



The Week in Politics
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THE REAL DEAL

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PRESS

Black Men Show Strong at Upchurch Fundraiser



State Rep. Terrance Upchurch thanks attendees at May 30 at midtown fundraiser.

By R. T. Andrews
 EDITOR

A May 30 fundraiser for freshman state legislator Terrance Upchurch was notable on several accounts. One of them was the strong presence of black men, including a significant number of those not usually in attendance at such events. We asked a couple of businessmen what drew them out for the occasion. Their responses touched on the importance of supporting new and young political talent, even if at this stage it was more for their potential than any political accomplishments to date. It was a refreshing long view of how the black community may be maturing in its understanding of the importance of new promising newcomers in the political arena.

The fundraiser was not a stag event. A number of women were present, including several judges,

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Tri-C, CMHA, Olivet, Esperanza partnering to bring training into neighborhoods

Local Access Learning Centers aim to remove barriers



L-R, Victor Ruiz, executive director of Esperanza, Inc.; Dr. Alex Johnson, president, Cuyahoga Community College; Rev. Jawanza K. Colvin, senior pastor, Olivet Institutional Baptist Church; and Jeffrey Patterson, CEO of Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority.

By R. T. Andrews
 EDITOR

[Cuyahoga Community College](#), Olivet Housing and Community Development Corp. (OHCDC), an arm of Olivet Institutional Baptist Church, and Esperanza, Inc. are collectively launching a set of learning centers to bring education and job-training opportunities into the community.

OHCDC and Esperanza Inc. will each host a Tri-C Access Center. Esperanza is providing space at its offices at 3104 West 25 St. The center hosted by OHCDC will open at the University Hospitals Otis Moss Jr. Health Center, 8819 Quincy Ave., on the city’s east side.

The Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority is partnering with OHCDC on the Quincy center, a reflection on the number of CMHA residents living nearby. Tri-C president Alex Johnson

talked about the 75% of Tri-C students who are “nontraditional”, i.e., not embarked on a four-year fulltime path to a degree straight out of high school. They’re from military families, or veterans, nonnative English speakers, the formerly incarcerated, etc.

The idea for Tri-C Access Centers grew from conversations between Johnson, Rev. Jawanza Colvin of Olivet, CMHA’s CEO Jeffrey Patterson, and Victor Ruiz of Esperanza, OHCDC and CMHA. All recognized the shared mission and responsibility of their organizations to overlapping populations.

A capacity crowd of about 250 attended the announcement of the partnership project at on June 13 at Tri-C’s Jerry Sue Thornton Center on East 22 St., and the sense of excitement in the room was palpable, from Dr. Johnson on down.

“With the Tri-C Access Center, we are putting a quality education

within reach for all members of our community,” said Ruiz, Esperanza executive director.

Olivet’s Colvin talked about the significance of the partnership model. “We are seeking to set a model for effective neighborhood- and community-based access to the established and emerging workforce industries in our region.”

CEO Jeffrey K. Patterson of CMHA sees the access centers as creating “new opportunities for our residents to gain access to vital skills and resources that will help them move toward self-sufficiency.”

Connecting people to education and job training opens the door to opportunity. Proposed services at Tri-C Access Centers include college and career readiness workshops; English as a Second Language courses; and the College’s Women in Transition program. Workforce offerings may include

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The Week in Politics

Bill Mason is back, Lead-Safe developments, DeWine

Former County Prosecutor **Bill Mason**, who resigned in 2012, will become chief of staff to beleaguered Cuyahoga County Executive Armond Budish, effective July 15.



The hiring, announced this week, raises a host of concerns. Mason's prosecutorial tenure was best known for choosing not to see the rampant county corruption that sent scores of public officials to prison, even as he built a strong countywide political machine inside the dry-rotted Democratic Party. He then helped orchestrate a county government "reform" that changed the governance structure without altering the culture, a fact highlighted by his public reemergence.

It is unclear what negotiations took place to bring Mason back into county government. Notwithstanding the *Plain Dealer's* glowing praise for the move, Mason has no proven executive skills. He will kick butts and take names, however, a skill his new boss clearly lacks.

His hiring by Budish smacks of a certain kind of desperation. It could even be a precursor to a larger scenario that will see Budish out of office by year's end, less than halfway through his term.

Mason's appointment underscores the powerlessness of Cleveland's black politicians. Whatever political poker game Congresswoman Fudge played with Mason and his Parma Boys, it is clear that he now holds the whip hand and will be a force to reckon with in the 2021 elections for county executive and Cleveland mayor.

...

This Friday, an all-day Lead Safe Home Summit will take place at Huntington Convention Center downtown. It was organized by United Way and the Lead Safe Cleveland Coalition. Attendance is "sold out", i.e., restricted to 350 or so attendees who have registered. Cleveland City Council is now considering legislation designed to ameliorate the prevalence of lead in tens of thousands of rental units

across the city. Cleveland Lead Advocates Safe Housing [CLASH], a more grassroots coalition of lead safe activists, says the legislation shows promise but still lacks some of the urgency demanded by the ongoing lead poisoning crisis. On Friday, CLASH attorneys filed suit in Common Pleas Court seeking a mandamus that would force city council's clerk of courts to accept and process the initiative petitions signed by more than 20,000 city residents over the window. The lawsuit, assigned to Judge Dick Ambrose, asserts that council clerk Pat Britt has once again stepped outside the clerical functions of her office and exercised a policy that she is without authority to implement.

It is clear that CLASH intends to remain vigilant to the end that Cleveland has adequate lead safe legislation by next year, and that they are retaining the option to bypass council and go directly to voters to ensure that acceptable legislation is enacted.

...



Finally, Gov. Mike DeWine announced last week that his office will be overlooking county efforts to improve the inhumane conditions at county jail. Budish issued a statement saying he welcomed the state's involvement.

DeWine also made headlines when the work of his office was celebrated by state leaders of Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice and Alliance for Safety and Justice. The two groups recognized DeWine's support in creating trauma recovery centers as an approach to advancing holistic community safety. Ohio is now the second state in the nation to establish a center network that can provide immediate support and crisis intervention to victims of traumatic violent crimes.

THE REAL DEAL PRESS

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The Real Deal Press

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QUOTE of the Week
"The political class is more united by self-interest than it is divided by ideology"
— George Will

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Community Calendar

Tuesday, June 18 at 6p. The 2019 edition of Who's Who in Black Cleveland will make its debut at the annual launch party. Always a good scene for people watching, the event returns to the InterContinental Cleveland Hotel, 9801 Carnegie Ave. Your ticket gets you a copy of the compendium.

Wednesday, June 19 at 3:30p-6p
• SEIU District 1199 is sponsoring a conversation on race, inequality, and how unions can play a role in uniting the Greater Cleveland community. Cleveland Union Hall, 1771 East 30 St. [44115]

Register [here](#).

Thursday, June 20 at 6p-9p. The Black Professionals Association Charitable Foundation hosts its first semi-annual networking mixer of 2019 in observance of the Summer Solstice. Food, entertainment, and a raffle are among the attractions. Frederick's Wine and Dine, Emery Rd., Warrensville 4412

Register/Buy raffle tickets [here](#).

Saturday, June 22 from 11a-2p. Fourth annual Aches, Pains and Automobiles and Men's Health Tune-up. Sponsored by the Northeast Ohio Black Health Coalition. Free behavioral and mental health screenings, dental care, CPR classes, fitness classes, a car show, and more. Care Alliance, 2916 Central Ave [44115].

Saturday, June 22 at 6p. The NAACP Freedom Fund Dinner. Guest speaker is Donna Brazile. Cleveland Renaissance Hotel, Public Square. Call 216.231.6260 for tickets/info.

Monday, June 24 @ 6:30p-8:30p. The Green New Deal: Addressing Climate Chaos. Hosted by the Northeast Ohio Black Health Coalition, Northeast Ohio Black Health Coalition, the Ohio Green Party and the Cuyahoga County Progressive Caucus. Cleveland Hts.-University Hts. Library, 2345 Lee Red. [44118].

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Outdoor Park - Rain or Shine

Our mission is to improve the quality of life in greater Cleveland through neighborhood revitalization, affordable housing, and integrated social services.

Community Bulletin Board



UBF, recasting annual meeting format, to present Sheila Johnson at fireside lunch chat July 9

The United Black Fund annual meeting has been set for Tuesday, July 9 at Windows on the River at 12:30p. Its format has been revamped to include lunch a fireside chat featuring Sheila C. Johnson and WKYC anchor and managing editor Russ Mitchell. PNC Senior VP Michael J. Tay-

lor will receive the Judge George W. White Award, named after one of UBF's founders.

Tickets are \$__. Registration begins at 11:30a. For more info, call 216.566.9263 or 216.571.1510.

Book Club to discuss *Becoming* by Michelle Obama July 18

The Racial Equity and Inclusion Book Club, sponsored by the Fund for Our Economic Future, will discuss Michelle Obama's *Becoming* at its next meeting on Thursday, July 18. Discussion starts at 4:30p at the Cleveland Public Library, MLK Branch, 1962 Stokes Blvd. [44106]. Contact C. Cleveland at 216.456.9800 / ccleveland@thefundneo.org for more info. FREE.

Black Men Show Strong at Upchurch Fundraiser

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State Rep. Stephanie Howse, and county Democratic Party chair Shontel Brown.

Among the attendees was Randall McShepard, one of the very few high-profile black leaders in the Cleveland corporate community. A week after the event, McShepard released an [opinion piece on black leadership](#) through PolicyBridge, a local organization that researches and analyzes local issues from a black perspective.

Early response to McShepard's report is consistent with [our own first take](#) last week. While McShepard deserves credit for talking about the elephant in the room, the effort was light on specifics and his chief recommendation, that the forces most identified with an Old Guard fortress mentality — Cleveland City Hall and the [Greater Cleveland Partnership](#) — was a risible nonstarter.

Tri-C, CMHA, Olivet, Esperanza partnering to bring training into neighborhoods

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advanced manufacturing and information technology training programs to guide residents into careers with sustainable wages and growth potential.

As Tri-C's Alex Johnson put it, it's about "meeting residents where they are to help them pursue degrees, workforce credentials and the opportunity for a better life."

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