

# THE REAL DEAL

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## PRESS

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### CLEVELAND

## School of the Arts is University Circle's Newest Jewel

By R. T. Andrews  
Editor

While milestone community celebrations — openings, anniversaries, etc. — are a frequent if not commonplace occurrence in a metropolis the size of Cleveland, the ribbon cutting for Cleveland's brand-new School of the Arts had a special quality about it.

For starters, the building is gorgeous, first-class in utility and design, matching its intended function as a center of arts learning. But on this day of celebration — Monday, September 17, one of summer's last — the structure itself seemed to took a back seat to the real stars — its student body — and the many stage hands who labored tirelessly to en-



Broadway start Paul Sadler looks on as Daechelle Strange '16, CMSD CEO Eric Gordon, and De'John Hardges '17 cut ribbon. (Photo courtesy of Amir Saleem)

sure that this day of victory would come.

These "stage hands" were the community supporters, alumni, past and present administrators and faculty, who had nurtured the dream and

held its realization steadfast in the midst of all the usual suspects — the naysayers, the bean-counters, the covetous land-grabbers — who said a new and gleaming arts school **UC's Jewel, Page 14**

## Banker Turned Entrepreneur Offers Tips On Being Your Own Boss

Ron Jones was at the top of his game as a top banker at KeyCorp when he quit in late 2001 to become his own boss.

Although he says "entrepreneurism is the hardest thing job you will ever have," he

**Your Own Boss, Page 5**



Ron Jones, CEO, The Copius Group

### ELECTION 2015: EUCLID

## Voters have clear choices for next mayor



Mayoral Candidates, clockwise from top left: Marcus Epps, David Lynch, Kirsten Holzheimer Gail.

By Mary Jo Minarik  
Press Correspondent

Come January, Euclid will have its first new mayor in twelve years, courtesy of City Hall term limits. The current mayor, Bill Cervenik, is completing his third four-year term and is ineligible to run again. Absentee voting begins October 6 and Election Day is November 3rd is Election Day. The last day to register is October 5.

On Sept 22 I sat down with Real Deal Press editor Richard Andrews at the Shore Cultural Center for two-on-one interviews with three of the four Euclid mayoral candidates — Kirsten Holzheimer

Gail, Marcus Epps and David Lynch. The fourth candidate, Christopher Litwinowicz, was not available and did not choose to re-schedule. We asked each candidate the same set of questions, designed to elicit their vision and plan for the city, their assessment of Euclid's challenges, and their take on the city's culture in this time of transition.

Marcus Epps (www.eppsforeuclid.com) is a 4th generation Euclidian. A high-energy private businessman who buys and sells businesses for a living, Epps considers himself a community activist leading the fight against the career politicians who have no vision for the

**Clear Choices, Page 11**

FROM HOMELESS TO HONCHO

# Rising leader reveals personal odyssey, posits path for community growth

By R. T. Andrews  
Editor



Larese Purnell  
Chief of Staff/  
CFO at THE  
WORD Church

By any measure Larese Purnell is an American success story. He is the Chief Financial Officer of a multi-million dollar enterprise. He is chairman the board of Faith United Credit Union. He is a trustee of South Pointe Hospital, a director of the Greater Cleveland YMCA, a published author, a sought-after speaker, and a social entrepreneur. And he's been married to his high-school sweetheart for seventeen years.

But as he told attendees at last month's quarterly Christian Business League breakfast, "People see your glory, but they don't know your story."

Purnell said he found the spiritual orientation of the CBL forum an inspiration to depart from his normal presentation to talk about his personal journey as an impoverished child. "We were homeless at times," he said, and hungry on many nights. He credited his mother's faith for sustaining

their family, and said his personal life began to progress once he was baptized as a youth in Bethesda Baptist Church.

Purnell now serves as CFO of The Word Church, a sprawling mega religious enterprise with five different Sunday worship locations, and a cornucopia of ministries and programs. He has clearly moved on from the poverty of his youth without forgetting where he came from.

That early background provides an inspiration for much of what Purnell strives to achieve today. He asked and then shared with the sixty or so attendees at the Manor Banquet and Conference Center the familiar question one regularly hears in the black community: how long does money stay in our community?

His answer: 30 days in the Asian community, 20 days in the Jewish community, 17 days in the white community, seven days among Hispanics, and six hours in the black community.

This stark reality led Purnell last year to initiate what he dubbed The Real Black Friday, an annual weekend of activities designed to highlight black business and encourage their patronage. The effort was repeated this summer.

Later this month Purnell expects to roll out what he calls an Empower Card aimed at extending this economic empowerment initiative. Details may be found at [www.therealblackfriday.com](http://www.therealblackfriday.com).



"Rolling With Jesus" Wiring, started in 2008, has provided electrical services and support that involves installation of copper-based systems, audio and video alarms and surveillance, desktop support, and wireless data networking. Along

with wife and Operations Manager Maia Ballard, RWJ Wiring President/CEO Michael Ballard has parlayed the principles of sacrifice and discipline into a near six-year success story.

"Mike is a godsend," says Corey Jackson, Building Manager for the City of Cleveland. "The work he's done speaks volumes about the quality of the company." RWJ Wiring was electrical installer for Cleveland's homeland security building.

Ballard has simple advice to go from zero to an operations budget that approaches seven figures annually. "Be prepared to work countless hours. Stay away from people who tell you what you can't do."

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One of a series of company profiles of MBEs/FBEs presented by the Construction Employers Association and the Contractors Assistance Association. CEA and CAA support diversity and inclusion as a means of creating opportunity and building community while maintaining standards of excellence.



# HOPE Foundation comes to Cleveland



By **R. T. Andrews**  
Editor

Saying he came here to signal that we are sitting in a moment in history, social entrepreneur John Hope Bryant proceeded to offer a summary recap of the relationship between African Americans and the US financial system since the presidency of Abraham Lincoln.

The Freedman's Bureau, he said, was charged with teaching freed slaves about money, consistent with Lincoln's view that this was the most important thing he could do for the newly emancipated. Frederick Douglass signed on to run the Freedom Bank, which grew to 73,000 depositors before failing.

Bryant's impassioned message about black people and

money included a reference to Martin Luther King's final campaign linking militarism, race, and poverty.

Bryant, author of "How the Poor Can Save Capitalism", came to Cleveland as part of his mission to "finish what Lincoln started and what King tried to advance." He wants to take particular aim against

**"NOTHING CHANGES YOUR LIFE MORE THAN GOD OR LOVE THAN MOVING YOUR [CREDIT] SCORE UP 120 POINTS."**

what he said was a "trillion dollar industry targeting 500 credit score people."

"Nothing changes your life more than God or love than moving your [credit] score up 120 points."

Bryant, 49, has set about leveling the playing field of

capitalism by creating a network of community centers aimed at increasing financial savvy of poor people. His nonprofit Operation HOPE has opened 42 centers to date, and has in the past 18 months received orders for 250 more. These centers are located in such big name facilities as Hyatt Hotels and

Whole Food Markets.

As evidenced by his Cleveland-based partnership with PNC Bank, Bryant has the support of the nation's established banking industry, whose reluctance to serve the urban poor has opened up enormous profit opportunities

for payday lenders, rent-to-own stores, auto-title lenders, and assorted other predators who have rushed in to provide high-cost services to people with no or little credit. These merchants are more prolific in low-income neighborhoods than fast-food restaurants. Bryant called Ferguson, MO, "the most unbanked city in

America" and correlated that status to its seven percent voter registration among African Americans.

Bryant said his is the only nonprofit in US history allowed to sit inside a bank. He aims to place 2000 centers in public schools, where



John Hope Bryant

he hopes they will be able to offer role models of success that can counter the negative images of rap stars and drug dealers. Ultimately, he wants to have 3000 locations nationwide by 2020.

Bryant spoke in Cleveland on the occasion of the third anniversary of PNC's community center, The Connection, at East 83 and Carnegie. His Operation HOPE will be based there, its "silver rights empowerment efforts" directed by Chris Smith.

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### ELECTION 2015: MAPLE HEIGHTS

# Automatic Recount Leaves Uncertainty As October Beckons

Blackwell wins primary but November opponent in doubt at press time

The Cuyahoga County Board of Elections announced September 24 an automatic recount to determine who will appear on the November ballot opposite Annette Blackwell to determine who will be the next mayor of Maple Heights. District 5 councilman Bill Brownlee held a five-vote lead over former District 7 councilwoman Neomia

Mitchell in the unofficial count following the Sept. 8 primary. After resolution of issues involving absentee, provisional and contested ballots, Brownlee's margin over Mitchell shrank to two votes, 380 to 378. The recount, required by law, will take place September 30 at county expense. Blackwell's official total in the five-way primary now stands at

532. Fourth place finisher Donald M. Grossmyer had 361 votes. Frank Rives came in fifth with 156 votes.

Blackwell's primary victory was a surprise to some political observers, who likely overlooked her years of work with parents in the Maple Heights schools.

Early voting for the November 3 general election will begin October 6.

## LOCAL BUSINESS DIRECTORY

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# Your Own Boss

Continued from Page 1

doesn't appear to have regretted his decision for a moment.

Jones was the featured speaker at a program sponsored by the National Black MBA Association, Cleveland chapter, to inform those possibly on the verge of quitting their day jobs of what they should be thinking about.

Jones was well equipped to make his move. After earning a computer science degree from Dartmouth College in 1986, Jones spent the next 15 years working in a series of startups and Fortune 500 companies where he learned the ins and outs of business. Along the way he initiated new business ventures within the corporate framework,

acquired an MBA in finance, and made lots of money for other people.

As he shared his career odyssey that now has the one-time computer programmer running one of the nation's largest bakeries, New Horizons Baking Co. in Norwalk OH [he still writes software code], it became as clear to his rapt audience as it must have become to him: he has an entrepreneur's DNA. So strong was the pull of running his own businesses that to gain requisite sales and customer relations experience, this natural introvert volunteered at a department store for a year selling ties, ladies shoes, and later sold insurance door to door.

Jones's talk was titled, "So

You Want to be an Entrepreneur", and he peppered his remarks with numerous anecdotes to emphasize the risks of being one's own boss.

"You never feel like you're there. ... If you are not a flexible person, entrepreneurship is not for you. ... Who can stay alive long enough for their idea to happen?"

Jones talked about the perils of decision making. A business person will typically make decisions about partners, clients, products, financing vehicles, etc. "Every decision counts," he said. "If you make the wrong decision it can cost you your business."

After his talk, Jones participated in a Q&A along with



Photos by Randy O. Norfus

*"Gloria Ware, Principal, Inclusion, JumpStart An eager crowd turned out on Saturday, Sept. 19 at JumpStart to hear Ron Jones talk about entrepreneurship."*



Gloria Ware, a JumpStart official who is also a former banker. The audience of corporate employees, small business owners, and hobbyists had lots of questions.



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## ON THE MOVE



**Jeanette Saunders** is now president and executive director at The Presidents' Council.



**Danielle Sydnor**, CRPC has joined the Highland Hills office of MetLife Premier Client Group of Ohio as a financial representative. Sydnor, previously with Merrill Lynch, has total assets under management of \$3.4 million dollars.



**Jeffrey L. Johnson** is the new Chief, Ohio Minority Business Development Division.



**Darrell X. Johnson** is the new director of the Cleveland office Minority Business Assistance Center, housed at the Entrepreneurial Center of the Urban League of Greater Cleveland.



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## HEALTH CALENDAR

### ► Medworks Hosting Free One-Day Clinic at J. Glen Smith Health Center

Now Accepting Appointments for General Medical Exams and Mammograms

Medworks will partner with J. Glen Smith Health Center to host a FREE one-day health clinic on Saturday, October 10, 2015 from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. The clinic will take place at the J. Glen Smith Health Center located at 11100 St. Clair Ave, Cleveland, OH 44108.

Appointments can be made by calling the Medworks Appointment Line at 216.201.9325.

Walk-in patients will also be accepted on clinic day until 1 p.m.

J. Glen Smith Health Center provides a broad range of services including: infectious disease counseling, internal medicine, Medicare wellness visits, nutrition counseling, obstetrics and gynecology, reproductive health, pediatrics, childhood immunizations, lead screenings, and social work. Additionally, the staff and community partners at J. Glen believe that education is the best preventative health measure and work with patients to help them better understand their health.

Healthcare professionals and support volunteers from Medworks, The MetroHealth System, and the Cleveland Department of Public Health will provide a broad range of services including medical exams, mammograms, flu shots, confidential testing, and lab tests. Each patient will have the opportunity to meet with a patient navigator to schedule follow-up appointments through MetroHealth. All services provided at Medworks clinics are free

of charge.

Since its founding, Medworks has organized 36 free medical and/or vision clinics. The clinics are made possible through the support of many in-kind donors, corporate sponsors as well as foundations including the Mt. Sinai Health Care Foundation. Medworks is a non-profit organization providing free healthcare clinics to Ohio's un- and under-insured.

With the generous financial support from grantors and sponsors, innovative collaborations with healthcare facilities, and a dedicated medical and non-medical volunteer corps, Medworks provides care for its patients and serves as an access point for those individuals to the medical community.

For more information about Medworks, visit [www.medworksusa.org](http://www.medworksusa.org). Contact Medworks by email at [info@medworksusa.org](mailto:info@medworksusa.org) or by phone at 216.231.5350.

✓ **Cleveland Clinic's Office of Diversity and Inclusion is hosting a mini-case scholarship competition for undergraduate and graduate/professional students providing an opportunity for African American and Hispanic/Latino students to compete for scholarship dollars.**

Accepting applications through Wednesday, October 16. Applicants will be notified of acceptance by October 23. Case Competition dates: **November 12 - 13, 2015**

For more information, visit <http://clevelandclinic.org/diversityprograms> or contact the Office of Diversity and Inclusion at [diversity4u@ccf.org](mailto:diversity4u@ccf.org) or 216/445-7323.



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Contact Dwayne Jones at 216-458-8907 or [dwayne.jones@scouting.org](mailto:dwayne.jones@scouting.org) to reserve a table TODAY!

## For East Cleveland, the bell tolls

East Cleveland was in state-declared financial emergency from 1988 until 2006. It reclaimed that status in October 2012 and is unlikely ever to relinquish it except through some process of merger, annexation, or dissolution.

Much of the problem is structural. The city has too large a concentration of poor people, too few wealthy ones, precious little commercial activity, too much vacant and abandoned housing, too few resources, too few friends, and too many avaricious buzzards impatient for the city's last gasp so they can swoop in and feast on the remaining and still luscious parts of its municipal carcass.

Even with its myriad structural issues, shared by many communities increasingly ravaged by deindustrialization, globalization, disinvestment, sprawl, racism, neglect, the conversion of public resources for private gain — none dare call it collective embezzlement — it's not all impersonal market forces. Some social groups — let's call them families, or communities — rally together when times are hard. They learn to share dwindling resources, they discover new ones, they find ways to adapt. Of course, those are the rare ones, which is why we celebrate the memory and legacy of Louise Stokes, mother of high achievers Louis and Carl. Her husband's premature death left her a young widow with sole responsibility to feed, clothe, shelter and nurture two young boys. For-

tunately she somehow was up to the task, and those boys grew up to achieve astonishing successes.

While it's impossible to predict which way the human spirit will turn in any *individual* case, study and observation do tell us that a small percentage of any given number will thrive under

all, likely suffered the consequences of an economic and racial caste system that was sure to perpetuate 90% poverty in that given community, leading to domestic violence, antisocial behavior, and addictive behaviors of all sorts.

When I sit in the public pews at East Cleveland's commission or council

ly taken an immense toll on the body politic. Sitting on the commission, Mayor Gary Norton said wryly but with near devastating accuracy, "Nobody believes the mayor, anyway". And he said it totally unaware of the extent to which his own body language, facial expressions, and comments foster that view even when he is speaking the truth.

Mr. Norton's disdain for his colleagues, his contempt for what he construes as their ignorance and stupidity, seems to have become endemic to the city's political culture. At the outset of his first term, he went in a matter of only a few weeks from being President and leader of City Council to a newly installed Mayor who showed no respect to his former colleagues and allies. It was stunning to see, up to a point.

The reality is that the leaders in East Cleveland behave as toxically towards one another as do the Palestinians and the Israelis. And with much less justification. Thus we are not surprised when city councilman Thomas Wheeler, who deserves applause for exposing an attempt to bribe him, instead finds himself the subject of a recall effort.

Infighting is often most brutal in inverse measure to the amount of the booty. There are few spoils to divide in East Cleveland, and the fight over who gets to control them doesn't keep hope alive for the city, it destroys it.

And that's why the vultures circle.

**THE MUNICIPAL STRESS OF  
BEING IN FISCAL EMERGENCY  
FOR NEARLY A GENERATION HAS  
CLEARLY TAKEN AN IMMENSE  
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BEHAVE AS TOXICALLY TOWARDS  
ONE ANOTHER AS DO THE  
PALESTINIANS AND  
THE ISRAELIS.**

the harshest environments and emerge to become productive and even exceptional. We do know that while America's competitive ethos has driven this country to amass and organize unparalleled natural resources and other advantages, including stolen lands and labor, its uneven fields have left lots of broken bodies and spirits along the way.

We don't know the names of most of the playmates and classmates of the Stokes boys. But we do know that many of their anonymous cohort wound up victims of the streets in one way or another. Many, though certainly not

meetings, I see and hear a community breaking down from chronic stress and constant assault in ways that parallel those families trapped in our nation's ghettos and barrios. Recent commentary surrounding the tenth anniversary of the Hurricane Katrina disaster has highlighted the extent to which displaced New Orleans young people exhibit signs of Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome at much higher levels than is typical of their cohort.

I see this in East Cleveland where the municipal stress of being in *fiscal emergency* for *nearly a generation* has clear-

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## Don't Let Misinformation About Voting With A Criminal Conviction Keep Ohioans From Voting

By **Shakyra Diaz**  
Press Correspondent

An estimated 5.86 million people are barred from voting because some states prevent people from voting if they have a criminal conviction, according to the Sentencing Project. An overused criminal justice system that disproportionately impacts African-Americans has resulted in one out of 13 African-Americans being ineligible to vote.

How did we get here?

In 1792, Kentucky became the first state in the nation to establish a criminal disenfranchisement law, excluding people from voting if they were convicted of "high crimes or misdemeanors." Many states since then have followed Kentucky's lead.

Nearly 100 years later, the 15th amendment of the U.S. Constitution was passed in 1870 and guaranteed the right to vote regardless of race, skin color, or previous condition of servitude; however, criminal disenfranchisement laws still remained.

What followed the passage of the 15th amendment were a series of state voting restrictions that included poll taxes and literacy tests that were intended to exclude black people from voting.

In 1965, the year the Voting Rights Act prohibited racial discrimination and restrictions in voting, there were 201,895 people in federal and state prisons, according to the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics. It wasn't long before the era of mass criminalization and incarceration was born.

Today, there are over 2.4 million people incarcerated in jails or prisons making the land of the free the

number one incarcerator of people in the world. So what happened to all those voter disenfranchisement laws?

Some states have laws that permanently ban people with felonies from voting, others have laws that prevent people from voting if they are on parole, probation, or unable to pay court related fines. The majority of the people impacted by voter disenfranchisement laws are African-American.

So where does Ohio stand?

Luckily, while Ohio is the seventh largest prison state in the nation, people with criminal convictions can vote. Under Ohio law, an individual can vote if they have been: convicted of a misdemeanor, even if they are in jail; arrested for a felony but not convicted; convicted of a felony but not currently incarcerated; and placed on parole, probation, or required to live in a half-way house.

The only exclusion Ohio is that people cannot vote if they are currently incarcerated for a felony conviction, but they can register to vote with their new address upon release.

The problem in Ohio, however, is that many people are under the impression that a criminal conviction prevents them from voting, which is not true. Help spread that word and encourage people get registered by Oct. 5.

Let's educate, empower, and vote for our interest.

*Shakyra Diaz is policy manager with the ACLU of Ohio.*



## Publisher's Column

We seem to be in the midst of a real spike in the level of sophistication and collaboration attending the black business community. You may be aware of it from your own activities, or you may see it reflected in our pages.

Cooperative economics is taking hold, as witnessed by the growth of initiatives spearheaded by Larese Purnell.

The Presidents' Council, an organization comprised of some of this community's larger black businesses, has just hired a new president and executive director with impressive credentials, launched a new business chamber, and consolidated all of its programs under one executive.

Statewide, the Ohio Minority Supplier Development Council has just established new offices — on the west side no less — and seems poised to play a larger role in facilitating black economic development. The MSDC now has over 450 certified MBE members statewide, a relatively small number to be sure, but large enough to wield some influence. And we've even seen some indication that a statewide chamber of commerce for MBEs is trying to find some legs.

We have long believed that strengthening the economic base of the black community is central to the health and welfare of the entire community. Not sufficient unto itself by any means — active political participation and civic engagement are also crucial.

We cannot allow ourselves to get caught up in the Washington-DuBois battles. For us in 2015 and moving forward, it has to be both/and. The reality is when the black community is sound politically, economic advancement is more likely. And economic advancement positions us to be more effective politically.

We are intent here at the paper on becoming a central reference point where the commercial affairs and interests of the African American community are respected, valued, and reported. This has been part of our mission from the beginning. Our business section is right up front. Our regular columnists, Burner Crew and Kirby Freeman, both focus on business and the economy. We are delighted to see these recent efforts and will do all in our power to keep you in the know about your community businesses.

— Richard T. Andrews



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### NEW CORNERSTONE CELEBRATES 10TH ANNIVERSARY

New Cornerstone Missionary Baptist Church of Maple Heights, pastored by Dr. Blanton Harper, Jr., celebrates its tenth anniversary all this month.

On Sunday, October 4, at the 11 AM Service, Rev. Roosevelt Watford will deliver the first anniversary message. Then, at 3:30 PM, the Rev. Richard Gibson will be guest speaker and the choirs and congregation of Elizabeth Baptist Church will be special guests.

On Tuesday, October 6, at 7:00 PM, Dr. A. Charles Bowie will be the guest speaker.

Accompanying him will be the East Mount Zion Baptist Church choirs.

On Sunday, October 11, at the 11 AM Service, the Rev. Raimon A. Prince will deliver the fourth anniversary message. Then, at 3:30 PM, the Rev. David Hunter will bring the final anniversary message. Accompanying him will be the choirs and members from Bright Star Missionary Baptist Church.

New Cornerstone Missionary Baptist Church is located at 18900 Libby Rd in Maple Heights.

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## Clear Choices

Continued from Page 1

city's future. His style is direct: here's-what-needs-to-be-done and I'm-the-one-to-get-it-done approach. Asked to speak about himself, he quickly pivoted to an indictment of the current administration, which he says has no pulse on the community and ignores the city's major issues.

Kirsten Holzheimer Gail (kirstenformayor.com) is also 4th generation Euclid. Except for a 9-month leave of absence in 2007-2008, Gail has served on Council since 1997, first as Ward Councilperson and since 2008 as Council President.

She considers herself a public servant, a notion consistent with her education and work as a social worker. She sees her ability to work collaboratively and to listen to the views of others as the core of her leadership style. She expresses a clear preference for a patient, methodical approach with full and open discussion as her preferred leadership style.

David Lynch (www.lynychformayor.com) is an attorney with private and public practice experience. He served two terms as mayor from 1988-1995 and says he implemented many fiscal and managerial reforms during his tenure. Lynch says he is running because 20 years later he sees "the disintegration of everything I accomplished." A self-described municipal government turn-around expert, he wants to restore his earlier reforms. He believes the city must act with a "take-no-prisoners" sense of urgency or risk steep decline.

### The Vision Thing

When asked for their vision for Euclid was, Epps saw it as a powerhouse suburb where city hall partners with the people. Gail described a vibrant and innovative first ring suburb, and Lynch spoke of an activist government driving economic reinvigoration.

For the most part the three candidates all agree that Euclid is facing serious challenges in the areas of budget, housing and economic development. However, the candidates differ markedly on the issue of Euclid's shared income tax.

Euclid assesses a 2.85% income tax

and shares a portion of the revenue there from with the city's schools. This shared tax arrangement, which provides about \$5 million annually to the school district exists nowhere else in Ohio and many residents would like to end it.

Gail says it would be irresponsible to end the shared tax without a plan on how to make up the \$5 million in lost income for the schools. Lynch says he is open to ending the shared tax and said the economic development his administration would spur would make up for the schools' lost income.

Epps favors ending the shared tax and says the schools have already received a \$5 million increase in state support.

### Leading the City

A Gail administration would identify safety, housing, strengthening the city's economic base and restoring strong public services as key issues. She would use technology and other techniques to heighten communication with city residents.

A Lynch administration would immediately seek the reinstatement of his earlier reforms, followed by several specific agenda items, including an appeal of the EPA consent decree and an urgent and aggressive drive to bring new business to Euclid.

Epps also has specific plans for the first days of his administration, including appointing Jack Johnson once again as finance director and Kelly Sweeney as law director. He would establish commercial and neighborhood advisory boards comprised of local businesses and residents from across the city. He would "trim the fat in City Hall, bring in fresh blood and look to bridge the gap between citizens and City Hall.

### Economic Development

Lynch sees economic development as the key component of his Administration. He would partner with corporate leadership to improve the process of moving to Euclid. He says the city is losing business opportunities because of a disconnect among city departments. He sees the current administration as a budgetary manager that



# Open House

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needs to do much more in the way of economic development.

Epps is concerned that the city may presently be overtaxing and over-regulating local businesses and then ignoring them when they need assistance. He sees the Mayor's role as key to bringing the city back to investing in and supporting its businesses and its people.

Gail would promote economic development by marketing the city's best qualities, working to improve the city's physical appearance, and dealing with the city's vacant commercial space. She would first enforce the housing codes to maintain the housing stock. Gail would brand neighborhoods for their positive characteristics and then market them.

### A Changing City

Lynch believes everything boils down to economics. Increase the revenue stream and improve services with the money. A better quality of life makes Euclid desirable. When people have a sense of hope, they're willing to participate. A rising sea raises all ships. If Euclid addresses its concrete issues,

racial concerns fall by the wayside.

Epps believes that racial issues are brewing throughout the city and faults the Cervenik administration for essentially ignoring them. He believes in more effective police training and would establish a Citizens Advisory Board to take complaints.

Gail acknowledges that the city's challenges in integrating newer and older residents. She relates the changing demographics with reluctance by some to invest in the city. To reverse negative perceptions of Euclid, Gail believes Euclid needs to affirm its integration in a positive way.

Ultimately, which candidate appeals most to voters may depend on their assessment of the city's needs. While Gail seems to represent a steady approach focused on open dialogue and communication, Lynch and Epps clearly see the need for making large-scale changes. Where Lynch would focus on restoration and economic development, Epps would also focus on changing the city's culture by finding ways to bring government closer to the people.

# Annual Sewer District Open House Almost Makes Wastewater Fun



Photos by Randy O. Norfus

By Derek K. Dixon  
Press Conference

The county agency that insures safe outflow of our wastewater is also invested in everything from private water harvesters to an iconic local dessert provider.

That was one of several revelations afforded attendees of the annu-

al Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District Open House held September 19 at the Environmental and Maintenance Service Center in Cuyahoga Heights. The event featured a tour of the Southerly Wastewater Treatment Center where demonstrations of water use, processing, technology and conservation were on display.

“We wanted to show that the sewer

district is friendly toward the general public and to educate people to the value of clean water and to the environment,” said Matthew Miller, a manager for engineering firm Cosmos Technologies and a volunteer who signed up tour goers at the open house. He estimated the event drew more than 1,500 people in a seven-hour span.

There was no shortage of interactive opportunities as thirty booths from outside vendors and twelve more representing different NEORSD departments were on-site. At one booth, representatives from the agency’s information technology department explained that every aspect of agency operations is in some way connected with IT. “All roads may not lead to IT, but all of them have to go through it,” one representative said.

At a neighboring tent was information about the district’s new initiative for minority and woman-owned small businesses to receive increased government contract procurement opportunities. The anticipated increase in firms doing business with NEORSD would result in greater bidding power for outside small businesses because the district would act as a support liaison that backs their bids.


There was also reason for patrons of the popular Ohio City-based Mitchell’s Ice Cream Company to be engaged. Spread out across Mitchell’s booth were snapshots of its headquarters’ underground water filtra-

tion system. Their state-of-the-art cistern — was recently installed by Columbus-based Rain Brothers, LLC — provides benefits for every part of the parlor that uses water. “The new system helps Mitchell’s conserve everywhere we use water,” explained Rachel Sekola, assistant manager at the Ohio City headquarters. “We’re now able to capture six hundred thirty gallons of rain water per day and process it cleanly; for everything from flushing toilets to washing plates to temporizing (cooling) dishwater. We use it for everything except the manufacture of the ice cream itself.” The increased efficiency of water use creates an indirect benefit for the company’s bottom line, Sekola said.

Jonathan Meier, co-owner of Rain Brothers, explained that the Mitchell’s project was unique for a business its size in the Cleveland area. “About eighty percent of our clients have been private residences,” he said. “We’ve installed some in Akron and Canton, but not in Cleveland.”

Patron Trish Kara of Cleveland believes this endeavor is just an extension of Mitchell’s reputation as a community-conscious enterprise. “I like that they use local manufacturers to incorporate into their business. It’s great how they are open to (partnerships with) other vendors.”

A 2-minute video tour of wastewater processing, may be found on the NEORSD Facebook page.



## writers & readers

SERIES OF HOPE

**Cristina Henríquez**  
Saturday, October 10, 2015 at 2:00 p.m.  
Main Library, Louis Stokes Wing Auditorium

Cristina Henríquez’ novel, *The Book of Unknown Americans*, was listed as one of the *New York Times* Notable Books of 2014. Inspired by her father’s Panamá-to-U.S. immigration story and the experiences of family and friends, the novel transcends the one-dimensional headlines which focus on the hardships and legal battles of immigration, revealing nitty-gritty details, humor, and human stories, seen through the eyes of characters from across Latin America.


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All events are free and open to the public. (This pertains to all events.)

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

**Deltas Host Citizens' Empowerment Summit October 3, at John Hay HS**

On Saturday, October 3rd, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated - Greater Cleveland Alumnae Chapter will host a Citizens' Empowerment Summit to provide more than 400 residents and visitors with a variety of resources, insight and information about their rights when interacting with law enforcement.

Moderated by MSNBC National Correspondent Joy-Ann Reid, the Empowerment Summit will feature three sessions from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm at John Hay High School, 2075 Stokes Boulevard. The informative and interactive sessions include:

"Consent to Repair, Restore and Rebuild"- Representatives from the city of Cleveland's Mayor's Office, the U.S. Attorney General's Office, along with State Senator Sandra Williams, will discuss details and answer questions pertaining to the Cleveland Consent Decree, entered into this year by the city of Cleveland and the United States Department of Justice; "A Tell of Two Cities: From Ferguson to Cleveland" - Guests from the front lines of nonviolent protests will profile the upheaval and detail the aftermath that impacted communities following recent tragedies in both cities. Twelve Steps to Nonviolent Protesting, Educational materials and vendors will be on site. Joy-Ann Reid will also have a book signing for her recently released book, "Fracture." The Empowerment Summit and parking is free for all attendees, but registration is required at [www.empowerCLE.com](http://www.empowerCLE.com).

For additional information about the Citizens' Empowerment Summit or to register, visit: [www.empowerCLE.com](http://www.empowerCLE.com) EmpowerCLE@yahoo.com #EmpowerCLE



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Students celebrate outside following the ribbon cutting.

couldn't and shouldn't be built, especially not on prime real estate in landlocked University Circle.

The ceremony itself was a fairly tight production that put on display the phenomenal talent that resides in so many of Cleveland's maligned young people. They danced, sang, spoke, hosted and guided an overflow crowd of two hundred or so who came to be a part of a special day. They herded themselves into the school's Black Box performing arts space for a tight program that included live performances, videos, and mercifully short speeches even from several public officials who seemed to realize this day belonged to the students and the community.

One of those community members, Cheryl DuBose, is a longtime CSA volunteer and the school's designated unofficial historian. She spoke truth to power as she recounted parts of the school's history that would likely be omitted from any official account of the program's rise to become one of the brightest of the

Cleveland Municipal School District's crown jewels, a high-achieving competitive magnet school that nourishes the potential of Cleveland's children and attracts appli-



(l) Paul B. Sadler, Jr., CSA alum and Broadway star, (m) Cheryl DuBose, CSA unofficial historian (r) State Rep. Bill Patmon.

cants from many of the area's tonier school districts.

Many speakers struggled to control their emotions as they reflected on the school's history and what the institution had come to mean for them. Paul B. Sadler Jr., who starred on Broadway during an eleven-year run with the

Wiz, recalled how the school had started in six rooms within Jane Addams High, how his wife of 24 years was also an alumna of the school, and how the school had taught



him lessons he carries with him today.

State Representative Stephanie Howse started at CSA as a 4th grader. The 1997 graduate talked about how a faculty member helped her course correct a life that was headed off-track. It was at CSA, Howse said, that she learned

life is not about the glitz and the glamour but "about the substance and character."

Daechelle Strange, a 12th grade drama major and, along with De'John Hardg-



es '17, one of two student M.C.'s, drew a warm response when she said that her favorite thing at CSA was its "imaginary double dutch team".

The school offers programs in dance, vocal, string, band, literature and the arts. Its proclaimed goal is to be a

## UC's Jewel

Continued from Page 1

national model for arts education.

One of this reporter's favorite program aspects was the performance by a CSA dance troupe. The twenty-two dancers, five boys and 17 girls, radiated intelligence, spirit, and beauty, while demonstrating that no color, size or shape has an exclusive patent on grace and style.

One aspect of the district's presentation that surely found favor among the public officials and parents in attendance was the announcement that the \$42 million building [2/3 of cost paid by the state] was finished on time and on budget. And some were likely to be pleased that MBES Moody Nolan Architects and Ozanne Construction were key members of the team that achieved that result.

In his remarks just prior to the ribbon cutting, CMSD CEO Eric Gordon called CSA the "flagship for what choice should look like in Cleveland." It would have been an impossible task to find anyone who disagreed on this day.

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## A Jazz Night Out



Cleveland had a delightful old-time vibe on display at the Renaissance Hotel on Public Square when the Vanessa Rubin Trio performed several sets for the enjoyment of a sizable audience. Rubin has a marvelous voice and an engaging manner. Both were on display as she entertained a crowd of jazz lovers that was also regaled by the extraordinary sounds of pianist Ed Ridley and bassist

Peter Dominguez.

Several lawyers were in the crowd, courtesy of the Norman S. Minor Bar Association, which is hopeful that this might become a regular Wednesday event. That could make Wednesdays the warmest night of the week this winter. If you agree, let hotel management know by calling 216.696.5600.

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