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at CSU on Wednesday
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THE REAL DEAL

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DEAL

PRESS

Calling Home

By R.T. Andrews, Editor

Every homicide is a tragic story. The intentional taking of a life when not in self-defense is one of those inexplicable stains of the human condition.

All lives do matter, even though most of us don't always behave as if that's true. When the victim is young or otherwise vulnerable, when the circumstances are especially heinous, when we have a personal relationship to the decedent or the situation — these things heighten the intensity we feel.

All of that is personally in play for me here. Of course, I'm reflecting on the tragic murder a week ago of Aisha Fraser at the apparent hand of her estranged husband, former congressional aide, state legislator and county judge Lance Mason.

A teenaged Aisha graced the front page of the first-ever issue of *The Real Deal* in the spring of 1991 as a debutante. By definition, her whole life was ahead of her, full of promise. Her uncle,

the internationally known and gifted George Fraser, is a friend of nearly a half-century. Aisha attended the same schools as my daughters, only a year or two ahead of my eldest.

But it's not these personal connections that loom large with me now, or I should think, with our community at large. Nor is it the fact that she was a devoted mother and teacher, who leaves behind two daughters, one with special needs.

Aisha's life and death is a call to action for our community. We are very quick in these parts to point fingers and assign blame when something goes so tragically wrong. So Cleveland mayor Frank Jackson is tattooed for hiring a convicted wife beater. And Congresswoman Marcia Fudge is exposed and condemned for having written an ill-considered letter-seeking leniency for an especially vicious wife-beater.

But they are politicians, in some ways less community leaders and shapers of standards than representatives of



who we are and what we accept as normal. And what we accept as normal is the silent killer epidemic of domestic violence.

I spent, at intervals, more than 20 years on the dating scene as a heterosexual adult male, during which time I was blessed to get to know many smart, educated, kind, generous and sophisticated women of varying backgrounds. It was a rare relationship when there was not at some point a personal reference to an attempted physical assault being within their direct personal experience, most often by someone they trusted.

We must learn to stop treating these awful assaults as isolated occurrences in the manner Fudge's letter suggested. Men in particular must become more vocal in making plain the unacceptable nature of much male behavior, even as we ask how the Congresswoman's vaunted Delta sisterhood considers her set-aside of the indefensible.

Who will step forth to campaign for the safety of our daughters, mothers, sisters, nieces, cousins, colleagues, friends, neighbors, indeed anyone who is vulnerable to these assaults?

The Word on Small Business

Is This the Calm Before the Storm?

By Kirby Freeman

A dizzying number of macroeconomic events and trends have happened since my last column appeared in this space about two and a half years ago, including:

- The surprise election of Donald J. Trump, as President of the United States, in November 2016;
- The continued reduction in the official U.S. unemployment rate to near or at historic lows to 3.7% in October 2018 – and a near “record” low of 6.2% for African-Americans. This compares with an aggregate U.S. jobless rate of 5.0%, and 9.0% for African-Americans in March 2016;
- Congressional passage of the “Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017” last December, which cut the top corporate tax rate to 21% from 35%, slashed tax rates for higher income taxpayers, reduced tax deductions for middle-income taxpayers, and threatens to open up a sustained \$1 trillion hole in the U.S. federal budget deficit;

On paper, the current economic conditions have painted a positive picture of growth. Several independent surveys have (until very recently) reported near-record levels of business optimism among small business owners during the summer of 2018. But

there are clouds on the horizon. Indeed, the Dow Jones Industrial Average, a traditional harbinger of economic trends, has lost 2,500 points, nearly 10%, since early October. More than a few market strategists have noted signs suggesting the economic recovery could be in its final stages.

Some economists have indicated that the U.S. economy, with an official jobless rate below 4%, could be at or near “full employment” -- the rate at which additional reductions in unemployment could touch off sharp increases in bank interest rates and consumer prices.

Economists have also pointed to high levels of consumer and corporate debt, with corporate bonds outstanding rising by \$2.6 trillion in the U.S. between 2007 and 2017, according to data from the McKinsey Global Institute – amounting to about 25% of GDP from around 16%. According to LendingTree, the online loan comparison website, which analyzed data from the Federal Reserve Bank, Americans now have debts of more than 26% of

their annual income, up from 22% in 2010. Consumer debt could reach a record \$4 trillion by the end of 2018.

African American consumers and business owners have to be especially vigilant over the next few months. For decades our community has served as a surplus labor pool for the American economy in boom times. “Last Hired – First Fired” has been the traditional experience of many people in our community. Underlying conditions – the unmet need for widespread, first-rate education and vocational training and the distinct lack of enough profitable, cash-flowing minority businesses – have not changed enough to make that old saying old-fashioned.

We recently passed through the thick of an active hurricane season, and just as with any other storm that citizens have to prepare for, consumers and small businesses must pay close attention to any and all economic data that affect their budgets.

At this stage of the game,

small businesses in general – and minority business in particular – need to take steps to shore up their ability to face volatility in customer demand. Nearly all of these actions focus on building up cash:

- Aggressively collect on past-due accounts receivables;
- Cut back on unnecessary cost items;
- Focus on investing resources in businesses and/or sectors that provide goods and services that will still be needed in a sharp economic downturn;
- Reduce debt levels as much as possible, while maintaining positive credit terms and relations with lenders

I believe economic conditions over the next few years will pose significant challenges to small and minority businesses. For the next few weeks and months, I will devote significant space in this column toward helping to make small and minority businesses more resilient and “recession-resistant”.



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Business: Equity Inclusion & Diversity

Mobley to step down as Case vp for inclusion, diversity

Marilyn Sanders Mobley, the first-ever Vice President for Inclusion, Diversity and Equal Opportunity at Case Western Reserve University, will step down from that role at the end of this academic year after a ten-year run that began in 2009.

Mobley, a tenured professor of English at Case, will take a one-year sabbatical to focus on her research and scholarship starting next summer.

The university has announced plans to launch a national search for Mobley's successor.

During her tenure, Mobley established the university's annual Power of Diversity Lecture Series, which features national thought leaders and CWRU scholars.

Prior to her appointment at CWRU, Mobley served as provost at Bennett College for Women in Greensboro, North Carolina, and as associate provost for educational programs and a faculty member at George Mason University for 19 years. She founded the African American Studies program at George Mason and served as its first director.



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Same Stuff, Different Day

Word came as we went to post last week that a collegial group of hale fellows well met were assembling with a very distinguished professor from Case Western Reserve University's Weatherhead School of Management. Their goal, according to a press release, is to "advance Cleveland's economic standing and address economic equality."

The top-down nature of the group makes us suspect it's mostly the former; the latter aim seems pretty much a fig leaf. And that would actually be ok, if it were possible. But while it's possible to advance the economic standing of the already wealthy without benefitting much of anyone else — pretty much the story of the American economy for the last 25 years or so — it is decidedly not possible to improve the local economy without addressing economic equality.

For the record, Crain's Cleveland Business reported the group comprises the following: Justin Bibb, senior consultant and head of global cities practice at Gallup and newly appointed member of the board of the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority; Julie Boland, vice chair and Central Region managing partner of Ernst & Young; Dr. Akram Boutros, president and CEO of the MetroHealth System; Marc Byrnes, chairman of Oswald Cos.; David Gilbert, president and CEO of Destination

Cleveland; Ira Kaplan, executive chairman of the Benesch law firm; Bernie Moreno, president of the Bernie Moreno Cos.; Jon Pinney, managing partner of the Kohrman Jackson & Krantz law firm; Chris Quinn, vice president of content for Advance Ohio; Chris Ronayne, president of University Circle Inc.; Rev. Dr. Stephen Rowan, pastor of Bethany Baptist Church; Bob Smith, market leader of the Cleveland office of HPM Partners; Dan Walsh, chairman of Citymark Capital; Brian Zimmerman, CEO of Cleveland Metroparks; and Ann Zoller, senior adviser with Strategy Design Partners.

The press release for this as yet untitled group was described in the news release as a "cooperative, inclusive effort to help build trust within the community and develop a shared vision for Cleveland's future."

Great. Cleveland certainly needs a shared vision. But we

doubt that it can be achieved as an inclusive effort that advances trust within the community when the average wealth of the envisioners — measured by mean, mode, or median net worth — means a group of millionaires are going to be charting a path for one of the poorest cities in America. Remind us where that has worked well?

Announced plans call for the group to hold a two-day session in a few weeks with about 70 participants, including representatives from "a diverse range of companies, organizations and government entities as well as up-and-coming and not-of-ten-heard voices," who will be "engaged to ensure a variety of ideas and perspectives are represented in the conversation and resulting process."

This looks very much like a circular exercise, which in the spirit of the effort and the season and the effort will also remain nameless for now.



THE REAL DEAL PRESS

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We welcome letters to the editor. Please include your name, address, and 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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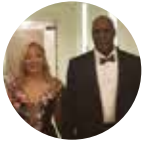
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SPOTLIGHT • APPOINTMENTS • AWARDS • CELEBRATIONS • MILESTONES •

MARRIAGE



Susan L. Hall and Olon Frederick Dotson wed Nov. 23 at the Indiana Historical Society

in Indianapolis. The groom is Associate Professor of Architecture at Ball State University, Muncie, IN. Clevelanders in attendance included Vanessa Whiting, Sonali Bustamante Wilson, Renee T. Richard, Ariane Kirkpatrick, and Michelle Felder and Juvenile Court Judge Alison Nelson Floyd, who co-officiated.

APPOINTMENTS



Lydia Kirkland Pope to first vice president, National Association of Real Estate Brokers.



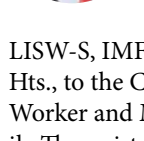
Julius Dorsey to director, Ohio Restaurant Association.



E. J. Brinson to board member, International Soap Box Derby.



John R Corlett to Ohio Advisory Council for Aging for term ending Nov. 21, 2021.



Jose Cameroon

LISW-S, IMFT of University Hts., to the Counselor, Social Worker and Marriage and Family Therapist Board for a term ending October 10, 2021.

AWARDS



Donté Gibbs, the Gund Fellow at the George Gund Foundation, has received the Young Alumni Award

from CWRU in recognition of his community service. Gibbs works on revitalization efforts in the Fairfax neighborhood, mentors children in greater Cleveland and coordinates volunteers at Manna Food from Heaven, which serves food at homeless shelters. He works on economic development and community revitalization projects at Gund.



Janice Eatman-Williams, director of the FOCUS Group School-Based Outreach in the

CWRU Division of Student Affairs, received the University's Newton D. Baker Distinguished Service Award, for her gifts of time, talent and service to those in need across Greater Cleveland. Beyond the city, she also delivered water, food and supplies to the citizens of Flint, Michigan, worked on post-hurricane restoration projects.

REST IN PEACE

Aisha M. Fraser died Nov. 17, 2018. Taught at Woodbury School, Shaker Hts. Visitation at the Calhoun Funeral Home, 23000 Rockside Rd., [44146], Nov. 30, 2pm-8pm. Memorial service at Olivet Institutional Baptist Church, 8712 Quincy Ave. [44104], Saturday, Dec. 8 at 11am.

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Community Calendar

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 28, 4:30p
 • The leadership and development teams of Warrensville Hts., Highland Hills and North Randall will collaborate with the Tri-City Chamber of Commerce to present a State of the City Business Update and Celebration. A panel will present updates and forecasts on business growth, new commercial development projects, and more. The program, at the Tri-C East Campus Mandel Humanities Center, 4250 Richmond Rd. [44122], will begin at 5:30 following registration and networking.



6:30p • There's a whole lot of Cleveland black and U.S. history in Don Freeman's wonderful memoir, Reflections of a Resolute Radical, alongside a fascinating account of that details a principled, intentional and committed life. Freeman and his memoir will be front and center at A Community Conversation and Book Signing at the CWRU Linsalata Alumni Center, 11310 Juniper Rd. [44106].

Freeman, a lifelong Cleveland resident and graduate of Glenville HS and Case Western

Reserve University, will share thoughts about the civil rights movement, the rise of radicalism, and the community's responses to both. Freeman's life journey has encompassed significant interactions with a host of political revolutionaries and cultural luminaries including Dwight McDonald, Rev. Bernard Lee, Tom Hayden, Stokely Carmichael [Kwame Ture], Max Roach, Abbey Lincoln, Ishmael Reed, Malcolm X, and Julius Hobson. Reservations are requested via 216.368.7568 or socialjustice@case.edu.

THURSDAY, NOV. 29, 4:30p • The actor and producer Michael K. Williams [Omar Little from The Wire, Chalky White from Boardwalk Empire], brings his HBO VICE documentary, "Raised in the System" to Cleveland-Marshall College of Law. Williams will screen his one-



hour documentary on the people impacted by the juvenile justice system, and then participate in a panel discussion and Q&A about the film and the system. Free and open to the public but registration required. Email cmlaacle@gmail.com for more info.

5:30p-10p • Local event promoter Arnold Hines is hosting a November Networking Mixer at the Ohio City Galley, 1400 West 25 St. [44113]. The event is free with registration.

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Community Bulletin Board

The AIDS Task Force of Greater Cleveland is sponsoring a free showing at the Cleveland premiere of a new documentary, "DRUGS: The Price We Pay" at 7PM, Monday, Nov. 26 at Shaker Square Cinemas, 13116 Shaker Square [44120].

The movie, narrated by Academy Award winner J. K. Simmons, will be preceded by a [free reception](#) at Nighttown, 12383 Cedar Rd. [44106], starting at 5PM. Reserve tickets by visiting www.drugscle.eventbrite.com.

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