



Cuyahoga County

Will One Case Tilt a Race?

Officers' incompetence, Prosecutor's response may weigh heavily in March Primary



Michael O'Malley
[Photo: Randy O. Norfus]

By R. T. Andrews
EDITOR

Stephanie Tubbs Jones served as Cuyahoga County prosecutor from 1991 until she stepped down in early 1999 to run for Congress. That was perhaps the only time within the memory of anyone alive today that the black community was comfortable with an incumbent prosecutor.

The ease of the relationship wasn't so much a matter of race as it was of fair play. Black people had a sense they would be treated fairly, not punished simply because they were black. Her predecessor was the autocratic,

distant, and opaque John T. Corrigan, Mr. Over Indict himself. Corrigan was considered a man of probity, but he ran a strong political machine out of his office, sending his assistant prosecutors off to become judges where they would work with prosecutors to keep the wheels of criminal justice humming along the pipeline to prison.

Whether Jones was able to make lasting substantive reforms in the office is a story for another day. She was a big improvement just because she wasn't John T. She also brought a softer hand to the administration of the office. She was far more personable; brought some much needed diversity to the staff, and did not suffer from the baggage that Corrigan had inevitably accumulated over a 35-year tenure that was too long by probably a quarter century.

What concerns the community today is whether we are headed for another — or are presently in the midst of — another overly harsh and biased prosecutorial regime. Or perhaps worse, whether

that harsh indifference might be combined with a return to the cronyism that was evident in the Bill Mason regime that succeeded Jones in 1999.

Tim McGinty, the current prosecutor, is the target of much community ire today largely because of his handling of two cases. He charged Cleveland police officer Michael Brelo for his outrageous conduct in firing 49 shots into the vehicle of two unarmed civilians at the conclusion of a high speed chase involving 62 police cars, more than 100 police officers that was a poster case for a Cops Gone Wild video. Brelo, waving his right to a jury trial, was found not guilty by a judge last May. [He was fired from the Cleveland Police Dept. only last month and may attempt to win reinstatement through arbitration.]

Even more troubling than the Brelo case, which took almost two and a half years to come to trial, is McGinty's handling of the Tamir Rice case. Tamir was shot and killed by two



Timothy McGinty
[Photo: Randy O. Norfus]

Cleveland policemen who were responding to a call of a black male waving a gun around at a municipal recreation center. Unbeknownst to the officers, the gun was a toy, and their tactical imbecility created a situation where 12-year-old Tamir was dead within two seconds of an officer-provoked confrontation.

Sources close to McGinty have told the Real Deal Press that the prosecutor initially wanted to indict at least Timothy Loehmann, the officer who fired the fatal shot that killed Tamir, but that as the investigation proceeded he became convinced that neither Loehmann nor his partner had committed an

Continued On Page 10

Euclid

Today's gang members: misguided but savvy

Authorities offer clues to controlling organized mayhem

By Derek Dixon
PRESS CORRESPONDENT

Concerned Euclid citizens were advised in a January community forum to reject antiquated images of "West Side Story" or "New Jack City" if they wanted an accurate image of a contemporary Northeast Ohio gang member. Thriving financial networks and digitized insignia are as prevalent in today's gang culture as in skyscraper boardrooms, explained the contingent of criminal activity experts.

A nine-member panel of law enforcement and juvenile court representatives, assembled by Ward 8 councilwoman Laura Gorshe and District 11 county councilwoman Sunny Simon, shared information and addressed questions from about thirty-five attendees at the Euclid Public Library on January 20th.

Continued On Page 6

Business Calendar

Feb. 11

LEFCO Worthington CEO to talk about growth by acquisition

Larry Fulton, CEO of LEFCO Worthington, will talk about "growing with velocity" through the acquisition of small companies when he appears at a networking event sponsored by the Small Business Development Center. The program will be Feb. 11 from 5:30pm-7:30pm at The Loft 2E, 1667 East 40 Street, Cleveland 44103. Call 216.812.3162 to reserve a spot.

Feb. 17

Warrensville Hts. Chamber to present LinkedIn expert at monthly luncheon

The Warrensville Heights Chamber of Commerce will present author, speaker, and radio show host Diane Helbig at its monthly luncheon on Feb. 17. Helbig will talk about strategies business professionals can use to build relationships, establish credibility, gain exposure, and conduct research. The lunch will run from 11:30am to 1:15pm at the Marriott Hotel, 26300 Harvard Rd. Call 216.454-0199 for reservations.

Feb. 25

Urban League annual meeting set

The Urban League of Greater Cleveland will hold its annual meeting on Feb. 25 at 6pm at its offices, 2999 Prospect Ave.

Euclid

Euclid Chamber puts out welcome mat

On January 26 Charlie Sims opened his car dealership not only to customers, but to anyone with a stake in Euclid's business future, as the incoming chairperson of the Euclid Chamber of Commerce made Sims Buick GMC the venue for the chamber's 2016 kickoff session of monthly "Coffee Connections" events. "The benefits of being a chamber member range from networking to getting programs the chamber offers to helping improve the overall Euclid business environment," said Sims, whose dealership has been in Euclid since 2005.

Euclid Chamber director Sheila Gibbons said the twenty-five or so attendees represented about 175 current members who either own an enterprise in Euclid or have other measurable business dealings there.

Andrew Clicker, an account executive

with Edgecliff Technology Innovators (ETI), a mobile office solutions firm, has found his investment in the chamber to be a good deal. "We've gotten several potential customers and made good partnerships as a result of chamber membership," he said.

"This is a good atmosphere to meet other owners," agreed Kristina Swann, an account exec with Quality Ribbons & Supplies Co. The thirty-three year old female-owned company services major corporations, small businesses and government agencies.

The "Coffee Connections" events are open to the public and are held at a different Euclid business each month. The next mixer will be held February 9 from 8:30-9:30 a.m. at HGR Industrial Surplus, 20001 Euclid Ave. Dates for each event can be found at www.euclidchamber.com.

VOTE March 15th

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Elect Michael
O'Malley
Cuyahoga County Prosecutor

"Our system of justice is not working. I will reform the system to ensure everyone is treated with respect and justice is pursued fairly and impartially."

Michael O'Malley



Restoring Public Confidence & Seeking Justice Fairly and Impartially

CORNERSTONES: Construction, Building Trades, and Community Benefits

Phase One of African American Cultural Gardens nears completion



Above: Door of No Return at African American Cultural Garden [under construction, Jan. 23, 2016]; Top-Right: Natoya Walker Minor. Bottom Right: Dr. Eugene Jordan at annual meeting.

By R. T. Andrews
EDITOR

Geologists tell us that Doan Brook originated about 15,000 years ago, after the last glaciers retreated from Northeast Ohio. Sometimes it seems to have been almost that long since land was set aside for what was to become the twenty-ninth cultural garden, one of those remarkable jewels celebrating the idyllic part of Cleveland's rough-and-tumble ethnic history.

The African American Cultural Garden plot was officially dedicated in 1977, envisioned by many as a kind of spiritual center for what is now Greater Cleveland's largest ethnic group. Even though ground was broken last May during a marvelous ceremony attended by hundreds, there continued to be many doubters who thought the dream of this particular garden would never be realized, and certainly not on the grand scale envisioned by architect Dan Bickerstaff, whose original monumental vision was eventually scaled back to \$2.7 million memorial garden to win municipal approval. That figure includes all construction costs plus a \$500,000 endowment fund for ongoing maintenance.

Now, with a blissful absence of fanfare but an abundance of focus, a dedicated team of building contractors has begun to give shape to a construction

project that for decades seemed to meander about even more than its Doan Brook neighbor, the idiosyncratic waterway that descends from Shaker Heights underneath University Circle and reemerges in Rockefeller Park, gracing the Cultural Gardens as it makes its way to the Great Lakes.

The casual commuter along Martin Luther King Jr. Drive will not notice much activity on the steeply sloped site, but should eyes be cast upward and westward, the Door of No Return — centerpiece of Phase I — can be seen along Wheelock Rd. The unfinished structure may not have great visual appeal at the moment — that will come when the concrete has been glad with a combination of sandstone and polished black granite — but it is nonetheless imposing. The two cross beams, which were set in place just weeks ago on Jan. 4, weigh in at 30,000 lbs. and 49,300 lbs, respectively.

Phase I of the project is slated for completion on April 1. Phase I costs exceeded \$500,000. Planning for Phase II is underway, with both its scope and schedule subject to the pace of fundraising.

Keeping the dream alive for the past several decades and focused on raising the money has been a tiny, aging but steadfast core of volunteers banded together as the nonprofit Association of African American Cultural Gardens. Carl Ewing is its president and Natoya Walker Minor, a key aide to Cleveland mayor Frank Jackson, has emerged as AAACG's guardian angel.

She was on hand last month at the Association's annual meeting to accept a \$27,000 check from Ewing, net proceeds of the organization's November fundraiser. Walker took the lead last year as head of a team that raised close to \$600,000 in six months to ensure the completion of Phase I and seems committed to helping drive the process to completion. She acknowledged at the meeting that her position as Cleveland's director of public affairs and leader of the mayor's community benefits agreement initiative has helped her advance the Association's cause.

Incidentally, it was touching to see Walker Minor recognize some of the group's pioneers, especially Dr. Eugene Jordan. The dentist has for decades always been one of the first to put his time and energy in service to innumerable civic causes.

Much of the construction work on this project is being done either via donated services or at cost. Among the companies participating in this community project are Coleman Spohn, Caver Brothers, Platform Cement, Foti Construction, All Crane, MAC Precast, McTech, and the construction manager, Ozanne Construction. Famicos, the community development corporation, serves as project fiscal agent.

While completion of the African American Cultural Garden is not yet around the corner, members and friends of the Association can be expected to persevere, no matter how stony the road, until victory is won.

HLMS Sustainability Solutions



Maximizing the sustainability of both physical infrastructure and business operations has been the focus of HLMS Sustainability Solutions since its inception in 2007 as "Humanity's Loom". Since the change to the current name in 2012, HLMS has become an industry leader for construction clientele in the real estate, health care, non-profit, and higher education arenas; as well as federal government facilities and multi-tenant housing. Its signature package of benefits is encompassed in the multi-dimensional supply of "LEED" (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) project management services which help identify, establish, and maintain the sustainability goals of any ambitious company. LEED services include a Responsibility Management System, sustainability progress updates, Credit Research, Requirements Specifications review, and a variety of online support tools.

HLMS maintains a nine-member consultation team of principal project managers, administrative support staff and an intern. Led by cofounders, LEED AP Margaret Hewitt and LEED AP & MBA Laura Steinbrink, they have serviced or currently are servicing buildings belonging to Cuyahoga Community College, Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority, Cleveland Clinic, and the city of Cleveland. Out of town clients include Bellweather Real Estate Capital (Cincinnati), Fukui Architects (Pittsburgh), and Old Dominion Freight Line.

"I was raised in a house by parents who worked every day to serve people, to help those who could benefit from their skills and talents," Hewitt says. "For 2016, we want to expand our business by working on more projects using the INVEST rating system developed by the Federal Highway Administration." The HLMS website maintains a blog with updates on current projects. It invites responses from clients and company partners on the progress of current projects and where the building sustainability industry stands on a variety of topics, data and insights.



216-452-0909



The Word on Small Business

Make Business Resolutions for 2016

By Kirby Freeman
RDP CORRESPONDENT



As another year begins, just as individuals make personal resolutions to get back into shape, stop bad habits, or make needed changes in their characters, entrepreneurs need to make similar goals to improve the state of their businesses.

There is always no time like the present for business owners to make changes to bolster sales or to cut back on certain expenses. But, the change of the calendar – due to the beginning of the tax season – is a good time to take stock of what improvements could be made to shape a better functioning operation.

It's at this time of the year when business owners begin to actively consult with their

bookkeepers and accountants in an effort to measure operating performance for the previous year. Closing the books is one way to benchmark the direction of the company. It's also a perfect time to take stock of what methods and practices could be implemented to move the business forward.

The beginning of the year is also a slow time for many types of small businesses. The end-of-year holidays are over, and consumers are less willing to spend due to cold winter weather and beginning of the year bill-paying. The seasonal lull in customer volume that many businesses face at this time of year makes it an ideal time for entrepreneurs to recalibrate their operations.

There are a few tips that have been noted by several business advisors that could

serve as resolutions for entrepreneurs ready to move their businesses to the next phase in 2016:

- 1. Resolve to Grow.** Just as individuals usually have to recommit to being better, entrepreneurs occasionally have to commit to putting all of their mental, emotional, financial and personal energies to expanding their business operations.
- 2. Aggressively Look for New Opportunities.** Many of the most successful entrepreneurs continuously seek out new growth opportunities. Most business growth opportunities can either be in the form of geographic expansion, new product introductions, a new service, or aggressive expansion into a new market segment.
- 3. Resolve to Send Out All Invoices on a Timely Basis.** As has been discussed in this column in the past, entrepreneurs have to tightly monitor and control their receivables. When a business has delivered a product or service, a record – usually in the form of an invoice – should be

sent to the customer as soon as possible. This will allow the business to quickly notify customers just how much they owe and the terms of repayment, while helping the business owner track just how much revenue needs to be collected.

4. Review Current or Look for New Accounting Software. Many small businesses fall into the trap of not being able to effectively apply for loan funding or qualify for a wide range of assistance because they do not keep financial records. Entrepreneurs must be able to fully trust their bookkeeping and accounting systems. They should review their current systems to insure that their adequacy or seek new systems. Many computer software systems – like Intuit QuickBooks – can be purchased at many retail shops.

5. Implement or Upgrade a Social Media Strategy. Many entrepreneurs do not have a business website or a marketing strategy that includes Internet, Facebook, Twitter, or other type of Social Media to

drive sales. These owners need to find a way to use these tools to attract new customers. Others, who do have a social media presence, often need revise their strategies to reflect market changes.

6. Develop a Business Growth Plan. When reevaluating the direction of the business for the year, it is good practice to update older versions of the business plan with a growth plan that features growth opportunities, complete with financial projections.

Every New Year, entrepreneurs need to make resolutions for the growth and regeneration of their businesses, fitting them into the same agendas they make in their personal lives. Take time to review some possible resolutions and stick to them. Use this ideal time of year to come up with effective strategies for 2016.

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Wal-Mart Closing is Huge Economic Loss to Bedford Area



[Photos by Richard Donald Jones]

By Richard Donald Jones
PRESS CORRESPONDENT

The 2008 grand opening of a new Wal-Mart Super Center on Rockside Road was to be the linchpin of a retail renaissance for the struggling inner ring suburb of Bedford. But eight years later the renaissance is dead as the Arkansas based company announced in January that it was closing the location at the end of the month amid a downsizing of at least 269 stores worldwide.

The closing announced on January 15 caught city leaders off guard.

"They contacted our office at 8:15 that morning and put that press release out at about 11:00," explained Bedford City Manager Michael Mallis. "They gave us no notice at all."

According to a press release from Wal-Mart headquarters, the company is moving its focus to profitable Super-center locations, and growing its online business to better compete with dotcom giants such as Amazon.

With 300 workers, the Bedford Wal-Mart was among the city's largest employers. Mallis estimated that Bedford receives about \$200,000 a year in tax revenue from the retailer, with the Bedford School District also receiving large annual property tax payments.

"It's a big hit to our community, absolutely, a big hit to the city but more than that Wal-Mart employed about 300 people whose families were counting on

those paychecks," Mallis said.

Bedford's Ward 6 Councilman Donald Saunders believes the decision to close the store was made months ago.

"They gave us no heads up at all. Wal-Mart doesn't care. They knew they were going to close this store. They just finished a resurface of the parking lot," said Saunders. "It's clear that was done to make the property more attractive once it hits the market."

Wal-Mart owns the building so they can choose to keep it empty to keep a competitor from entering the market, but City Manager Mallis said Wal-Mart officials have indicated that they are going to be aggressive in marketing the property.

"Once they notified us of the closing we reached out to see if we could meet with them to maybe work out a solution to possibly keeping that location open, Mallis said. "They said the decision was final. Every indication is they want to sell that property."

But Councilman Saunders isn't necessarily buying the company line.

"We've seen how this plays out," says Saunders. "If they don't sell that building right away, down the line they will come back and ask the property value be reduced. The building sits empty as an eyesore and the schools take a further hit in property taxes."

"As I said, Wal-Mart doesn't care!"

While the city and local schools are taking a hit, Wal-Mart's role as a corporate citizen in Bedford was at times questionable.

According to Bedford police records the store generated 760 calls, more than two a day, for police assistance during the 2015 calendar year.

Saunders acknowledged the store had its share of problems.

"I don't how much of an impact they had on our safety forces but they indicated to us that the store was losing more money to theft than it was bringing in," Saunders said. "But that store was not kept to the levels of some of their other locations in terms of security and customer service."

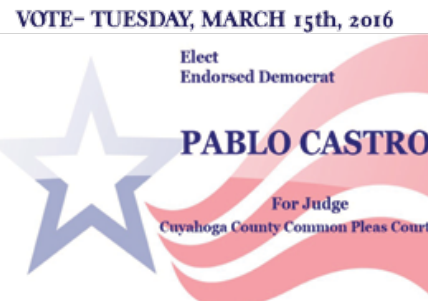
Saunders says city officials are not sitting still and are trying to figure out how to deal with the closing, including actively seeking new tenants on its own.

"We have reached out to developers and some big retailers included Meijer's, but that Wal-Mart had 109,000 SF of space and not many retailers have use for a building that large."

Meijer, a Walker, Michigan-based operator of what it calls hypermarkets, is looking to expand into the Cleveland area, according to some media reports. The company had planned to open in Twinsburg some 15 years ago before canceling its plans, citing market conditions. The site now is a Cleveland Clinic facility.

Bedford City manager Mallis would not comment on the record about bringing in Meijer's but did say that talks have occurred and the city is a willing partner with the right development plan.

"We want to redevelop that space and will bring to the table very attractive incentives such as tax abatements and job creation credits."



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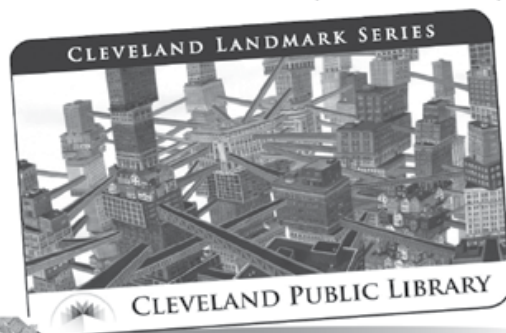
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Amy Casey

"In Dissemination I wanted to represent how the library acts as a conduit of information and services, connecting people and places and ideas."



Today's Gang Members Continued From Page 1

"This is not like back in the '80s with the Crips and the Bloods on the street corner," advised Assistant Cuyahoga County Prosecutor Diane Russell. "These guys are actually creating an enterprise. The 'Heartless Felons' is an umbrella. Smaller gangs like 'J-Park' and the

'Benham Boys' are all under this Heartless Felons umbrella."

Russell referenced the movie classic "The Godfather" to describe how current gang members, though belonging to their own street families, still honor the larger circle and highest-ranking leaders. "This is not to scare you; but to let you know that these are not just kids hanging out on the corner. You've got 15-year-olds with guns that are getting directives from the 'godfather'. These aren't dumb kids. They're doing dumb things that are hurting our community, but they're not dumb. They've got titles. They've got missions. They've got punishments. They ante up what the steal. They put money on the books for their comrades in the commissary. They know about that."

Officials also noted how significantly the online world is in gang promotion. "You don't see as much graffiti anymore. What you see now is a lot of social media. That has become the new graffiti," observed Euclid Police Sergeant Dan Novitski. "The kids will put a lot of their signs and information on their Facebook wall and Instagram. So if you (parents) see anything out there, contact us and let us know."

As intrigued as the audience was to hear the identifiers, how to curtail the rise in criminal activity was the most common inquiry. "What can I do as a board member and as a parent?" asked newly-elected Euclid School Board member representative Steve Johnson.

"What we need is to (have parents and law enforcement) work together as a group and try to lead by example and be mentors in our own communities and try to help these kids out," Novitski responded. "Try to direct these kids and try to give them something more to do. When you see a kid walking down the street, instead of just trying to ignoring him, don't walk past him. We've seen a lot of gun violence lately and a lot of kids that just feel

that the gun gives them some respect. So that same kid that you'd ignore and walk past now suddenly has a gun pointed in your face because he wants the respect. That's what he's looking for."

"If you look at the kids who are involved in crime," added Duane Deskins, the county's Director of Juvenile Crime Prevention, "half don't have a high school education. Half! Those who are twenty-five and younger?—sixty-eight percent (did not finish high school). The councilwoman (Ward 8 representative Laura Gorshe) works her tail off to try to make sure we have good quality schools; but our first line of defense is your house, your kids' cell phone, your schools. And I pledge to you that we'll be on the other end to make sure we have fewer victims."

One local attendee, an IT business owner, uses his own past to connect with gang members. "The reason I was able to tell (former Euclid city officials) that the gangs were coming is because I was a founding member of a gang in the city of Cleveland," related Hank Davis, founder of ICONS (Individuals Collectively Overcoming Negative Situations), a non-profit youth outreach organization. "So the gangs that you all have talked about here, I know many of their founding members who still look to me for advice. We do several prevention and intervention programs in the city, but we also work with the CMSD." Davis' website, unitedicons.org provides a list of programs currently in place.

Dan Marsdan, an officer in the police gang unit of the Cleveland Metropolitan School District summarized that his office and the parents are striving for similar goals. "We don't want you to think we're trying to drop the hammer on these kids all the time. We want them to be productive. That's our main focus and we need your help"

Councilwoman Gorshe anticipates having a similar panel discussion in about a year to gauge how the collective efforts have benefitted the city. But she said that concerned parents need to stay in touch with police with even the slightest observations of suspicious activity or sudden changes in their children's speech or behavior.

Black Health Coalition Takes Year-end Look at DOJ Findings

By R. T. Andrews
EDITOR

The violent death of black people — whether by neighbor, stranger, or law enforcement official — is increasingly coming to be seen as a public health issue, with causes rooted in social, structural, and economic systems. One local nonprofit organization, the Northeast Ohio Black Health Coalition, has begun to focus its limited resources on understanding the interplay of these systems in our community and educating citizens on possible solutions.

The Coalition, also known as NEOBHC, held a focused community meeting January 16 at Enhancement Ministries Church, 5246 Broadway Ave. Cleveland's Slavic Village neighborhood.

The meeting was billed as the first anniversary forum of a Local Conversation on the Department of Justice.

The meeting deserved a larger attendance than the fifty or so attendees, for the Coalition pulled together top presenters and actors in the ongoing community conversation about changing the dynamics of public safety in Cleveland, and by extension, its suburbs.

Among the presenters was Michael Tobin, a Northeast Ohio representative of the US Department of Justice, who gave a report on the status of the Consent Decree negotiated between the City of Cleveland and the DOJ in the aftermath of the DOJ's scathing

report on the practices of the Cleveland Police Department. Tobin recounted how DOJ had opened a pattern and practice investigation into whether Cleveland Police used excessive force. The subsequent report, issued December 2014, found that Cleveland police misconduct had eroded public confidence in law enforcement and in many instances violated Constitutional protections guaranteed to US citizens.

The report led to extensive negotiations between the City and the Department of Justice, resulting in a Consent Decree that was filed in the US District Court and approved in late May by Chief Judge Solomon Oliver. This agreement now has the force of law, is fully enforceable by the federal court, and mandates a number of changes in the Cleveland Police Department. These changes include more training, a greater focus on how to deescalate situations, the provision of first aid, and enhanced cultural competency.

(The Decree can be downloaded or read online at www.justice.gov/usao-ndoh/cleveland-police-reform. Those without access to a home computer can likely review the document at their local library branch or by calling the Cleveland Community Police Commission formed as a result of the decree [216.755.4272].)

Rev. Zachery Williams and LaTonya Goldsby, a relative of Tamir Rice, spoke on the importance of advocacy in bringing about social change. Williams talked about the power of advocacy to reshape our reality.

Other presenters included Rev. Dr. Yvonne Connor & Case Western Reserve University professor Dr. Rhonda Williams, who discussed the work of the Cleveland Community Police Commission, of which they are both members.

Consent Decree monitors Tim Tramble and Ayesha Bell Hardaway also presented. Tramble, executive director of Bell Burten Carr Development Corp. and Hardaway, a professor at Case Western's law school, talked about the nature of their work and the importance of having monitors who understood the community.

William Denihan, who heads the county's Alcohol, Drug Addiction & Mental Health Services, said that "people with mental illness are 13 times more likely to be the victim than the aggressor" in a confrontation.

Denihan, a former Cleveland public safety director, urged attendees to support the current process because "This is the greatest opportunity we will ever have to make substantive change in our police department. The only way this will work is if the public gets involved.

While the attendance at the meeting was sparse, the audience did include several public officials, including County Councilwoman Yvonne Conwell, State Representative Stephanie Howse, Cleveland Community Relations chief Blaine Griffin, and others well known in Cleveland's civil rights establishment, including former NAACP executive director, Rev. Stanley Miller, and Jill Miller Zimon, current candidate for the state legislature.



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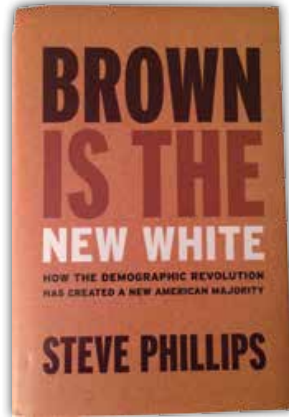
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EDITORIAL

Chickens Coming Home to Roost



Malcolm X famously uttered the words of the headline above when observing how the American love of violence had perhaps played a role in the assassination of America's prince, President John F. Kennedy. The gist of his meaning was essentially that a society reaps what it sows.

Malcolm's words come back to me now as I listen to the frustrations express by many over what they deem to be an inadequate range of choices in the race for county prosecutor. We have spent much time analyzing that contest, have interviewed both the incumbent and the challenger, and will present a full assessment of that contest in our next issue, which will be published March 2.

One thoughtful observer noted how Cleveland's

THERE IS NO REASON FOR CLEVELAND TO REMAIN A SOCIAL AND POLITICAL BACKWATER, DESTINED TO BE LIKE ONE OF THOSE MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY SOUTHERN TOWNS LIKE NATCHEZ, CLINGING TO HALCYON MEMORIES OF THE ANTEBELLUM ERA AND ITS ANTIQUATED ECONOMIES, SLAVERY THERE AND STEEL HERE.

African American leadership characteristically fails to develop and maintain a relationship with whoever is sitting in the county prosecutor's seat until a crisis arises. At that point it's too late to go introduce yourself to the office because it's chest-deep in dealing with the crisis. And the cycle repeats.

We happen to believe that we are in a remarkable moment in local political history, one where the black community has an opportunity to become a predominant political force in this community commensurate with both its numbers and its needs.

Consider that about eight years ago, Barack Obama set out on a quest to become President of the United States. He determined among other things, that the road to the White House ran through Ohio, which meant that the road ran through Cuyahoga County, and most assuredly therefore, through Cleveland and its first ring east side suburbs. He knew that the existing partisan structure of this

heavily Democratic county was top-heavy, weak, and corrupt. Remember, in 2008 Jimmy Dimora was still in public office and squatting atop an enervated Democratic Party. Frank Russo, his partner in crime, was also still in public office and likewise serving as a top party official.

Obama knew this from hundreds of miles away. Did he try and curry favor with that dishonorable crew? No. Did he lament that but for a disorganized Cuyahoga County Democratic Party he might be the next President? No.

**What then did he do?
He organized.
At the grassroots level.**

He put together a so phisticated coalition of likely voters of all hues, ages, genders and persuasions sufficient to achieve the huge majority in Cuyahoga County that was critical to carrying Ohio.

What are the lessons for us here in Cleveland and Cuyahoga County? Why is

this a remarkable time?

To begin with, we have huge problems, including multiple epidemics of homicide, at the hands of the police and by our own hands. We have school systems that do not functioning as we need to them in the 21st century, even as they resist continuing assault from venal legislators shilling for for-profit charter-school operators. We have economic predators at every corner. And we have third-world health conditions in many of our communities in the shadows of world-class healthcare systems. And of course we have chronic disinvestment in too many of our neighborhoods.

Many of these crises existed in the 1960s when the black community had far fewer resources. But that community, more cohesive than than now, and using a different kind of social media, organized and within a few short years, elected a mayor who was able to make breakthrough changes

Continued On Page 9

THE REAL DEAL PRESS

The Independent Source
for Your Community News

We welcome letters to the editor. Please include your name, address, and your best phone number. We may edit for clarity and space.

Send letters, press releases, notices, calendar items, and corrections to *The Real Deal Press* via email at rta@TheRealDealPress.com or fax: 216.672.4304.

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Publisher & Editor:
R. T. Andrews

Advertising Sales:
216.282.5111

Contributors:
Lara Adrienne, Derek K. Dixon; Kirby V. Freeman; Lisa Hammond; Alan Howard; Richard Donald Jones; Af-Odelia E. Scruggs.

Photography:
Randy O. Norfus; Eric Benson.

Layout & Design:
Steve Aresmon Thomas/
Attvcks Media LLC

The Real Deal Press
216.672.4301 v
216.672.4304 f
rta@TheRealDealPress.com
[@RealDealPress](https://www.instagram.com/RealDealPress)



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Chickens

Continued From Page 8

in the City of Cleveland. The generation of leaders that arose with that mayor — his name was Carl B. Stokes — has now largely moved on. While there are many capable black elected officials around town, they do not function organically as leaders of the larger black community.

We are of course past the day when one person could speak for the black commu-

America are essentially aggregations of aggressive special interest tribes. We are oftentimes too timid to succeed in that environment.

(We won't venture in this craziest of all political years to undertake an analysis of what's going on in the Republican presidential sweepstakes, beyond noting that much of it is a reaction to the fact that America has had a

Fudge — are in some ways about as apolitical as politicians can be. Each is more policy wonk than partisan operative. Neither appears the least concerned about building a political organization. Frank is content to run on his record, like it or him, or not. Marcia, for her part, converted the once-potent Congressional District Caucus into a nonpolitical instrument and then let it die.

halcyon memories of the antebellum era and its antiquated economies, slavery there and steel here.

Cleveland can never return to its former greatness unless and until it invests in the great mass of its citizens. That will not happen unless and until that same mass organizes and demands such an investment. Many of the powers that be in this community work

THE TWO HIGHEST-RANKING BLACK POLITICAL OFFICIALS AROUND - CLEVELAND MAYOR FRANK JACKSON AND CONGRESSWOMAN MARCIA FUDGE - ARE IN SOME WAYS ABOUT AS APOITICAL AS POLITICIANS CAN BE.

nity. That message hasn't reached some state officials and chamber of commerce types who tend to think they can make one call and take both the temperature of the black community as well as control of its HVAC system.

We have yet to figure out how to replace that kind of top-down personality-driven small-p leadership regime with any kind of sustainable organization.

Basically, black people in Cuyahoga County rely on the Democratic Party to be that organization. And it does not work for us because we have not organized to make it work for us. Both major political parties in

nonwhite president for the last seven years.)

Race is a difficult thing to talk about publicly in this country. We get into here because, after all, we are *The Real Deal Press*, and how can we have real discussions if we pretend that are not herds of elephants in the room?

But back to the remarkable political opportunity that exists today in Cuyahoga County. The Old Guard is gone in the black community. A vacuum of political leadership exists. The two highest-ranking black political officials around — Cleveland mayor Frank Jackson and Congresswoman Marcia

Does it do anything besides provide parade sponsorship?

A new book out February 1, *Brown is the New White*, talks about the new political calculus in America. Its author, Steve Phillips, grew up in these parts and still has family here. Phillips candidly addresses the changing demographics in America. Young progressives in this town should read it and began to act on its truths.

There is no reason for Cleveland to remain a social and political backwater, destined to be like one of those mid-twentieth century Southern towns like Natchez, clinging to

to keep such organization from occurring. Right now, a trio of black elected officials is planning a game of musical chairs to swap seats on a local/county/state level. Their game is not about public service, but adapting to term limits and seeking greener pastures.

But the opportunity is here, waiting for a corps to begin organizing, not for an election next month or six months from now, but for two and three and five years down the road.

Vote for now, but organize for the future, which, without concerted planning, will soon arrive looking much like the present.

Will One Case

Continued From Page 1

indictable offense. For his part, while McGinty has declined to talk about what happened in the grand jury proceedings, his torturous release of expert reports and numerous inappropriate out-of-court statements have weakened his claim on the office.

The questions at hand this primary season, however, are these:

1. Did McGinty mishandle these two cases so badly that he has lost the public's confidence in his ability to handle the duties of the office?
2. Is Mike O'Malley likely to do a better job?

McGinty's long career as a public servant includes ten years as an assistant prosecutor followed by 18 years as a county judge, before he became county prosecutor in 2011. That record, good and bad, needs to be evaluated along with his performance in the Tamir Rice and Brelo cases.

On the other side, Michael O'Malley also has a record to stand on as an assistant county prosecutor. In addition he has laid out a platform for what he intends to do if elected prosecutor.

The winner of the March 15 Democratic primary is the odds-on favorite to be the next county prosecutor. Early voting starts February 17. In our March issue, we will lay out our evaluation of each candidate. We urge voters to examine each candidate carefully over the next six weeks before casting a ballot.

Local chapter of Black MBAs awards scholarships



L-R: Shaquira Johnson, NBMBA NEO chapter president, Bianca Smith; Lisa Evans, NBMBA vice president; Rebecca Talley, Senior Vice President, Director, Investment Operations & Wealth Management Technology, KeyCorp. [Photo: Eric Benson]

The National Black MBA Association (NBMBA) NEO Cleveland Chapter presented \$5,500 in scholarships to four outstanding area students at its year-end Corporate Scholarships and Awards Reception. The chapter recognized the Cleveland Clinic as its Corporate Sponsor of 2015.

The event was held at Cleveland State University's Monte College of Business, with which the NBMBA chapter has recently established a working partnership.

Rebecca Talley, a KeyCorp senior vice president and director of its Investment Operations & Wealth Management Technology, was keynote speaker for the evening.

The scholarship winners and their schools were:

Bianca E. Smith – Case Western Reserve University, Weatherhead School of Management; Keniece Y. Gray - Case Western Reserve University; Catrina E. Palmer - Rutgers University; and Elisabeth Rockamore - Ohio University.

The chapter also recognized outstanding new members Frank Edmonds III [KeyBank], Brenda Ewart [PNC Bank], and Michael Gaston [Eaton Corp.].


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Health Charts

Tri-C Health, Wellness and Preventative Care Center Reopens at Metro Campus for Spring Semester

Students provide health care services to noninsured and underinsured adults

The Community Health, Wellness and Preventative Care Center at the Metropolitan Campus of Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C) reopened for spring semester on Jan. 26.

The care center provides low-cost health care services to uninsured or underinsured adults while giving Tri-C health career students learning and training opportunities in a clinical setting.

The center is open 2-5 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays, Jan. 26 through April 28. It is located in Room 105 of the Health Careers and Sciences building at Metro Campus, 2900 Community College Ave. in Cleveland.

The center is staffed by students studying to be medical assistants, physical therapy assistants, occupational therapy assistants and dietetic technicians. The students work under the supervision of licensed health care providers.

Services offered at the center include blood pressure readings, glucose and cholesterol screenings; physical therapy and occupational therapy; physical rehabilitation for daily living; pain management; bone density screenings; nutritional coaching; stress management; and exercise and education programs. No physician

referrals are needed.

To schedule a visit or to find out about special health-related workshops, call 216.987.3555.

Tri-C Massage Therapy Clinic Opening for Spring Semester

Appointments available with students studying to be massage therapists

HIGHLAND HILLS — The Massage Therapy Student Clinic at the Eastern Campus of Cuyahoga Community College is opening for spring semester and scheduling appointments through May 6.

Tri-C students studying to be massage therapists provide massages for a fee. The students work under the supervision of licensed massage therapists to gain professional experience in an educational setting.

The cost for a 45-minute table massage is \$30 for adults and \$25 for seniors (age 60 and older) or Tri-C students.

The clinic is open Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays in the Health Careers and Technology Building at Eastern Campus, 4250 Richmond Road in Highland Hills. Appointments are available at the following times:

- Tuesdays: 11:15 a.m., 12:15 p.m., 1:15 p.m., 2:30 p.m. 5:45 p.m. and 6:45 p.m.
- Thursdays: 6:45 p.m. and 7:45 p.m.
- Fridays: 11:15 a.m., 12:15 p.m., 1:15 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.

To schedule an appointment or for more information, call 216.987.2417.

Community Calendar

Feb. 6-7

Gathering Place Warehouse Home Furnishings Sale set

The semi-annual warehouse home furnishings sale, offering sweetheart deals for just about every room in your house, will be held at 4911 Commerce Parkway, Warrensville Heights. Sale hours are Saturday, February 6 9a-2p & Sunday, February 7, 10a-1p. Call 216.595.9546 for more information.

Feb. 13

The Urban League Guild is sponsoring a session aimed at developing future civic leaders.

The program is geared towards young people ages 17-29 and will cover the importance of primary and general elections. The session will be held at the East Cleveland Public Library, 14101 Euclid Ave. from 10am-1pm. Admission is free and a continental breakfast will be provided. Attendees may register by phone [216.233.2967] or email [pchbound@gmail.com].

Feb. 19

The United Negro College Fund Greater Cleveland Leaders' Luncheon will begin at 11:30am at the Westin Cleveland, St Clair Ave NE, 777 St Clair Ave. Call 216.781.8623 for information.

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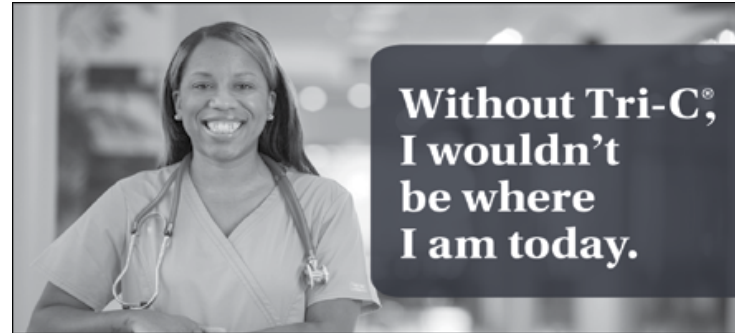
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Education

Health Disparities Scholar named Case Law's First Dean for Diversity

Ruqaiyah A. Yearby, Case Western Reserve University School of Law's first tenured female African American professor, has been named as the school's inaugural Associate Dean of Institutional Diversity and Inclusiveness. Yearby, who joined the



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faculty in 2011, began her administrative position last month.

"Professor Yearby's knowledge, experience and commitment to helping others make her uniquely suited to take on this new role," Deans Jessica Berg and Michael Scharf said.

Before becoming dean, Scharf emphasized the importance of recruiting a more diverse faculty during his leadership of the school's appointments committee. In addition to Yearby's appointment, 2011 also saw the arrival of Juscelino Colares, the school's first tenured Latino professor. As deans, Berg and Scharf made increasing minority student enrollment a key priority; 20 percent of this year's entering students are from underrepresented groups.

"We know the law school can be doing so much more," the deans said. "We think this [appointment] will make for a better educational and scholarly climate, enhance admissions recruitment and provide opportunities to engage more alumni."

The law school's commitment to inclusion dates back to the school's first entering class 123 years ago, whose numbers included an African American student. Before becoming renowned nationally as a civil rights attorney, Fred Gray came to Cleveland to earn his law degree at Case Western Reserve. It was the early 1950s, and Alabama's law schools did not accept African-Americans.

Last fall, the school hosted a high-profile conference regarding police brutality. In the spring, Visiting Assistant Professor Ayesha Hardaway was named to the Independent Monitor Team for the federal consent decree aimed at addressing excessive use of force by Cleveland police. Meanwhile, faculty member Michael Benza has been one of the nation's most widely quoted experts on the issue of police violence against minority citizens, including the fatal police shooting of 12-year-old Tamir Rice in Cleveland in 2014.

During her undergraduate days at the University of Michigan, for example,



Dr. Ruqaiyah A. Yearby

Yearby founded and led "United Brothers and Sisters," a student organization dedicating to bringing together students from different cultures, religions and lifestyles through diversity-related programming.

An honors biology major, Yearby discovered what would become the focus of her legal scholarship during a National Science Foundation-supported research trip to South Africa two decades ago. As she observed sharp differences in access to health care firsthand, she began to recognize that solutions could not come solely from medical professionals—no matter how well meaning.

"It showed me that there will always be disparities unless the laws and structures of society mandate equality," she said.

After graduating from Michigan, Yearby went on to earn a Master's in Public Health from Johns Hopkins University and a Juris Doctorate from Georgetown University. In 2003, she became the first African American woman hired to a tenure-track position at the Loyola Chicago School of Law; five years later, she joined the University of Buffalo as an associate professor in both its law school and school of public health and health professions.

Professor Yearby's scholarship focuses on racial disparities in health care and law, justice and medical research. Two years ago Yearby organized a national symposium at the law school, "Sick and Tired of Being Sick and Tired: Putting an End to Separate

and Unequal Health Care in the United States 50 Years After the Civil Rights Act of 1964." This past September, she presented her research regarding the unjust inclusion of children in medical research to the Oxford Global Health and Bioethics International Conference; later in the fall, she also presented her research regarding the continuation of racial disparities in health care at Duke University School of Law.

"As the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. said, 'I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be. And you can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be,'" Associate Dean Yearby explained. "Thus, throughout my life I have worked to improve the lives of others."

Euclid

Euclid Schools Celebrate Successes

By Derek Dixon
PRESS CORRESPONDENT

Indisputable proof that there are hard working, successful African American students at Euclid High School was on display at the January 25 meeting of the Euclid Board of Education when at least twenty young men appeared before a sparse but proud audience of family and supporters at the Chardon Hills Magnet School on East 222 St.

At least 13 of 25 scholarship-eligible high school football players had made commitments to a variety of four-year colleges and universities, according to an athletic department press release issued before the board meeting. The remaining twelve were undecided but could make their choices by the time the team is honored on February 3 in the high school's west

Continued On Page 13

Community Bulletin Board

County Sheriff's Office Announces Inaugural Citizen's Academy Program

Deadline to apply is February 27

The Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Office is now accepting applications for its inaugural Citizen's Academy.

"If you've ever wanted to learn about law enforcement, this academy is a great opportunity for residents of Cuyahoga County to take part in," said Sheriff Clifford Pinkney in a prepared statement. "Our goal is not only to educate the public on our duties, but use this as an opportunity to advance the relationship between the community and law enforcement."

The 8-week academy, held in the Justice Center Complex, will meet Wednesday evenings from 6pm to 9pm. Residents can expect to participate in hands-on demonstrations, lectures, and field trips that will cover the following topics:

- SWAT
- Corrections
- Firearm Safety
- Media Relations
- Active Shooter

The Citizen's Academy is free of charge and open to all eligible residents. Eligibility

requirements include:

- Resident of Cuyahoga County
- At least 21 years of age
- No felony convictions
- Must pass a background check

For more information or to download the application, visit <http://sheriff.cuyahogacounty.us/en-US/CC-Sheriffs-CitizensAcademy.aspx>. All applications should be completed and submitted to the Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Office by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, February 27.

Tri-C Offering Free Tax Preparation Services Assistance available at four campus locations

Cuyahoga Community College is once again offering free personal income tax filing services to qualified taxpayers filing simple returns with a 2015 earned income of less than \$62,000. The services will be offered at four campus locations this year.

Walk-in assistance on a first-come, first-served basis is available as follows at these locations:

- Metropolitan Campus, 2900 Community College Ave, Cleveland. The free tax clinics will run between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. Saturdays from Feb. 6 through March 26 (closed March 19) in the

Technology Learning Center, Room 153. Preparation of Schedules C, D and E will NOT be offered at this site.

- Western Campus, 11000 Pleasant Valley Road, Parma. The free tax clinics will run between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays from Feb. 5 through April 2 in the Galleria, Room G271.
- Eastern Campus, 4250 Richmond Road, Highland Hills. The free tax clinics will run between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Saturdays from Feb. 6 through April 2 (closed March 19) in the Student Services building, Room 3405.
- Corporate College West, 25425 Center Ridge Road, Westlake. The free tax clinics will run 4-7 p.m. Wednesdays from Feb. 3 through March 23 in Room 203.

This is a walk-in service, and capacity limits are dictated by the number of volunteers offering their services. Returns will be prepared and filed by IRS-certified tax preparers and completed while the taxpayer waits. All returns will be screened for eligibility for the Earned Income Tax Credit and the Child Tax Credit.

To qualify for the service, taxpayers must have a 2015 earned income of less than \$62,000 and must be filing a simple return.

Participants must bring a

current photo ID; Social Security cards for each adult and child listed on the return; all 2015 tax documents, including sources of income; support for any deductions and credits being sought; health care verification; prior year tax returns; and bank account and routing numbers to arrange direct deposit of any refund. Those filing jointly must both be present if e-filing.

For more information, call 216.987.0606 or go to www.tri-c.edu/taxhelp.

Cleveland First Fellows Program Empowering change agents for the public good

The Cleveland Foundation is launching the Cleveland First Fellows program to offer emerging young leaders from across the country the skills and networks needed to create the community they envision and jumpstart a career in public service.

A select group of Fellows will spend a year embedded in public sector agencies in Cleveland working on the frontlines of civic innovation. If you are a recent college graduate considering a public service career, choose Cleveland First and continue the reinvention of a

rustbelt city on the rise.

The program includes:

- Paid placement at a selected public sector agency in Cleveland, providing meaningful career-related work experience
- Participation in a university-based public sector professional development program
- A small cohort with individualized coaching, supervision and support
- Immersion in local civic and cultural life, with first-hand opportunities to network and connect with an array of emerging and senior leaders and organizations

Timeline and Eligibility

Applications will be accepted over the next two months, with the top candidates interviewed during April and May. Selected Fellows will be announced before June and the program will begin in September.

The one-year paid Fellows program is open to recent college graduates (graduation dates between December 2014 and spring 2016).

Applications open this month and the inaugural group of Cleveland First Fellows will begin in September 2016. Interested parties may request the latest information by emailing first@clevelandfn.org. Applications will be available at clevelandfoundation.org in early February.

Euclid Schools Continued From Page 12

gymnasium. The scholarships provide each recipient with tuition-free education, crowning achievements in what has been a banner season for the Panther football program.

"In my four years as superintendent combined, I don't remember having this many recipients," enthused Euclid School Superintendent Keith Bell. "So this is quite an accomplishment for one year. These students are truly

student-athletes, students first and athletes as well. We are very proud of them."

The scholarships are a tribute to the commitment the young men made to teamwork and discipline, according to first-year head football coach Jeff Rotsky. The Panthers won conference and playoff games against Austintown-Fitch and Westerville Central before falling to eventual Division 1 state champion St. Edward. "We

measure success by being consistent," Rotsky said to the group of champions. "We're very, very proud of all of you. Keep up the athletic and academic success."

Chardon Hills Magnet School principal Chris Papouras and Assistant Principal Kait Turner also joined the good news parade. They reported on the success of two innovative student intervention programs recently used at that school. The "i-Ready"

program helped administrators track academic improvement efforts of each individual student more accurately through specific teacher collaboration methods across the curriculum. Data showed use of the intervention resulted in increased achievement in all grade levels by percentages ranging from seven to more than 100 in some cases. Turner also provided the board with a report on the

overall improvement of the school's behavioral climate through multi-tiered universal improvement methods that yielded as high as 81 percent increase in desired social behavior among students.

Finally, the board approved the appointment of its newest member, Steve Johnson, to the city recreation commission before going into executive session to discuss evaluation procedures of the superintendent and treasurer.

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Social Justice Watch

Ohio Chief Justice Forms Grand Jury Task Force

Supreme Court of Ohio Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor announced Jan. 27 the formation of the Task Force to Examine Improvements to the Ohio Grand Jury System.

The concept of a grand jury has been part of the federal system since 1791 and a constant in the Ohio Constitution's Bill of Rights as far back as 1802. Every state constitutional revision since has preserved the protection of the grand jury.

"To be clear, this task force is being asked to recommend ways to improve the functioning of grand juries and to see what additional steps can be taken to improve the public's confidence in our justice system," Chief Justice O'Connor said in a prepared statement. "It is not being asked to determine whether the grand jury system should be eliminated."

Chaired by Franklin County Common Pleas Court Judge Stephen L. McIntosh, the task force has 18 members, including judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, law professors, legislators, members of law enforcement, and community leaders.

Three Cleveland-area citizens are on the task force: Judge Michelle D.

Earley, Cleveland Municipal Court Judge Steven E. Gall, Cuyahoga Common Pleas Court; and defense attorney Roger Synenberg.

The task force will hold its first meeting on Feb. 17 from 6-8 p.m. at the Ohio Judicial Center, 65 S. Front St., Columbus. The meeting is open to the public, but seating is limited. The task force has been asked to submit its final report and recommendations by June 15, 2016.

Also on the task force are: Wayne Co. prosecutor Daniel R. Lutz (vice chair); Sen. Kevin Bacon, R-3, Minerva Park; Sen. Edna Brown, D-11, Toledo; Fairfield Municipal Judge Joyce A. Campbell; Rep. Robert R. Cupp, R-4, Lima; Marion County Common Pleas Judge William R. Finnegan; University of Cincinnati law professor Mark A. Godsey; Lucas County Common Pleas Judge Michael R. Goulding; Colonel Chief Eliot Isaac, Cincinnati Police Dept.; United Way of Central Ohio President/CEO Janet E. Jackson; Hamilton County Municipal Judge Melissa A. Powers; Ohio State University law professor Ric Simmons; Rep. Fred Strahorn, D-39, Dayton; and Greene County Common Pleas Judge Stephen A. Wolaver.

People



Seaman Sherrod Williams graduated from Cape May N.J. training base on December 18, 2015, after eight weeks of intensive training. After approximately 4 months of training in USCG Station Manistee in Manistee, MI, he will be a candidate for Officer training at the US Coast Guard Academy in New London, CT. Williams is a graduate of Shaker Heights HS and Ohio University '13. He is the son of Shaker Councilman and Mrs. J. Earl [Viveca] Williams.

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