maryland State Medical Examiner Dr. David Fowler which found that dozens of police custody deaths were misclassified as accidental or of unknown causes citing that racial and pro-police biases may have contributed to the mischarac-

terizations.

"Our research has determined that OCME was especially unlikely to classify death as a homicide if the decedent was Black or if they died after being restrained by police," Attorney General Anthony Brown said at the time. "These findings have profound implications across our justice system. They speak to systemic issues rather than individual conduct."

An example, the LDF attorney says, is "concrete evidence" that things may be being skewed in these

investigations, thus explaining the growing suspicions in some communities.

"Black people are dying. Black lives are being undervalued, and we need to address that head-on. Otherwise, the past is just going to continue to replicate itself in the present," she emphasized.

While the LDF is still awaiting a response from Congress, the organization is encouraging communities, regardless of whether or not a suspicious death has taken place in their state, to contact their elected offi-

Viola Davis rejects Target's apology after Halloween costume backlash

Story by Shahana Yasmin



01KMFJ8GAKS4S0YGQ686K3K7RC.jpg
© Yui Mok/PA



Viola Davis has rejected Target's apology over a children's Halloween costume that was pulled from stores after drawing criticism for evoking racist blackface caricatures.

The Oscar-winning actor addressed Target directly in an Instagram post on Tuesday, sharing an image of the costume alongside historical minstrel imagery. "Target, I do not accept your apology and I do not believe that you understand the impact...the pain...the dehumanisation of the above," she wrote. "These images laid the foundation and the ideology for every atrocity that has been committed against my people."

Davis ended her message: "We MATTER!! You have shown us that you are not on OUR side."

The Independent has contacted Target for comment.

The costume, marketed as the "Kids' Glows Under Blacklight Circus Clown" outfit, was sold by Target for \$25. The listing was removed following the backlash.

The product showed a young Black boy wearing the costume – a black-and-orange chevron and argyle bodysuit, black gloves, and a hood with an exaggerated smile and small top hat.

The image led to criticism online because of its perceived resemblance to racist imagery associated with blackface minstrelsy, a form of 19th-century American entertainment in which white performers

darkened their faces and used exaggerated features to caricature Black people.



Critics specifically pointed to the costume's exaggerated mouth and the child's pose as resembling historical minstrel imagery.

Target apologised on Monday and said the costume should never have been sold. "As a company, we know we got this wrong, and we are deeply sorry," the retailer said in a statement. "The costume is offensive and should never have been part of our assortment. It is no longer available for sale."

The company said it knew the incident was "especially hurtful for our Black guests, team members and partners" and described removing the costume as "an important first

step".

The company said it was examining "how this happened and what needs to change to ensure this won't happen again".

Target did not publicly explain how the costume was approved nor did it identify the people responsible for its design and review.

For activists who have criticised Target's retreat from DEI, the costume has become a new test of the company's claim that it is committed to Black customers and employees.

Sheletta Brundidge, a Minneapolis-area business leader who protested the company's DEI rollback, told Reuters: "You rolled back diversity, so who's in the room, now, to say 'hey, this is wrong?'"

Rev Jamal Bryant, who led a 40-day Target boycott last year, was more direct, telling the Washington Post that a costume evoking Jim Crow-era minstrel imagery "is not simply getting it wrong".

He said the incident showed that Target "still lacks corporate diversity among decision-makers" and needed concrete internal changes.

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NAACP calls for investigations from page - 7

cials, encouraging them to support the commission. However, on the national front, Gordon tells theGrio that the organization has received a response from a party within the United Nations and is working to set up a meeting to discuss it.

"These are not isolated incidents; these are interconnected," she concluded. "The one overarching

point that I will reiterate is that Black lives are no less important than any other lives. It is truly, truly heartbreaking to see so many deaths go unaddressed or be obfuscated in some way because it's showing black people that 'hey, you don't matter as much as other people,' and it's important not only to combat that vehemently, but to also keep close to

the heart your own value and your own sense of personal worth, because it doesn't matter what other people tell you, what other systems tell you, other entities tell you. We know who we are. We know what we bring to the table. We know that we matter, and it's important to internalize that and use that to drive us forward in this movement."

North Carolina Black business owners organize in response to North Carolina HUB closure

Triangle News/G-boro Times edit



Business leaders from across North Carolina assembled at the International Civil Rights Center & Museum to condemn the elimination of the HUB office and plan next steps.



Gerry McCants, Co-Founder, Greensboro Business League



200 plus North Carolina business owners attendees/summit and townhall event



Gabriel Esparza, NC Dept. of Administration



(L-R) NC Rep. Amos Quick, NC Senator Gladys Robinson, Gerald Carr, CEO, ALL-Pro Builders, and Attorney Michelle Clark Jenkins,

Despite the closure of an essential state-supported network, Black business owners are still finding ways to flex their economic muscles. They held a business economic leadership summit at the International Civil Rights Center and Museum in Greensboro last week, (Sept. 10th).

“we’re here to talk about solutions, recommendations and next steps” said Gerry McCants, Co-Founder, Greensboro Business League. We also have an executive order and resolution to speak to some of the things we talked about here today that we hope the governor’s office will do”

After 27 years, North Carolina’s Office of Historically Underutilized Businesses was eliminated from the state budget in July, impacting approximately 6,400 minority- and women-owned construction businesses that held HUB certifications.

Nikki-Nicole Miles is founder and principal lighting designer of Glimmer & Glow Architectural Lighting Design, a Durham-based lighting design firm. She told The Tribune that closure of the HUB office will widen the gap between small, MWBE and larger, established

businesses.

“‘Other’ firms do not face the same systemic barriers to growth as small Black-owned businesses do. The closure of the office was intentional,” Miles wrote in a statement. “The wealth generation pipeline for minority businesses is now restricted even more. History has shown the impact of removing the access, resources and reach of an entire group of people. The goal is erasure, not equity or inclusion.”

Black chamber leaders, business owners and policymakers meeting in Greensboro was to strategize a path forward. Greater Durham Black Chamber President and CEO CJ Broderick delivered remarks, saying “now is the time to build Black economic power.

“When the General Assembly repealed the statutes that created the HUB Office, they didn’t just close an office. They dismantled the statewide system that gave more than 6,400 certified firms a front door to opportunity: certification, advocacy, accountability and a seat at the table.”

Partnered with the Greensboro Business League, The Collective and

others, the GDBCC delivered a call to action: demand the state create avenues through which underutilized businesses can compete.

Broderick also said that House Bill 171, legislation banning diversity, equity and inclusion, and “promoting equality in state agencies” has not yet been passed in the North Carolina Senate. Since this year brings midterm elections, he asked that constituents urge their representatives to oppose the bill.

Calvin Stevens Jr. is president of CATE Services, another Durham-based firm specializing in construction, design and program management. CATE was contractually identified in agreements with Red Hat, the city of Raleigh, the Raleigh Convention Center specifically, as a minority-owned partner for the Red Hat Amphitheater and Convention Center project – a \$40 million deal. CATES was notified of termination of the contract last month.

The firm had an established relationship with the city, having been contracted to remove a granite statue memorializing fallen Confederate soldiers from the State Capital in June 2020.

PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY

Draft MPO Program of Projects

The Greensboro MPO invites the public to review and comment on the **Draft FY 2027 Program of Projects (POP)**. The POP lists proposed transit grants for the Greensboro Transit Agency (GTA), Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART), and Guilford County Transportation and Mobility Services (TAMS). These agencies plan to apply for the grants during the 2027 federal fiscal year, which runs from October 1, 2026 to September 30, 2027.

- The public comment period is open through **September 23, 2026**.
- The draft Program of Projects is available at www.guampo.org.

The Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) will consider the draft POP for adoption at its September 30, 2026 meeting. If you wish to speak at the TAC public hearing on the POP, please email guampo@greensboro-nc.gov by **5:00 PM on September 25, 2026**.

For more information, to submit comments, or to view the draft POP visit www.guampo.org, email guampo@greensboro-nc.gov, or call (336) 373-2865, or write to:

Greensboro Urban Area MPO
Attn: Draft Program of Projects
P.O. Box 3136
Greensboro, NC 27402-3136

Anyone in need of auxiliary aids or interpretive services may call (336) 373-2865.

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The Greensboro Gist

(e-newsletter)



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Need financial assistance to buy your first home? The City of Greensboro has a program for that. It's called Housing Connect GSO.

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DOLLY PARTON

AND BLACK PEOPLE: WHAT I LEARNED FROM MY RESEARCH

SOMETIMES ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN POLITICS

“OF COURSE BLACK LIVES MATTER.”
— DOLLY PARTON 2020

GREW UP IN A SEGREGATED SOUTH  Didn't meet Black students until high school. Life taught her differently. PEOPLE > PREJUDICE	INVESTED IN A BLACK COMMUNITY  Used money from Whitney Houston's "I Will Always Love You" to buy property in a historically Black Nashville neighborhood. "HER PEOPLE, WHO ARE MY PEOPLE AS WELL."	WILLING TO CHANGE  Changed the name of her Dixie Stampede attraction after learning of its Confederate associations. REALIZE IT. FIX IT.	RESPECT, DIGNITY & HUMANITY  You don't have to be Black to stand with Black people. You just have to be a decent human being.
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WHAT I LEARNED: Dolly Parton doesn't speak for Black people. She doesn't have to. What matters is what she's willing to **do** when nobody is watching.

AN ALLY DOESN'T HAVE TO LOOK LIKE YOU. CHARACTER IS REVEALED BY ACTION, NOT APPLAUSE.

RECOGNIZE THE ALLIES. CHALLENGE THE HATE. BUILD THE UNITY. — GET THE BLACK MIND RIGHT

I started researching Dolly Parton expecting to find the usual celebrity statements about race. What I found was more interesting.

Parton grew up in segregated Tennessee and didn't encounter Black students until high school. Yet her experiences later challenged what she had been taught. In 2020, she simply said, "Of course Black lives matter." But words are easy. What caught my attention was her actions. After Whitney Houston turned Parton's "I Will Always Love You" into a worldwide hit, Parton used some of that success to purchase property in a historically

Black Nashville neighborhood. She said she wanted to be there with "her people, who are my people as well."

That made me think. You don't have to be Black to recognize racism. You don't have to experience it personally to understand it. And you don't have to speak for Black people to stand with Black people.

Parton also changed the name of her Dixie Stampede attraction after recognizing its Confederate associations. To me, that's another important lesson: when you realize something is wrong, you have a choice, defend it or change it.

My research didn't convince me that Dolly Parton understands the Black experience. She doesn't. What it did make me realize is that sometimes we spend so much time identifying people who don't understand us that we overlook people who are actually trying to understand.

An ally doesn't have to look like you. Sometimes character is revealed not by what someone says about us, but by what they're willing to do when nobody is watching.

by Larry "Syid" Wright

Dolly Parton Didn't Just Say Black Lives Matter. She Showed It.

She grew up poor, one of a dozen children living in a one-room shack in the foothills of Tennessee's Great Smoky Mountains. She became a country music legend, an A-list Hollywood actor, millionaire businesswoman and pop-culture icon, a star who soared so high and burned so brightly that she was known worldwide simply by her given first name: Dolly.

Yet despite achieving global superstardom, accumulating a vast fortune and reaching larger-than-life status in an industry that struggles with diversity, Dolly Parton was embraced by the Black community. When her family announced her death at age 80 on Tuesday, a wide range of Black icons — including the nation's first Black president — noted her passing.

Parton died after a brief battle with cancer.

While many Black admirers praised Parton's artistry and hailed her improbable rise to stardom, others noted she was a white per-

son who "got it" — someone who not only saw and understood Black America but also empathized with the people and tried to help. They described her as a quiet but consistent social-justice advocate whose consciousness likely was shaped by her humble beginnings.

During her six-decade career, Parton embraced Black artists, spoke plainly against racism, distributed millions of books that helped countless Black children read, invested royalties into a Black Nashville neighborhood from arguably her biggest hit — which a Black woman transformed into a timeless, Grammy-winning pop anthem. And she treated Black people and culture not as something outside her world, but as part of it.

"I understand people having to make themselves known and felt and seen," Parton told Billboard during the protests and racial reckoning following the murder of George Floyd in 2020. "And of course Black lives matter. Do we

by Rev. Dorothy S. Boulware 8-25-26

think our little white asses are the only ones that matter? No!"

Perhaps most significantly, in her art and her interviews, Parton never pretended that her impoverished childhood — ostracized, made fun of, seeing her parents sweat, toil and swallow pride just to put food on the table — was charming. She seemed to understand that inequality and poverty are systemic, that a helping hand can make a big difference, and that children can't dream beyond the world they know unless someone places possibility within reach.

"It's hard to imagine many people having a bigger impact," former President Barack Obama wrote on social media. "Born in a one-room cabin, she earned 11 Grammys and an Emmy, built a business empire, helped millions of kids learn to read... What a life." Former Vice President Kamala Harris, the first Black woman to serve in the office and receive a major party's presidential nomination,

Source: ABC News

Woman Won't Face Charges After Fatal Walmart Parking Space Shooting



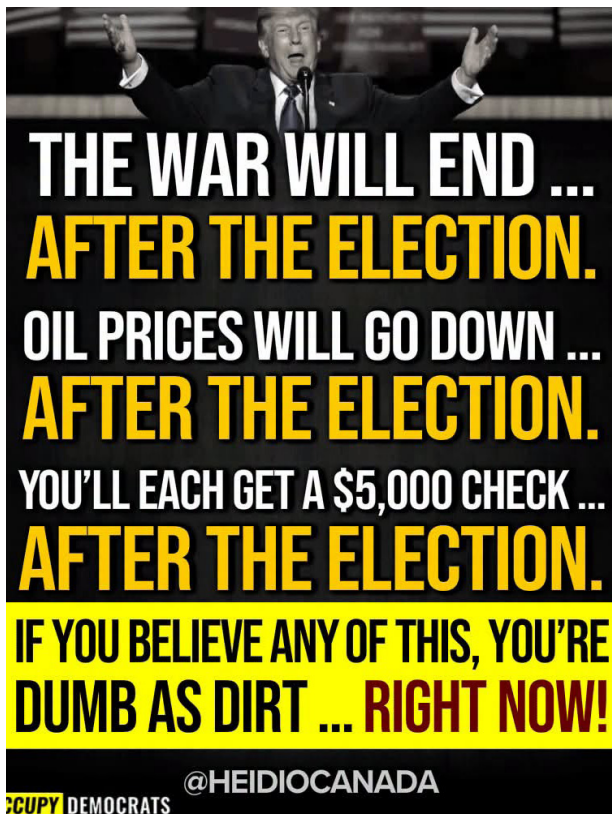
A Florida woman identified as Melissa Payne will not face criminal charges after fatally shooting 62-year-old Bart DiGuglielmo during a confrontation over a parking space at a Walmart in North Lauderdale.

The June 30 incident was captured on multiple videos. Prosecutors said DiGuglielmo repeatedly approached Payne despite warnings to stay away as she backed away from him. Payne ultimately fired one shot, striking him in the abdomen. He later died at the hospital.

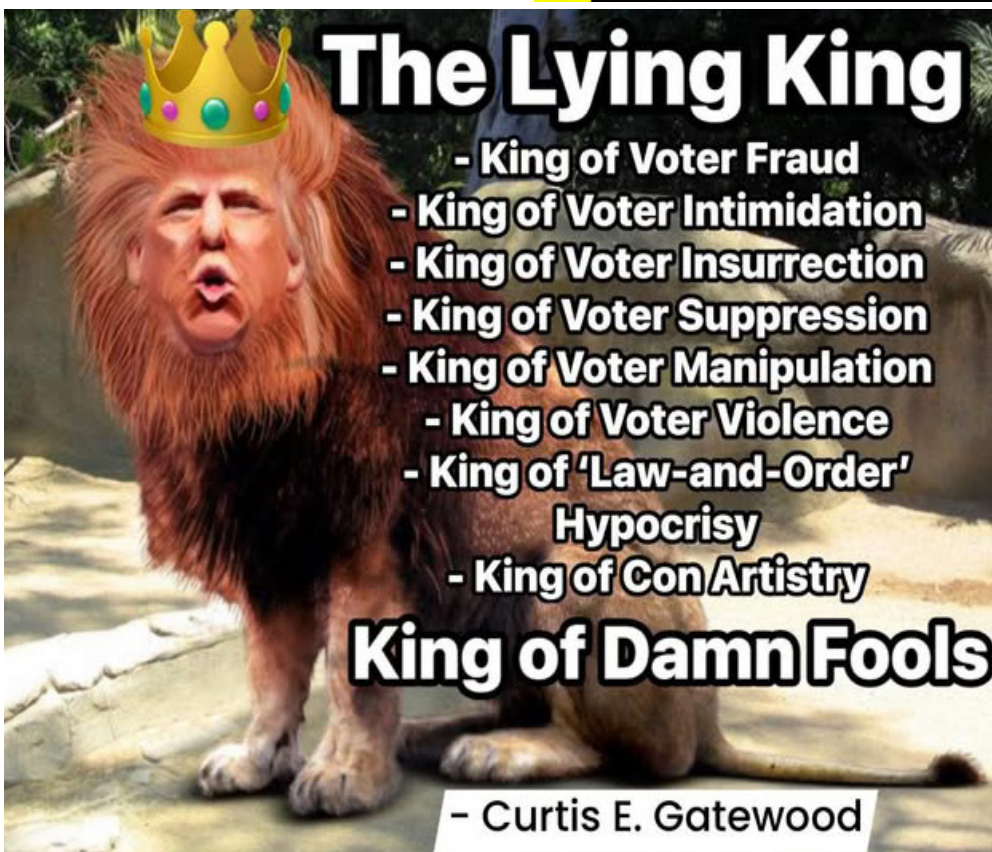
The Broward County State Attorney's Office determined that prosecutors could not disprove Payne's claim that she reasonably feared death or serious bodily harm. Under Florida's Stand Your Ground law, officials concluded she was immune from prosecution and had no legal duty to retreat. DiGuglielmo's family disputes that conclusion and says the shooting was not justified.



Bennett college was founded as a normal school to educate freed enslaved people in 1873 by Albion Winegar Tourgee, a former Civil War soldier, lawyer, judge, and the founder of the National Citizen's Rights Association. He represented Homer Plessy in the ground-breaking Supreme Court case Plessy v. Ferguson



Martin L King Jr along with his father Martin L King Sr and his son Martin L King III, 1960.



High Point Alumnae Chapter Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

North Carolina HUB Office Closure - from page - 9



“It was not convenient to remove the confederate monuments for the city of Raleigh, Red Hat, and the Raleigh Convention Center in the midst of the George Floyd riots. It wasn’t convenient for me and my family to receive death threats from terrorist groups and have to have police protection to remove them to bring peace to downtown Raleigh,” Stevens said at last week’s meeting in Greensboro. “It wasn’t convenient for the Raleigh Convention Center to receive taxpayer money for the project, but it is apparently

convenient for Red Hat, the city of Raleigh and the Raleigh Convention Center to terminate my contract.” Stevens told The Tribune that his firm had performed over a year’s work on the project.

Earl Jones, former NC State legislator and co-founder of the Greensboro Business League called the North Carolina General Assembly legislation closing of the HUB office, “trickle down racism, the anti-DEI effort in Trump’s White House has triggered and infected the North Carolina General Assembly.”

The coalition made three demands of Governor Josh Stein:

- * Establish an advisory council on Black affairs in the state
- * Transfer all the HUB-certified businesses to the state Department of Administration’s Small Business Enterprise Program
- * Establish a small business goal of 25% participation and established “good-faith efforts.”

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

YANCEYVILLE CENTER ROOF REPLACEMENT

Contact Teresa White, teresa,white@rmf.com

Sealed proposals will be received until 2:00 PM on October 20, 2026, in the DeHuguley Building 602 North Benbow Road, Greensboro, NC 27411, for the construction of North Carolina A and T Yanceyville Center Roof Replacement at which time and place bids will be open and read aloud.

Electronic specifications (PDF) for this project can be obtained from REI Engineers, 9121 Anson Way, Suite 100, Raleigh, North Carolina 27615. Contact John Davinson jdavinson@reiengineers.com 919 219 2569 beginning September 28, 2026.

An open pre-bid meeting will be held for all interested bidders on September 29, 2026, at the NCA and T Yanceyville Center located at 2105 Yanceyville Street, Greensboro, North Carolina 27405 at 2:00 PM. The meeting will address project specific questions, issues, bidding procedures and bid forms.

The state reserves the unqualified right to reject any and all proposals.

The Pre-Bid Meeting is Mandatory.



A hospital built to meet the needs of Greensboro's African American community during segregation was recognized with a North Carolina Highway Historical Marker.

The marker commemorating L. Richardson Memorial Hospital was dedicated during an indoor ceremony at Barber Park Event Center in Greensboro, N.C. (1500 Barber Park Dr., Greensboro, N.C.) on May 15. Following the ceremony, the marker was installed at the corner of Washington Street and Benbow Street.

Byron Allen from page 1

vision production, broadcasting, and digital media, including the acquisition of The Weather Channel and the news platform TheGrio.

Born in Detroit in 1961, Allen moved to Los Angeles as a child after his parents divorced. His early exposure to the industry came via his mother, Carolyn, a publicist for NBC Studios, which allowed young Byron to mingle with stars like Redd Foxx and Freddie Prinze. Allen began performing stand-up comedy at age 14.

He was quickly discovered by Jimmie Walker, who invited him to join a writing team that included future late-night stars Jay Leno and David Letterman. This trajectory culminated in Allen's historic appearance at age 18 on The Tonight Show starring Johnny Carson, making him the youngest comedian to ever perform on the program.

After hosting NBC's reality program Real People and touring as a stand-up opening act for musicians like Dolly Parton and Lionel Richie, Allen pivoted from "show business" to "business show," establishing his production company, CF Entertainment, in 1993. His initial syndicated talk show, Entertainers with Byron Allen, employed a pioneering revenue-sharing model in which he distributed the program to stations at

no cost, generating revenue through advertising sales.

Despite early struggles, including home foreclosures and the loss of phone service, Allen persevered, and his show remains in syndication.

Renamed Entertainment Studios in 2003, the company is now valued at over \$4.5 billion. Allen has built one of the industry's largest cable network portfolios, featuring 10 24-hour HD networks, including THE WEATHER CHANNEL, COMEDY. TV, CARS.TV, and LOCAL NOW. The company also continues to produce and distribute Emmy Award-winning and nominated shows while selling advertising for 43 broadcast and cable television programs.

Allen has aggressively pursued business acquisitions, including the film distributor Freestyle Releasing (now Entertainment Studios Motion Pictures), which released the 2017 hit shark thriller 47 Meters Down. Other film successes include the Western Hostiles and the mystery-thriller Chappaquiddick.

In the digital space, Allen acquired TheGrio in 2016, transforming it into a video-centric news platform that delivers compelling content to African Americans and attracts over 20 million annual visitors. The company's 2018 acquisition

of The Weather Channel, the No. 1 weather news television network, further diversified its portfolio. The Weather Channel has since deployed cutting-edge Immersive Mixed Reality (IMR) technology to enhance climate and weather reporting.

Allen has consistently championed economic inclusion and Black ownership of media companies, asserting, "Blacks need to both be on the camera and own the camera."

In October, Allen was featured in Variety and shared his latest projects from his film studio with the publication.

This vision led to the formation of ALLEN MEDIA BROADCASTING in 2019, which began building a broadcast station group through a series of acquisitions, including 11 stations from USA Television. He also personally partnered with Sinclair Broadcast Group to acquire 21 Regional Sports Networks (RSNs) from Walt Disney/FOX Corporation for \$10.6 billion.

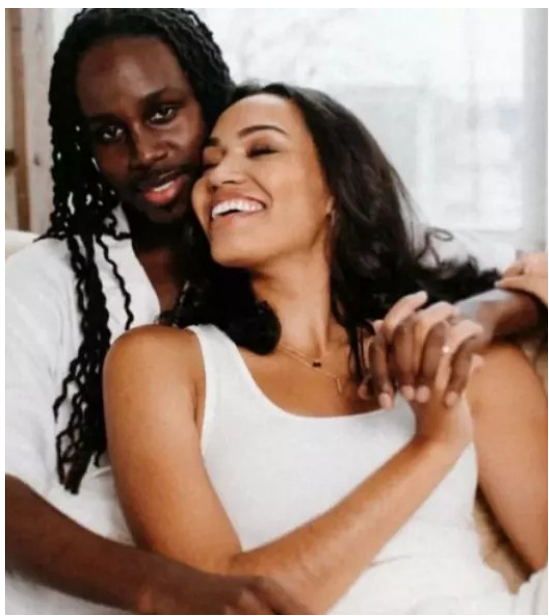
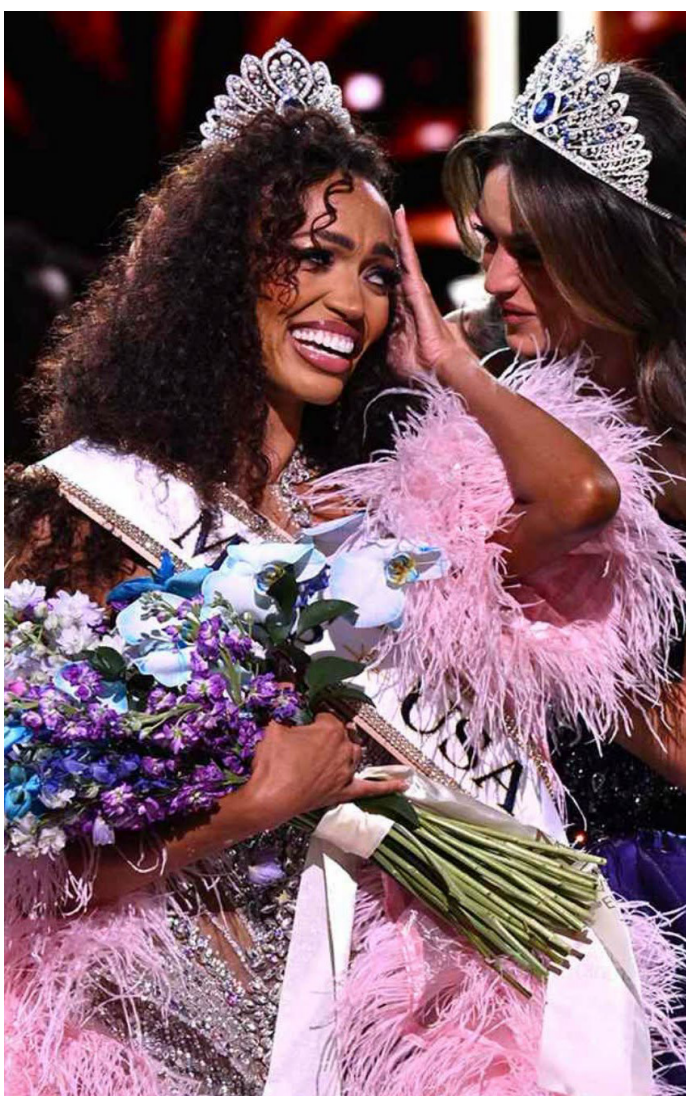
Allen is married to TV producer Jennifer Lucas, and the couple has three children. He was inducted into Broadcasting and Cable's Broadcast Hall of Fame in 2019.

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Justus Kelley's Miss USA Win Is For Every Black Woman Choosing To Live By Her Own Rules

The former Miss Virginia USA was crowned Miss USA 2026 during the pageant's 75th competition in Miami. Her win marks a major first for the organization, making her the first mother, first married woman, and first woman in her 30s to hold the title.

by Lauren E. Williams,
Beautiful Magazine



We are hearing it more and more: life does not end at 30. And for many women, that is when things are just getting good.

We are rewriting the rules, changing the timelines, and deciding for ourselves what comes next in our lives. We are changing careers, having children when we want, getting married when we want, and going after any and all opportunities that may not have been available to women before us.

Now, we can add winning Miss USA to the list. Meet Justus Kelley.

The 31-year-old made history last night, August 27, snatching the title of Miss USA 2026. Representing Virginia, she is the first married woman, first mother, and first woman over 30 to win the national title.

Don't you love seeing Black women change the game?

Miss USA began allowing married women and mothers to compete in 2023. The pageant opened eligibility to all women 18 and older in 2024. Before that, contestants aged out at 28.

During the final question por-

tion of the competition, Justus touched on this. She spoke about being 31, married to her college sweetheart, and raising two foster siblings while continuing to pursue her own goals.

"What my year as Miss USA would mean and look like is no longer questioning if we have to choose between our ambitious careers, our families, and our wildest dreams," she told the audience "I'm standing on this stage embracing every part of who I am, and I believe that I can be your next Miss USA."

She also reportedly addressed her history-making win at a press conference after the pageant, saying it was "a huge honor." She continued, "I look at this like a responsibility to know that I was trusted to be the first."

Who Is Justus Kelly, The New Miss USA

While Justus represented Virginia, she is originally from Indianapolis.

She earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Indiana University, with studies centered on

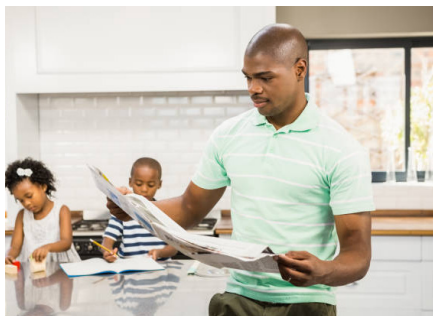
community and public health. She is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. Justus now works as a senior philanthropic adviser for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

Justus and her husband, Tyler Kelley, are also licensed foster parents. They currently care for siblings and have welcomed children ranging in age from infancy to 10 into their home.

Justus also founded Foster Footprints to support foster youth and families in the DMV.

Before traveling to Miss USA, she packed some of her belongings in trash bags to spotlight a reality many foster children face when entering a new home. "A trash bag should never be a child's suitcase," she told People.

And while she can absolutely pull off a pageant gown, Justus has also talked openly about thrifting her wardrobe. She wore secondhand pieces during the competition and has used her fashion choices to push back on the idea that pageantry has to come with a giant price tag.



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