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Gov. Kasich appoints 3 black judges
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THE **REAL** **DEAL** PRESS

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EDITORIAL

A Hope for 2019

Black leadership has historically rested with that segment of the community least susceptible to outside pressure. After emancipation, this meant a small group that typically included those folk whose income came almost exclusively from within the community, most notably undertakers and preachers. Only after the Civil Rights Movement did black elected officials become commonplace. Beginning in the mid to late 1960s, the number of black elected officials rose nationally from a few dozen to several thousand.

This startling increase resulted in a qualitative change in community leadership. Black leadership is now less organic and more representational, less communal and more distant. This development, coinciding with other factors — geographic dispersal; some socioeconomic group realignment; a loosening of dominant society control; and the emergence of

a group of clergy seemingly more focused on the church's institutional and business growth than on the support and salvation of its members, to name a few — have conspired to make the whole question of black community

— has little if any contact with their elected representatives beyond the occasional ceremonial appearance.

While these trends may be nationwide, we can say for certain that among black elected officials here in Greater

attentive can identify the name or position of the dean of Cuyahoga County's delegation to the state legislature?¹

The disconnect between black electorate and representative has profound consequences for the entire community's welfare. The larger community acts upon the assumption that our representatives are effective stewards and advocates of community interest. If we send less than our best to the table or fail to hold them to account, whose fault is that?

The dominant systems upon which American society is built are capitalism and representative democracy. For the majority of American history, black people were the objects of both. But today, the non involvement of black citizens in the electoral and civic space likely does us more damage than even the heinous and unconscionable GOP schemes of voter suppression and gerrymandering.

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“... decade-plus dominance of the most aloof public officials ever to sit atop the local black political pyramid: Congresswoman Marcia Fudge and Cleveland mayor Frank Jackson.”

leadership more problematic.

The preachers and businessmen who led the community were dependent upon it for their own livelihood. They interacted with their members and customers on the regular. The vast majority of the black community today — the very concept of “the black community” has become elusive

Cleveland there is precious little dialogue with or accountability to the community. This unfortunate situation has given us a decade-plus dominance of the most aloof public officials ever to sit atop the local black political pyramid: Congresswoman Marcia Fudge and Cleveland mayor Frank Jackson. Yet who but the most

A Hope for 2019

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A group of citizens who felt perhaps half as removed from their elected officials as most black people took it upon themselves to do something about their condition. They started locally and in less than a decade — aided by some monster money (read that two ways) — changed the tenor and realities of American politics on a national scale, to immense global consequence. We speak of course, of the Tea Party.

However corrupt, inscrutable, or irrelevant our current political process may seem, the consequences of non involvement are in the end far more discomfoting than confronting and reforming them.

The 2009 county reorganization that voters passed in the wake of county-wide scandal was a placebo. We felt better but not much changed in the overall quality of public life or public service. A captive cadre of public officials was mostly non responsive in 2017 to the voters who elected them and thwarted a referendum attempt on how public dollars should be spent.

It is an open secret that our local political culture is one of the major impediments to metropolitan health and growth. In Cleveland's past, and today in places once thought of as cultural backwaters, black initiative has been the catalyst for political change.

Is it too much to hope that such initiative will rear its lovely head here in 2019?

Political Digest

There is no off-season in politics. Even as the consequences of last month's election results are still unfolding, positioning is already underway for the 2019 primaries, some of which carry a February 6 filing deadline.

Among the head starters:

• Former State Sen. **Shirley Smith** has pulled petitions to challenge **South Euclid** mayor **Georgine Welo**. Smith, who is retiring from the Ohio Parole Board effective 12-31-18, told **RDP** she has yet to decide whether she will run but that she wants to keep her options open as she contemplates her future and that of her new city. Smith, who said she moved to South Euclid in 2009, represented the 21st Senate district from 2007 to November 2014,

when she resigned. She previously represented the 10th House District from 1999 to 2006.

Welo has won four mayoral elections, beginning Nov. 2003.

Smith's petition play seems like a trial balloon. The filing deadline is not until August 22.

Gov. Kasich is using his last few weeks in office to make a variety of statements. Political observers may recall Kasich began his 8 years as governor with a series of Cabinet appointees who were almost invariably white men. This week, he appointed four new judges to fill vacancies resulting from last month's election, three of them African Americans.

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THE REAL DEAL PRESS

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Business Ledger

Popular Eatery reopens on Kinsman under new management; Angie's on Carnegie to follow

The healthy eatery Bridgeport Café established and operated by Burten Bell Carr Development Inc. [BBC] reopened last month with a new name and new management.

BBC, a community development corporation, developed and managed Bridgeport as a healthy eating outpost in the central Kinsman area. Bridgeport closed Oct. 8 when BBC had the opportunity to transfer

its operation to a private manager, part of the Soul Republic United Restaurants brand that includes both Zanzibar on Shaker Square and the original Angie's Soul Café spots.

The new restaurant, Sunshine Café, has been doing a soft opening operation since early November, only recently hoisting its new banner. Currently, it is open Monday through Friday from 7:30a until 3p. Saturday hours are in the planning stage, according to Shawn Wynn, who is managing the opening



along with his duties as Soul Republic general manager.

Wynn said that Sunshine will continue the spot's **emphasis on healthy eating**, and do so on an "upgraded level".

Wynn also said that a new Angie's Soul Café is still in the works for the northwest corner of Carnegie and East 79 St., with its new opening expected "in the next few months."

Political Digest

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The new judges include:



• **Ray Headen** to the 8th District Court of Appeals [Cuyahoga] to the seat held

by Ohio Supreme Court Justice-elect Melody Stewart.



• **Wanda Jones** to the Cuyahoga County Common Pleas seat held by Ohio

Supreme Court Justice-elect Michael Donnelly.



• **Stephanie Mingo** to the Environmental Court seat in Franklin County

Municipal Court. The seat has county-wide jurisdiction.

Kasich vetoed some of the more reactionary legislation



passed in the General Assembly's lame-duck session, including a gun bill and the fetal heartbeat legislation. His veto of the gun bill was overridden, as was his veto of the legislative pay raise. The Ohio Senate failed by one vote, however, in an attempt to override the fetal heartbeat legislation. Kasich's last full day in office will be Jan. 13, 2019. The bill will no doubt be reintroduced in January

when the new session begins, and Gov.-elect Mike DeWine has said he will sign it.

Kathleen Clyde, who lost last month as Democratic candidate for Secretary of State, has resigned her seat as state representative from the Kent area Dec. 20, and accepted appointment the same day as a Portage County Commissioner. She fills the unexpired term of

Mike Kerrigan, who recently stepped down in the middle of his four-year term. Clyde will serve through the expiration of the term in 2020.

Ohio Supreme Court Justice **Mary DeGenaro**, who lost to Melody Stewart in a bid to retain her seat on the Court, has reportedly agreed to be chief legal counsel to state auditor-elect **Keith Faber**.

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Around And About

Fiftieth Anniversary Class of National Urban Fellows presented at annual reception

The National Urban Fellows program has become an important source for introducing new professional talent to Cleveland. Pictured here, L-R, are Joe Black, NUF '17, with Sisters of Charity; with 2019 Fellows, Juan Galeano, Karimata Bah, and Cheri Koecher. Galeano and Bah are interns with the Cleveland Foundation, while Koecher is assigned to the Cleveland Water Department.

About 70 attendees gathered for the annual NUF alumni reception, hosted Nov. 27 at

the Cleveland Foundation.

NOMA, CAA & NSBE gather for holiday industry mixer at Oswald Centre, Dec. 19

Construction Employers Association VP Glen Shumate shares a laugh with Angela Sellers, left, and Sylest Lofton of Moxx Creative, at the annual joint construction industry mixer co-sponsored by the National Association of Minority Architects, The Contractors Assistance Association and the National Society of Black Engineers.

Architect Scott Whitley speaks with Jack Petsche of USA Roofing [and also a Brecksville City Councilman.]



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