

5,315 weeks, since the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre

MURIEL MIGNON LILLY CABELL was 7 when her family's home and photography business on North Elgin Street were destroyed by the white mob.

It's long overdue for the criminals who destroyed the Historic Greenwood District in 1921 to be held accountable. Each week we remember survivors or descendants.

CHEROKEE NATION ANNOUNCES PLANS FOR \$18M TREATMENT CENTER

By SEAN MURPHY, ASSOCIATED PRESS

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — As a child welfare specialist for the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma more than a decade ago, Juli Skinner saw firsthand the impact of the opioid crisis on Cherokee families. Parents who began using the powerful painkillers after a surgery or injury became hooked and were losing custody of their children, babies were being born addicted and young people who ended up in foster care were aging out of the system and becoming addicted themselves, resulting in a generational impact.

CHEROKEE NATION TREATMENT CENTER On A2



STATE

'PETTY CHILDISH BULLSHIT': VETERANS, STAFF EXHAUSTED BY ODVA DRAMA

By TRES SAVAGE AND REESE GORMAN (THE FRONTIER), NONDOC

An ongoing dispute between Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs director Joel Kintsel and the board that oversees the agency has intensified to the point that a leading veteran in the Legislature fired off an email instructing the feuding parties to

ODVA DRAMA On A2

STATE

EDUCATION WATCH: STATE TO CONSIDER RELIGIOUS CHARTER SCHOOL THIS WEEK

By JENNIFER PALMER, OKLAHOMA WATCH

An Oklahoma board is set to consider a Catholic charter school this week in what is viewed as a national test case for publicly-funded religious education. The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City submitted a proposal to open a Catholic online school, called St.

CHARTER SCHOOL On A6

STATE

OK CONSIDERS SEPARATING STATE AND FEDERAL ELECTIONS IF VOTING RIGHTS ACTS PASS

By KEATON ROSS, OKLAHOMA WATCH

President Joe Biden is urging Congress to resurrect sweeping voting rights legislation that would mandate same-day and online registration and restore voting rights for people convicted of felonies after leaving prison.

VOTING RIGHTS ACTS On A6

NATION

REMEMBER WHEN THE U.S. STERILIZED BLACK PEOPLE? HERE'S WHY IT MATTERS TODAY

By ALEXA SPENCER, WORD IN BLACK

The American Society of Human Genetics (ASHG) recently released a public apology for its participation in eugenics — a scientific movement in the early 1900s that discriminated against groups of people based on their ethnicity and physical features — and other instances of scientific harm.

The apology comes after the organization published a 27-page report detailing its past

STERILIZATION On A10

NATION

BLACK MALE TEACHERS REPRESENT 2% OF EDUCATION WORKFORCE



By SAM P.K. COLLINS, WORD IN BLACK

In 2022, Kurt Russell, a Black male history teacher from Ohio, became the National Teacher of the Year. That occasion not only shed light on Russell's efforts to reveal all facets of American history, but the lack of Black men

BLACK MALE TEACHERS On A10

NATION

Q&A: Oklahoma Attorney General's Quick Start Includes Marijuana Enforcement and Spending Investigations

By PAUL MONIES, OKLAHOMA WATCH

New Republican Attorney General Gentner Drummond hasn't wasted any time in his first month in office.

Drummond, an attorney and banker from Tulsa, has taken over from local district attorneys several pending investigations of state spending. Among them are probes into the Tourism department and its contract with

MARIJUANA ENFORCEMENT On A11







**ARTIST RENDERING** provided by the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma shows a new treatment facility. The Cherokee Nation, which is headquartered in Tahlequah in northeast Oklahoma, is the nation's largest Native American tribe, with more than 440,000 enrolled citizens. A portion of its \$98 million in opioid settlement funds will be used to construct a treatment facility that will be completely operated by the tribe and provide no-cost treatment for Cherokee Nation citizens struggling with substance abuse.

CHEROKEE NATION TREATMENT CENTER *from AI*

“We didn’t know what hit us. We were just floundering,” recalled Skinner, now the director of behavioral health for the Cherokee Nation, which is headquartered in Tahlequah in northeast Oklahoma.

Now, the nation’s largest Native American tribe, with more than 440,000 enrolled citizens, plans to use a portion of its \$98 million in opioid settlement funds to construct a 50-bed, 17,000-square-foot treatment facility in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, where the tribe is headquartered. The facility, which tribal officials announced on Monday, will be completely operated by the tribe and provide no-cost treatment for Cherokee Nation citizens struggling with substance abuse.

The \$18 million treatment center is part of \$73 million the tribe plans to spend building facilities across its reservation to address behavioral health needs, including drug treatment and prevention. Another \$5 million will go into a tribal endowment to help pay for Cherokees to go to college and grad school to become therapists and medical professionals needed to staff the facilities.

“These will truly be drug treatment centers

## “We didn’t know what hit us. We were just floundering.”

**Juli Skinner, director of behavioral health for the Cherokee Nation**

developed by Cherokees, for Cherokees,” said Cherokee Nation Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin. “It’s not a federal government-imposed facility.

“The symbolism is also important, which is we are paying for this over the next five years and making the opioid industry pay for everything. There’s a real sense of justice just making that statement.”

Native American tribes across the country settled with drugmaker Johnson & Johnson and the nation’s largest drug distribution companies for \$590 million that will be divvied up among hundreds of tribal nations, but the Cherokee Nation negotiated its own separate settlement with drug manufacturers and

distributors.

One of the things Hoskin and other Cherokee Nation officials are excited about is incorporating aspects of the tribe’s culture into the recovery program. In addition to having peer recovery specialists who are Cherokees, the recovery curriculum includes traditional activities like bead making, talking circles and stickball.

“A person in recovery needs to know they’re not alone,” Hoskin said. “If you’re Cherokee, there’s a real cultural reason why you’re not alone. We share traditions, even if those traditions in some families haven’t been practiced in generations.”

For Jennifer Lasiter, a 38-year-old Cherokee

Nation citizen who struggled for years with opioid addiction after she began taking hydrocodone for a back injury, having a connection with other Cherokee citizens at her workplace has been an important part of her recovery.

“Just from working here at the Cherokee Nation, I believe that Cherokees band together and lift each other up,” said Lasiter, a single mother of three children who works for the tribe’s food distribution center and has been sober for five years. “As a tribe, we all feel connected in some way.” apseanmurphy

## Veterans Commission: Frustrations Intensified

ODVA DRAMA *from AI*

“fix your shit.” Employees have grown weary of the elongated and politicized quarrel and say they are concerned that the drama has distracted the agency from meeting veterans’ needs, according to interviews with former and current staff, as well as public comments.

Kintsel believes Gov. Kevin Stitt wants him fired after he challenged him in the 2022 Republican primary, receiving 14.3 percent of the vote. He also took a significant amount of leave from ODVA — which operates veteran housing and enrolls veterans into benefit programs — to run a campaign in which he alleged massive “corruption” by Stitt’s administration.

Kintsel has said Stitt has replaced eight of nine Veterans Commission members in order to terminate his employment. He, the state attorney general and at least one veterans group have questioned the validity



KEVIN STITT, Governor, state of Oklahoma

of some of Stitt’s appointments to the board. As a result, Kintsel refused to attend recent scheduled meetings. In one instance, he instructed staff not to post the agenda.

But new members of the Veterans Commission said in interviews and public statements that their frustrations with Kintsel are borne of his own doing, and a series of termination decisions by Kintsel and deputy director Sarah Lane — coupled with Kintsel’s increasingly combative correspondence and behavior — has left some rank-and-file ODVA staffers hoping Kintsel resigns or is terminated.

Senate President Pro Tempore Greg Treat (R-OKC) told the Tulsa World on Tuesday that he believes Kintsel should resign.

“I think that he should step down,” Treat said. “I think that in any objective analysis, whether he

feels like he’s been treated fairly or unfairly in the public light, he is definitely a distraction to being able to serve veterans.”

That could happen at a special Veterans Commission meeting at 10 a.m. Wednesday. The agenda for the meeting proposes an executive session for board members to discuss “the employee performance and conduct of Joel Kintsel related to the current workplace environment.” Action items on the positions of executive director and interim executive director also appear.

New Veterans Commission Chairman Robert Allen declined to speculate how Wednesday’s meeting will go, but he discussed Kintsel earlier this month as tensions were mounting.

“What I’ve learned is this guy doesn’t like oversight,” Allen said in an interview. “He doesn’t like

people asking him tough questions, unless it’s coming from a rubber-stamp commission of his campaign donors.”

Wednesday’s meeting — scheduled at the Oklahoma Department of Transportation’s office instead of ODVA headquarters — comes less than two weeks after Kintsel refused to attend a Veterans Commission meeting on Feb. 3.

Kintsel argues that certain Stitt appointees to the governing body are “illegitimate” and contrary to statutory requirements. About an hour before the Feb. 3 meeting, he forwarded dozens of media outlets his correspondence with commissioners and legislators criticizing Stitt’s appointments and explaining his absence.

“You do not represent the Oklahoma veterans community in the manner explicitly laid out in

the applicable statute. A group of randomly chosen veterans does not make a Veterans Commission make. Only veterans chosen accordingly to the law, comprise a legally constituted Veterans Commission,” Kintsel wrote. “Because presently the Oklahoma Veterans Commission is not legally constituted, I will not be participating in the so-called veterans commission meeting you have unlawfully scheduled today.”

Kintsel’s absence left three other staff members to answer commissioners’ questions about the delayed and over-budget construction of Sallisaw’s new Oklahoma State Veterans Home. His refusal to attend the meeting openly frustrated commissioners and privately infuriated ODVA staff.

Speaking on the condition of anonymity owing to fear of retribution, two ODVA employees discussed staff reactions to the absence of Kintsel and Lane, the deputy director.

“With Joel not being here, they were looking for who is in charge,” one employee said. “That’s how bad it is.”

A second employee described the situation similarly.

“They had to defend his bullshit for the meeting and the commissioners,” the person said.

**‘I have watched this back and forth shit for the last nine months’**

Kintsel is the former parliamentarian of the Oklahoma House, and several lawmakers supported his move to become deputy director of ODVA in

ODVA DRAMA *Continued On A3*





**NISHA YOUNG**, construction program administrator for the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs, answers questions during a meeting of the Oklahoma Veterans Commission on Friday, Feb. 3, 2023. Young answered commissioners' questions because ODVA director Joel Kintsel refused to attend the meeting.

# *“This Drama Started Two Days After The Primary Election... The Governor Has Removed - Eight Of The Nine Commissioners”*

**- Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs director Joel Kintsel**

**ODVA DRAMA** *from A2*

January 2018. Months later, auditors culminated a three-year audit with a report calling ODVA a “dysfunctional environment” with “a culture of fear and intimidation.” In September 2019, Kintsel was promoted to director by a Veterans Commission featuring multiple members whom Stitt would replace over the next three years.

As Kintsel’s standoff with Stitt and new commissioners has intensified, some observers have run out of patience.

Rep. Josh West, a Purple Heart recipient who chairs the House Veterans and Military Affairs Committee, emailed his frustrations to Kintsel, Lane, Veterans Commission Vice Chairman Sid Ellington and other legislators on Jan. 24:

The email did little to assuage the conflict between Kintsel and commissioners over the ensuing three weeks. West (R-Grove) said Monday that the drama had lingered too long.

“The bottom line is, at this point, we’re not doing our job taking care of Oklahoma veterans,” West said.

Kintsel blames that on Stitt and his changes to the governing commission’s membership.

“This drama started two days after the primary election, and since then the governor has removed — either through termination or replacement — eight of the nine commissioners,” Kintsel said Feb. 9.

About 30 veterans met with Oklahoma Attorney General Gentner Drummond to express their concerns earlier this month.

Drummond, a veteran himself, weighed in on the drama with a Friday afternoon press release emphasizing the troubling tableau that has been painted for the public.

“This entire episode has been nothing short of a spectacle,” Drummond said. “It is unfortunate that the governor has not followed the proper appointment process, and it is equally unfortunate that the executive director of the state Department of

Veterans Affairs is acting irresponsibly and not in the best interests of veterans. It is wholly unacceptable that Oklahoma’s honorable veterans have been left without a functional commission.”

**Legitimacy of commission ‘a subject of some disagreement’**

According to Title 72, Section 63.2 of state statute, the governor appoints all nine members of the Veterans Commission, with six seats representing specific groups:

- American Legion
- Veterans of Foreign Wars
- Disabled American Veterans
- Paralyzed Veterans of America
- Military Order of the Purple Heart
- National Guard Association of Oklahoma

The statute requires each group to send the governor a list of five potential nominees for its seat on the commission. The statute also says one member must be a veteran of the Vietnam War.

But over the past year, at least three of Stitt’s appointees were not selected from the organizations’ lists. Instead, Stitt appointed members of the organizations who had not officially been recommended.

Allen has a lifetime membership in the Military Order of the Purple Heart, but he was not recommended by the group. Daniel Orr represents the Disabled American Veterans but was not recommended, and Ted Perry represents the Veterans of Foreign Wars but was not recommended. Former commission members and others have also raised concerns that no Vietnam veteran now serves on the board.

Stitt’s office and his appointees have cited a section further down in the statute that says the veteran service organizations “on or before January 1

**“The bottom line is, at this point, we’re not doing our job taking care of Oklahoma veterans.”**

**Rep. Josh West, a Purple Heart recipient who chairs the House Veterans and Military Affairs Committee**

of the year in which the organization’s appointee’s term expires” must submit a “performance audit and financial audit of the organization for the immediately preceding fiscal year of the organization,” or else the organization will be rendered “ineligible to submit a nominee to the governor.”

“Ask the guys with the Military Order of the Purple Heart the last time they submitted the performance and financial audit to the state, which is required,” Allen said. “The answer is ‘never.’”

During his Feb. 6 meeting with aggrieved veterans, Drummond said he disagrees with the interpretation of the statute’s reporting requirement and believes the appointments were made “contrary to law.”

“There’s also the concern that you have an audit that’s due on the year of your term’s expiration, and how that is interpreted, I think, is a subject of some disagreement between the governor’s office and this office,” Drummond said.

Former Commissioner Larry Van Schuyver and the Oklahoma Military Order of the Purple Heart challenged Allen’s appointment in court, but the judge so far has ruled in favor of the Stitt administration on motions limiting the plaintiffs’ arguments. Stitt’s press secretary declined to comment on the situation, referring to the administration’s filings in the ongoing litigation.

Kintsel’s reaction to what he views as illegitimate appointments has thrown the commission into a stalemate. A scheduled Feb. 10 commission meeting never occurred, and Kintsel and Allen continued to bicker by email.

“By directing staff not to post the agenda or cooperate with this commission, you continue to deliberately obstruct us from conducting business on public property in an effort to prevent the public and our veterans from understanding what is taking place in the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs,”

Allen told Kintsel in an email.

In an effort to mitigate further debacles with the commission, Rep. Jay Steagall (R-Yukon) filed House Bill 1080, which would spread the nine commission appointments across six individuals: the governor, the speaker of the House, the president pro tempore of the Senate, the lieutenant governor, the attorney general and the labor commissioner. The bill advanced unanimously out of a House committee Feb. 7.

“What we need to keep in mind here is that the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs, by design, is a non-direct reporting agency, and it’s very difficult for us to maintain that mandate when it’s one individual that has all nine appointments to the commission,” Stegall said.

The legislation has also garnered some support from Drummond, who said he is “encouraged that our state Legislature appears poised to resolve this matter.”

“I believe it is prudent to resist litigation by this office, let the legislative process run its course and ultimately ensure the integrity of the Veterans Commission,” Drummond said.

**‘It’s the secretism. It’s the lies. It’s the toxic management up here.’**

Unlike Kintsel, former ODVA employees Travis Stanberry and Camilo Ulloa attended the Feb. 3 meeting of the Oklahoma Veterans Commission. They watched their former colleagues, construction program administrator Nisha Young and chief financial officer Lisa White, answer commissioners’ questions for more than an hour because Kintsel chose not to attend.

Afterward, both men walked to the agency’s parking lot, interacting briefly with commissioners and answering journalists’ questions. “It took a lot of courage for Nisha and Lisa and the other employees who

**ODVA DRAMA** *Continued On A5*



# J. Coody Johnson

By JOHN R. HARGRAVE, THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF OKLAHOMA HISTORY AND CULTURE

One of the most prominent African American attorneys practicing in Oklahoma, J. (James?) Coody Johnson was born north of present Wewoka on July 27, 1864.



The grandson of a slave belonging to William McIntosh, the great Coweta chief of the Creek Nation, Johnson was esteemed by Creek and Seminole as “the Black Panther.” He was intimately familiar with the language, laws, and customs of the Creek and Seminole. By the terms of a treaty made between the U.S. government and the Creek Nation after the Civil War, Johnson and all other Creek freedmen were granted full membership rights in the Creek tribe. His skills as an interpreter earned him the honor of occupying a number of elected and

appointed tribal positions, including membership in the House of Warriors, secretary of the Creek Nation, and private secretary to a principal chief of the Seminole Nation. When a constitutional convention was convened in 1906 to fashion a constitution for the soon-to-be state of Oklahoma, powerful forces were at work seeking to advance a “Jim Crow” agenda. To resist these efforts, Johnson founded and served as president of the Negro Protection League. In this capacity he rendered forceful and eloquent arguments

in favor of the rights of all men to receive fair treatment at the hands of their government. In 1907, when Pres. Theodore Roosevelt received the Oklahoma Constitution for acceptance, the document contained numerous segregationist provisions, including a clause prohibiting black people from marrying whites or Indians. As chair of the suffrage committee, Johnson was part of a delegation that traveled to Washington, D.C., to plead with Roosevelt not to approve the constitution in that form. Even so, two months later Roosevelt agreed to accept

the document as submitted. Johnson also distinguished himself as an African American entrepreneur. He founded the Black Panther Oil and Gas Company and owned the Black Panther Hotel in Wewoka. Prior to 1907 statehood he established a law office on Cedar Street in that town. He later built his own law office and a second hotel. In the early twentieth century he had the only black-owned establishment on Wewoka’s Main Street. In 1985 the Johnson Building, on the corner of Wewoka Avenue and Cedar Street (124 North Wewoka), was listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NR 85001744). In 1918 his legacy was clouded when disbarment proceedings commenced against him. It was alleged that he, along with a number of other attorneys, white and black, had taken unfair economic advantage of an uneducated orphan girl soon after she reached the age of maturity. As a Creek Nation freedwoman, she was to come into possession of a considerable estate. She died mysteriously before the proceedings against Johnson could be concluded. The complaint against him was dropped. Johnson served as the president of the Negro State Fair Association, which staged the state’s first Negro Independent State Fair in 1915 at Muskogee. In 1919 the event was held at Wewoka. Reportedly, Wiley Post was the main attraction at the 1920 fair. This event was held on Johnson’s extensive ranch, located approximately five miles north of Wewoka. The state school superintendent, R. H. Wilson, permitted every Oklahoma African American school to close for two days so students could attend. Johnson also served two terms as grand master of the Colored Masons of Oklahoma. When he died on February 27, 1927, Johnson committed a portion of his estate to be used to establish a school for “Negro boys and girls.” Such a school was indeed established and named the Johnson Grove School in his honor. Because at the time African American children were not allowed to attend school inside the city limits, the school was located on Johnson’s ranch. When that law changed, the students attended Wewoka’s Douglass High School, and the Johnson School closed. In accordance with his wishes, Johnson was interred in a cemetery north of Wewoka near his mother, father, and daughter.

THE OKLAHOMA HISTORICAL SOCIETY is an agency of the government of Oklahoma dedicated to promotion and preservation of Oklahoma’s history and its people by collecting, interpreting, and disseminating knowledge and artifacts of Oklahoma.

J. COODY JOHNSON, (1135, J. Coody Johnson Collection, OHS).

## Featured Last Week



House Moves Education Plan: \$500M Of New Funding



Post-Roe, Native Americans Face Even More Abortion Hurdles



OK CIO: Veterans’ Information Stored Outside State Network

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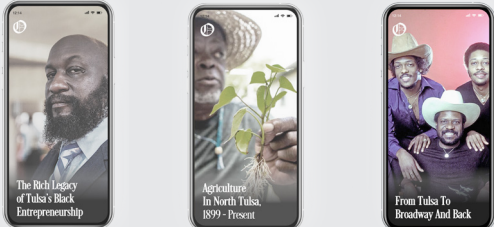
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# “For us, it’s the way that they operate and employment decisions”

- Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs employee

## ODVA DRAMA from A3

were sitting in the back, because your leadership is not there,” Ulloa said. “In the military, everybody tells you that your leadership is always going to be there, because that’s what their authority, responsibility and obligation is. And if you run away from that, it’s not considered courageous.”

Ulloa and Stanberry were both terminated in 2022 under circumstances they believe were unfair.

As Stanberry stood outside ODVA headquarters Feb. 3 and described his final months at the agency, a man who identified himself as the husband of an ODVA human resources employee confronted Stanberry about whether he was “bad-mouthing” his wife.

“You don’t intimidate me dude,” the man said.

Stanberry replied, “I don’t try to.”

A Marine Corps veteran, Stanberry said the bizarre encounter underscored the “toxic” climate faced at ODVA headquarters.

Stanberry lives in the Lincoln County community of Sparks, said his employment ended in 2022 after he was reassigned from serving veterans in Okfuskee, Okmulgee, Hughes, Lincoln, Seminole and Pottawatomie counties. Instead, he was asked to shadow another employee for outreach to incarcerated veterans.

When he was eventually reassigned to the ODVA office in OKC, Stanberry said he was asked on Sept. 12 to return a state vehicle he was assigned for the outreach job the next day. He said he asked his supervisor for help.

“I said, ‘I don’t have a way to get home. I can’t drive my vehicle up here and that vehicle. My wife’s at work.’ He said, ‘Don’t worry, if you don’t

have a ride, I’ll give you a ride,’” Stanberry recalled. “It’s 57 miles to my house. And the next day, on the 13th, he never showed up for work. He was at an ODVA symposium in Stillwater.”

As the afternoon progressed, Stanberry said he made it known that he had no other ride home and would need to wait for his wife to get off work and pick him up around 8 p.m. He said ODVA’s human resources director and legal counsel asked to speak to him in his office.

“They both talked to me, and they said they talked to Joel (Kintsel) and Sarah (Lane), and they had made it clear that I was not allowed to stay here and I needed to get off the premises,” Stanberry said.

Stanberry said he decided to walk toward Lincoln County.

“I ended up walking a little over 11 miles,” he said. “I made it almost to the bridge on 23rd Street or Highway 62 in Choctaw when one of the veterans I’d helped saw me walking, pulled over, picked me up and took me home.”

Stanberry said the incident made him feel “like they don’t care.”

“It’s the secretism. It’s the lies. It’s the toxic management up here,” Stanberry said.

Asked about Stanberry’s termination and other employee concerns, Kintsel said he had not been told about the parking lot encounter.

“I’m not going to comment on any of that,” Kintsel said. “That’s all HR stuff, and there’s a lot going on there that we’ve followed the law and done what we needed to do.”

But both of the two ODVA employees who agreed to speak about their concerns on the condition of anonymity said Stanberry’s parking lot encounter epitomizes the workplace

## The ODVA drama and governance questions have boiled over at recent meetings as the new members of the commission have attempted to learn more about the delays

culture.

“For us, it’s the way they operate and employment (decisions),” one employee said. “How they got rid of Travis, how they got rid of Camillo. That’s really the biggest issues for us. Their hiring practices.”

Another employee said the atmosphere at ODVA became additionally tense when Kintsel announced in April 2022 that he was challenging Stitt in the Republican primary.

“We were on pins and needles here, to be honest, because we didn’t know what it meant for our jobs or for the [agency] itself,” the person said.

The other ODVA employee agreed.

“It was common sense,” they said. “You’re running against your boss, so that was common sense that there would be some issues.”

Both employees said that the vast majority of their coworkers are tired of working for Kintsel and Lane.

“It’s 90 to 95 percent who want him gone, and the other 5 percent are people he appointed,” the person said.

Kintsel said employee morale is not a problem at ODVA.

“I think the people who are telling you those things have been talking to former employees, some of whom have been terminated for cause,” Kintsel said.

### New ODVA home in Sallisaw delayed, over budget

The ODVA drama and governance questions have boiled over at recent meetings as the new members of the commission have attempted to learn more about the delays and cost increases for the agency’s new Oklahoma State Veterans Home being built in Sallisaw.

In January, Kintsel requested that the Veterans Commission vote to declare

an “emergency” regarding the project so that a change order increasing the building cost by \$22 million could be approved. As approved, the center was expected to cost \$77 million, but it had to be remodeled after architectural imperfections meant the design was not up to state fire code.

Commissioners received only limited information regarding their most pressing questions, including why the project’s budget had been lowered from an original \$90 million down to \$77 million. Both employees said their superiors had made that decision, including Kintsel.

Kintsel, who declined to discuss what he anticipates could happen at Wednesday’s 10 a.m. meeting of the Veterans Commission, said ODVA can still recover money from the project’s original architect if commissioners would just let him do his work.

“We’ve got the original architect that was grossly negligent and did not provide complete architectural plans for the project,” Kintsel said Feb. 9. “Of course, it took a while for that to come to light. So we have retained a law firm here in Oklahoma City that is going to sue them and hopefully recover damages for the state of Oklahoma.”

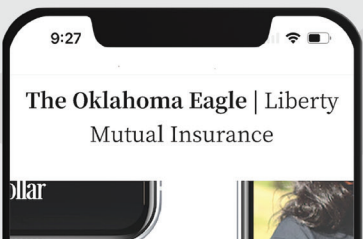
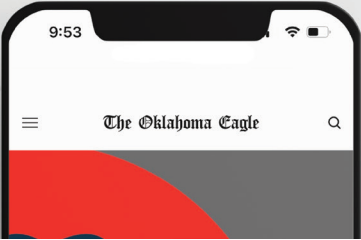
**WILLIAM W. SAVAGE III (TRE)** has served as the editor in chief of NonDoc since the publication launched in September 2015. He holds a journalism degree from the University of Oklahoma and covered two sessions of the Oklahoma Legislature for eCapitol.net before working in health care for six years. He is a nationally certified Mental Health First Aid instructor.

**REESE GORMAN (THE FRONTIER)** is a political reporter for The Frontier based in Oklahoma City. He spent two years at The Norman Transcript before moving to The Frontier to cover Oklahoma politics.

The Oklahoma Eagle

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# Archdiocese Proposed Fall 2024 Opening with an est. 500 Students

CHARTER SCHOOL *from AI*

Isidore of Seville Catholic Virtual Charter School. The Statewide Virtual Charter School Board plans to consider the application at its 2 p.m. meeting Tuesday, according to its agenda.

The board canceled its December and January meetings because it was down to two members — not enough for a quorum. A recent appointment by the Senate allows the board to resume meetings.

Newly appointed board member Nellie Tayloe Sanders is senior vice president of philanthropy at Center of Family Love, a residential facility in Okarche for developmentally disabled adults. Her husband is former state Rep. Mike Sanders.

Sanders, a Kingfisher resident, has dyslexia and said she’s passionate about the opportunity to bring alternative educational options to students who learn differently.

The Archdiocese has proposed

opening in the fall of 2024 with an estimated 500 students in grades kindergarten through 12th. The school would be designed for students who “desire a quality Catholic education, but for reasons of accessibility to a brick-and-mortar location or due to cost cannot currently make it a reality,” according to the application.

State law requires charter schools, which are public, to be non-religious. A legal opinion by former Attorney General John O’Connor advised the board to disregard that ban in light of recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions.

Statewide Virtual Charter School Board meetings are held at the Oklahoma History Center and can also be viewed online. Comments, questions, story ideas? I’d love to hear from you via email or direct message.

A STUDENT who is enrolled in virtual classes works through a school lesson on a tablet.

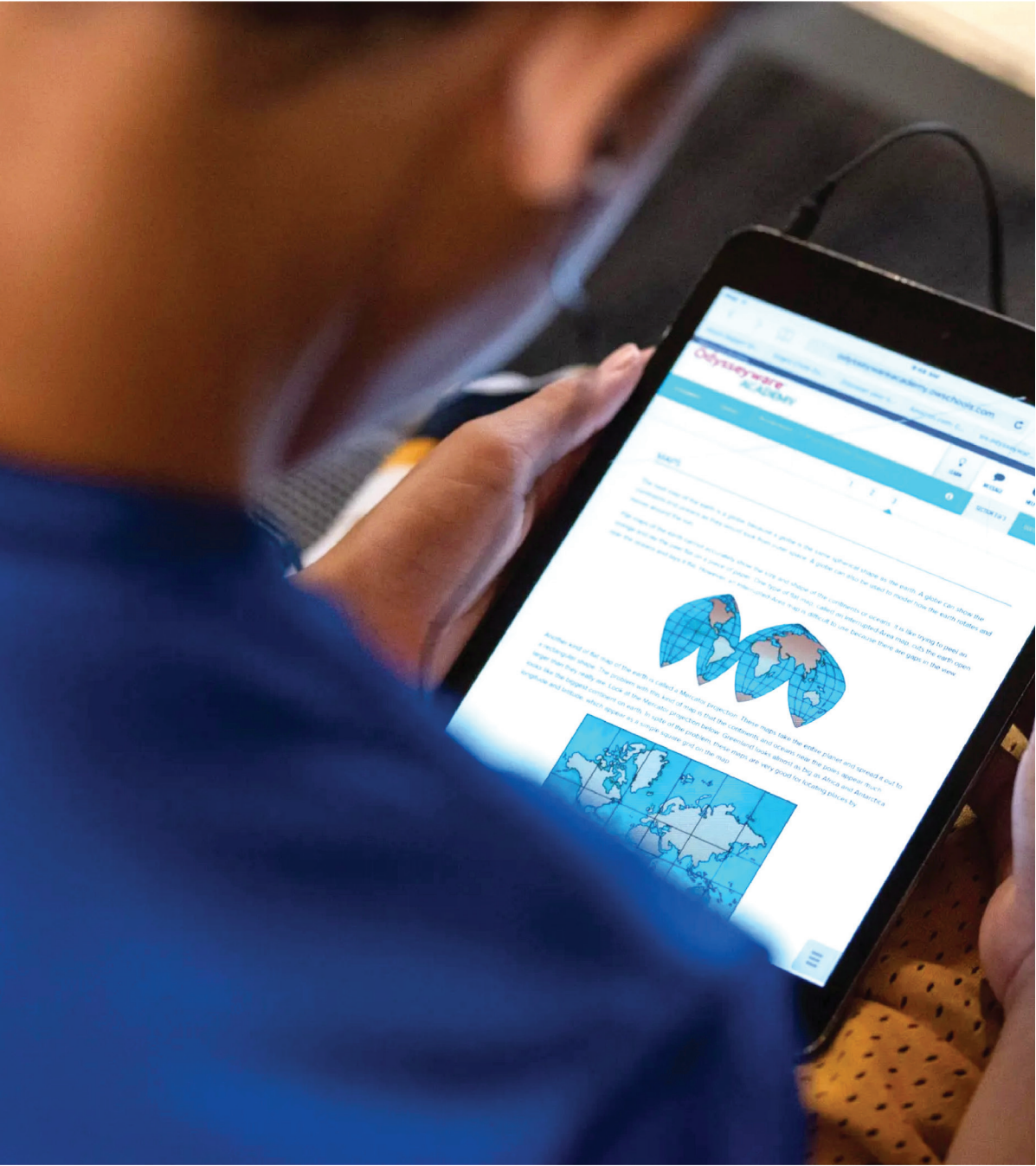


PHOTO WHITNEY BRYEN/OKLAHOMA WATCH

# Bill poised to move forward by republicans and employment decisions” - Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs employee

VOTING RIGHTS ACTS *from AI*

A combined version of the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement and Freedom to Vote Acts cleared the House but stalled in the Senate last January. But a Republican legislator from Piedmont wants Oklahoma to be ready to counter what she sees as potential federal interference in the state electoral process.

Rep. Denise Crosswhite Rader sponsored House Bill 1415 to establish a mechanism for Oklahoma to separate state and federal elections should Congress pass certain voting reforms. Last year, she proposed a similar bill that House Democrats termed overly complex and argued could clear the way for the passage of discriminatory voting laws.

The House Elections and Ethics Committee is set to consider the proposal at 3 p.m. today.

Crosswhite Hader points to the same-day voter registration requirement as one concern in the pending federal proposals because it contradicts state election law. Oklahoma sets a voter registration deadline of 25 days before an election day.

“I hate to go that far because I understand the concern of the cost and the time,” said Crosswhite Hader, who was among 39 state lawmakers to sign a letter asking the state’s congressional delegation to stop the verification of the Electoral College vote on Jan. 6, 2021 “But I also want to make sure we maintain our autonomy, which to me is as important as what the other repercussions might be.”

If Crosswhite Hader’s so-called trigger bill passes and the federal government passes voting rights legislation, the state attorney general and election board secretary would determine if separating elections is warranted and present a written order to the Legislature for final approval. State elections would likely move to odd-numbered years should the Legislature authorize the request, she said, with voters needing to register separately to participate in state and federal races.

There would also be a notable fiscal impact. It costs between \$1.3 million to \$1.4 million to hold a statewide election, Election Board Secretary Paul

**If Crosswhite Hader’s so-called trigger bill passes and the federal government passes voting rights legislation, the state attorney general and election board secretary would determine if separating elections is warranted and present a written order to the Legislature for final approval.**



PHOTO WHITNEY BRYEN/OKLAHOMA WATCH

RESIDENTS OF THOMAS, A WESTERN OKLAHOMA TOWN of 1,902, voted on Nov. 8, 2022. A bill before the state House Elections and Ethics Committee would separate state and federal elections if Congress passes a stalled but sweeping voting rights act.

Zirix told lawmakers during a Feb. 7 Senate Judiciary Committee meeting.

The bill appears likely to move forward in the Republican-controlled Legislature, where legislative leaders and Gov. Kevin Stitt have said maintaining secure elections is a priority. An amended version of Crosswhite Hader’s 2022 election separation bill cleared the House on a party-line vote but stalled in the Senate in the final weeks of the session.

States that opt to separate federal and state elections would likely see lower voter turnout and engagement, said Megan Bellamy, vice president of law and policy for the Voting Rights Lab, a nonprofit organization that tracks and analyzes voting-related legislation nationwide.

Oklahoma has historically struggled to attract voters to the polls, ranking last in the nation in voter participation in the 2020 general election. Just over half of registered voters participated in the 2022 midterm election, including just 24% of registered voters 30 and under.

“It’s really set up to create more confusion among voters, who are going to have to navigate what is going to feel like a different process because there are going to be different rules and different requirements for each,” Bellamy said. “It’s also going to have a potentially huge impact on election administrators themselves. They’re

already underfunded, understaffed and under a great deal of stress.”

Only New Hampshire has passed a bill allowing for the separation of state and federal elections. Legislation is pending in Texas and Missouri.

Bellamy said states that pass separation laws would likely face legal challenges should they take effect.

“I think it [potential legal challenges] would really be a notion of authority and the state’s rights argument more so than an access point for voters themselves,” Bellamy said. “It would focus more on the implications of who gets to set that standard, federal or state, and would the federal legislation really get in the way of where the state wants to go.”

While not currently outlined in House Bill 1415, Crosswhite Hader said the Legislature would likely need to allocate more money for election officials to make and communicate changes. While acknowledging the potential for voters to grow weary of constant election cycles, she said the Legislature could alleviate that by consolidating certain local election dates. Three Senate Republicans have introduced bills seeking to move school board elections from April to November.

“When you start limiting those, it helps eliminate voter fatigue,” Crosswhite Hader said. “It also helps people be aware that this is when we vote, just like we know that we vote in

November for president or governor.”

Oklahoma would not be alone if it opts to move its state elections to odd-numbered years. Five states — Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Jersey and Virginia — hold elections in odd-numbered years, with the practice dating back to the early-to-mid 1800s in some cases. A 2019 NPR report found voters in these states were likely to skip off-year races, particularly when the governor is not on the ballot.

A related proposal, House Bill 2504 by Mark Lepak, R-Claremore, would require state and county election officials to report within 10 days any federal communication relating to voting or elections to the governor’s office, House speaker and Senate president pro tempore. It would also call for the State Election Board to notify legislative leadership if they intend to disburse federal funds. The bill is on today’s House Elections and Ethics committee 3 p.m. meeting agenda.

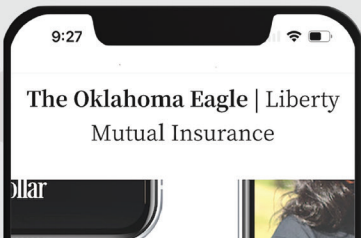
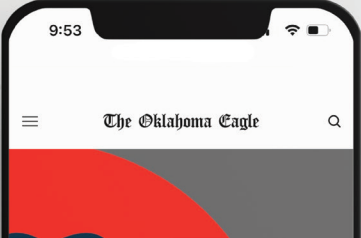
Bills must pass out of committee in their chamber by March 2 to continue in the legislative process.

KEATON ROSS is a Report for America corps member who covers democracy for Oklahoma Watch. Contact him at (405) 831-9753 or Kross@Oklahomawatch.org. Follow him on Twitter at @\_KeatonRoss.

The Oklahoma Eagle

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To amplify our core value of equity, through journalism and editorial” is the cornerstone of our continued success.





NOTICE

Published in The Oklahoma Eagle:  
February 17 and 24, 2023

NOTICE TO BIDDERS  
SEALED BIDS FOR  
PROJECT NO. SP 17-17 & SP 17-18

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to an order by the Mayor of the City of Tulsa, Oklahoma, sealed bids will be received in Room 260 of the Office of the City Clerk, City of Tulsa, 175 E. 2nd Street, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74103 until 8:30 a.m. the 17th day of March, 2023 for furnishing all tools, materials and labor and performing the work necessary to be done in the construction of the following:

PROJECT NO. SP 17-17 & SP 17-18  
ROOF REPLACEMENT TULSA FIRE STATIONS NO. 23 & NO. 25

The entire cost of the improvement shall be paid from Account No. 2234B00006. Buildings.FACILITY.409.4093122-541104  
2234B00024. Buildings.FACILITY.409.4093122-541104

A MANDATORY Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled for Tuesday, February 28, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. and will be held through video conferencing with Microsoft Teams, invitation presented on the City of Tulsa's website at this link: <https://www.cityoftulsa.org/government/departments/engineering-services/construction-bids/>

Attendance at the Pre-Bid Conference is MANDATORY. Bids will not be received from contractors who did not attend the Pre-Bid Conference.

Bids will be accepted by the City Clerk from the holders of valid pre-qualifications certificates from the City of Tulsa in one or more of the following classifications: A, B or S

Drawings, specifications and contract documents for construction of said public improvements of the said project have been adopted by the Mayor of said City. Copies of same may be obtained at the Office of the Director of Engineering Services at the City of Tulsa Engineering Services, 2317 South Jackson, Room 103, North Building, for a non-refundable fee in the amount of \$50.00 made payable to the City of Tulsa by check or money order.

Contract requirements shall include compliance as required by law pertaining to the practice of non-discrimination in employment.

The overall aspirational Small Business Enterprise utilization goal for this project is ten (10) percent.

Attention is called to Resolution No. 18145 of August 23, 1988, requiring bidders to commit to the goal of employing on the project at least fifty percent bona fide residents of the City of Tulsa and/or MSA in each employment classification.

Attention is called to Resolution 7404 of November 8, 2006, requiring bidders, their subcontractors and their lower-tier subcontractors to hire only citizens of the United States.

The City of Tulsa itself is exempt from the payment of any sales or use taxes, and pursuant to Title 68 O.S. Section 1356(10), direct vendors to the City are also exempt from those taxes. A bidder may exclude from his bid appropriate sales taxes, which he will not have to pay while acting for and on behalf of the City of Tulsa.

A Certified or Cashier's Check or Bidders Surety Bond, in the sum of 5% of the amount of the bid will be required from each bidder to be retained as liquidated damages in the event the successful bidder fails, neglects or refuses to enter into said contract for the construction of said public improvements for said project and furnish the necessary bonds within thirty days from and after the date the award is made.

The bidder to whom a contract is awarded will be required to furnish public liability and workmen's compensation insurance; Performance, Statutory, and Maintenance bonds acceptable to the City of Tulsa, in conformity with the requirements of the proposed contract documents. The Performance, Statutory, and Maintenance bonds shall be for one hundred percent (100%) of the contract price.

All bids will be opened and considered by the Bid Committee of said City at a meeting of said Committee to be held in the City Council Room of City Hall in said City at 9:00 a.m. on the 17th day of March 2023.

Dated at Tulsa, Oklahoma, this 17th day of February 2023.

(SEAL)  
Christina Chappell  
City Clerk

NOTICE

Published in The Oklahoma Eagle:  
February 10 and 17, 2023

NOTICE TO BIDDERS  
SEALED BIDS FOR  
PROJECT NO. AI 23-001

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to an order by the Mayor of the City of Tulsa, Oklahoma, sealed bids will be received in Room 260 of the Office of the City Clerk, City of Tulsa, 175 E. 2nd Street, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74103 until 8:30 a.m. the 10th day of March, 2023 for furnishing all tools, materials and labor and performing the work necessary to be done in the construction of the following:

PROJECT NO. AI 23-001 CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT ALLEYWAY IMPROVEMENTS

The entire cost of the improvement shall be paid from Account No. 2036D0007Z.Streets.CBD-SA.4281.42813243-541106  
2036D0007Z.Streets.CBD-SA.4282.42823243-541106  
2036D0007Z.Streets.CBD-SA.4283.42833243-541106

A MANDATORY Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled for Tuesday, February 21, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. and will be held through video conferencing with Microsoft Teams, invitation presented on the City of Tulsa's website at this link: <https://www.cityoftulsa.org/government/departments/engineering-services/construction-bids/>

Attendance at the Pre-Bid Conference is MANDATORY. Bids will not be received from contractors who did not attend the Pre-Bid Conference.

Bids will be accepted by the City Clerk from the holders of valid pre-qualifications certificates from the City of Tulsa in one or more of the following classifications: A or C

Drawings, specifications and contract documents for construction of said public improvements of the said project have been adopted by the Mayor of said City. Copies of same may be obtained at the Office of the Director of Engineering Services at the City of Tulsa Engineering Services, 2317 South Jackson, Room 103, North Building, for a non-refundable fee in the amount of \$50.00 made payable to the City of Tulsa by check or money order.

Contract requirements shall include compliance as required by law pertaining to the practice of non-discrimination in employment.

The overall aspirational Small Business Enterprise utilization goal for this project is ten (10) percent.

Attention is called to Resolution No. 18145 of August 23, 1988, requiring bidders to commit to the goal of employing on the project at least fifty percent bona fide residents of the City of Tulsa and/or MSA in each employment classification.

Attention is called to Resolution 7404 of November 8, 2006, requiring bidders, their subcontractors and their lower-tier subcontractors to hire only citizens of the United States.

The City of Tulsa itself is exempt from the payment of any sales or use taxes, and pursuant to Title 68 O.S. Section 1356(10), direct vendors to the City are also exempt from those taxes. A bidder may exclude from his bid appropriate sales taxes, which he will not have to pay while acting for and on behalf of the City of Tulsa.

A Certified or Cashier's Check or Bidders Surety Bond, in the sum of 5% of the amount of the bid will be required from each bidder to be retained as liquidated damages in the event the successful bidder fails, neglects or refuses to enter into said contract for the construction of said public improvements for said project and furnish the necessary bonds within thirty days from and after the date the award is made.

The bidder to whom a contract is awarded will be required to furnish public liability and workmen's compensation insurance; Performance, Statutory, and Maintenance bonds acceptable to the City of Tulsa, in conformity with the requirements of the proposed contract documents. The Performance, Statutory, and Maintenance bonds shall be for one hundred percent (100%) of the contract price.

All bids will be opened and considered by the Bid Committee of said City at a meeting of said Committee to be held in the City Council Room of City Hall in said City at 9:00 a.m. on the 10th day of March 2021.  
Dated at Tulsa, Oklahoma, this 10th day of February 2023.

(SEAL)  
Christina Chappell  
City Clerk

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ITEMS LOCATED AT: NOURISHED FOOD: 131 DEAN A MCGEE #115, OKLA. CITY AND DRIP THE BEVERAGE LAB: 900 E. WILL ROGERS BLVD, CLAREMORE  
**INSPECTION: WED. FEB. 22ND FROM 8:00 AM TO 5:00 PM AND STARTING AT 8:00 AM DAY OF AUCTION**  
**AUCTION HELD AT:**  
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**200 NW 114TH ST, OKLA. CITY, OKLA.**  
**(W. Side Service Rd of the Bdwy Ext. between 122nd & Hefner)**  
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**AND STARTING AT 8:00 AM DAY OF AUCTION**  
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**WED. FEB. 22ND AT 10:00 AM**  
ITEMS LOCATED AT: 5616 S. ROCKWELL, OKLA. CITY, OKLA.  
**INSPECTION: TUES. FEB. 21ST FROM 8:00 AM TO 5:00 PM AND STARTING AT 8:00 AM DAY OF AUCTION**  
**AUCTION HELD AT:**  
**DAKIL AUCTIONEERS, INC.**  
**200 NW 114TH ST, OKLA. CITY, OKLA.**  
**(W. Side Service Rd of the Bdwy Ext. between 122nd & Hefner)**  
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# THE OKLAHOMA EAGLE CHURCH DIRECTORY



**The Oklahoma Eagle publishes news and announcements for churches currently listed in The Oklahoma Eagle's Church Directory. For information, please call our office at (918) 582-7124**

## Church Of The Living God

1559 E Reading St. Tulsa OK  
(918) 584-3206

Minister RJ Smith

Sunday school - 9:30am  
Sunday Worship - 10:45am  
Monday Worship - 6:00pm  
Wednesday Bible Study - 5:00pm

## CAPERNAUM MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

1962 N. Sheridan Rd.  
(918) 834-4747

Pastor Ruthie I. Howard



Sunday School  
10:00 a.m.  
Morning Worship  
11:00 a.m.  
Bible Study & Prayer Wednesday 7:00 p.m.  
For Transportation (918) 402-6027

## Words of Wisdom Ministries FC

Temporarily meeting at the Courtyard Marriott 3340 S 79th E Ave Tulsa OK  
(918) 230-3022



Pastors Wesley & Alfie Gray would like to invite you to come and experience the Word of God in action this Sunday! God has a word for you, He Guarantee's it! You'll be glad you did!!!

## The Oklahoma Eagle Church Directory

List your church in one of the largest church directories in Oklahoma.

Participation in the directory allows free church announcements/ church news.

Post events and celebrations. Priority over non-listed churches for news.



Gospel Tabernacle Outreach Ministries, Inc.  
Traveling Outreach Ministries

609 E. Zion Street  
Tulsa, Oklahoma  
Elder Julius W. Bland  
Sr., Pastor  
918-810-3882

**ALL ARE WELCOME**



## MOHAWK FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

3329 E. 30th St. North • 834-0391

Sunday School  
9:30 a.m.

Sunday Morning  
Worship 11 a.m.

Bible Study  
Wednesday  
7 p.m.



Rev. Emanuel L. Collier, Sr.  
Pastor

## Gethsemane Baptist Church

727 East 56th St. North  
(918) 425-6613

Dr. W. T. Lauderdale

Sunday School  
9:00 a.m.

Church Services  
11:00 a.m.

## Zoe' Life Church of Tulsa

Rudisill Regional Library  
1520 N Hartford Ave.  
Tulsa OK 74106  
(918) 409-4899

Pastor Richard and Cher Lyons

Sunday Worship: 1pm

Wed- Healing School: 6:30p - 8p

"The Righteous Are As Bold As A Lion." - Prov.28:1a

## SOLID ROCK 7th DAY BAPTIST CHURCH

123 E. 59th St. North  
Ph: (918) 425-2077  
Pastor Rick Bruner

Sabbath School (Saturday)  
9:30-10:45 a.m.  
Praise & Worship 11:00 a.m.  
Choir Rehearsal  
Wednesday 6:00 p.m.

"The Seventh Day Is Still God's Sabbath"

## Northside Christ Gospel Church

3101 N. M.L King Jr. Blvd.  
Tulsa OK  
(918) 625-2374

Sunday School - 10 am

Sunday Morning  
Worship - 10:45

Sunday Evening Prayer - 7 pm  
Sunday Worship - 7:30 pm  
Wednesday Prayer - 7:30 pm  
Wednesday worship - 8pm

Rev. John W. Anderson

## VERNON AME CHURCH

307-311 N. Greenwood Ave.  
P: 918-587-1428  
F: 918-587-0642  
vernonamechurch@sbcglobal.net

Sunday  
Church School  
8:30 am

Worship Service  
10:00 am

Wednesday  
Bible Study  
6:00 pm



Rev. Dr. Robert R. Allen Turner

## FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH NORTH TULSA

THE CHURCH WHERE THE HOLY SPIRIT LEADS US



Pastor Anthony L. & Mrs. Kelly Scott

Sunday School - 9:30 a.m.  
Morning Worship - 11:00 a.m.  
Wednesday Prayer Meeting - 6:30 p.m.  
Bible Study - Noon & 7:00 p.m.

1414 N. Greenwood Ave.  
Tulsa, OK 74103  
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## BOSTON AVENUE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

1301 S. Boston  
(918) 583-5181  
Rev. David Wiggs  
Senior Minister

Sunday Worship  
8:30 and 11:00 a.m.

Sunday School  
9:40 a.m.

Sunday TV  
Worship  
11:00 a.m.

KTUL Channel 8



## TIMOTHY BAPTIST CHURCH

821 E. 46th St. N. • 425-8021

REV. TWAN T. JONES

Sunday School

9:45 a.m.

Sunday Morning Worship

11:00 a.m.

"We've come this far by faith"

## NORTH PEORIA CHURCH OF CHRIST

2247 N. Peoria  
Tulsa, Okla. 74106  
(918) 425-1071

Warren Blakney, Minister

Sunday Bible School.....9:00 a.m.  
Sunday Morning Worship.....10:00 a.m.  
Sunday Evening Worship.....6:00 p.m.

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## Pettie Chapel CME



19364 S. S. Mingo Road.  
Bixby, 74008  
Phone: (918) 366-8870

Rev. Robert Givens

Sunday School 9:30 a.m.

Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.

"Where Peaceful Waters Flow"

## Church In Power

732 E. 31st North  
Tulsa, OK 74106 - (918) 835-1525

Service times: 9am Sundays, 7pm Wed, and Special Supernatural Breakthrough Services every last Friday and Saturday of every month at 7pm and Sunday at 9am

Wednesday Bible Study - 6:30 p.m.

Church Ministries:  
Children's Church, CIP Praise Dancers, and CIP Praise Tem.



Pastor Bukky and Wunmi Alabi

For Further Information call (918) 835-1525.

"Have Faith In God." Mark 11:22

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Mount Zion Baptist Church  
419 N Elgin Tulsa, Oklahoma

Office:

918-584-0510

Fax:

918-584-1958

Prayer Line:

918-584-PRAY

Sunday School

9:30 a.m.

Morning

Worship 10:45

Wednesday

Bible Study

Noon and 7:00



## In The Spirit Christian Church

"Come And Experience The Spirit"

1020 South Garnett  
Tulsa, Okla., 74128  
Phone: (918) 836-6823  
Fax: (918) 836-6833



Rev. Sharyn Cosby-Willis,

Eclectic Praise, Extraordinary Worship, And Spirited Preaching.

Wednesday Services  
10:00 a.m. Spirit Seniors  
5:30 p.m. Support Groups  
6:30 p.m. Community Dinner  
7:00 p.m. Bible Study

Sunday Worship  
Church School  
9:45 a.m.  
Worship  
11:00 a.m.

Ministries: Administration, Children's Church, Children's Choir, Spirited Kids, Guest Services, Intercessors, Men's Fellowship, Outreach and much more...

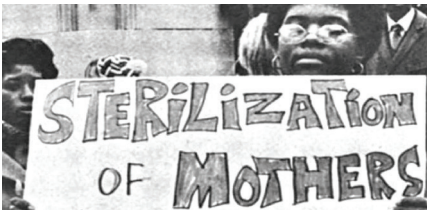


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Remember When the U.S. Sterilized Black People? Here’s Why it Matters Today

The American Society of Human Genetics (ASHG) recently released a public apology...  
STERILIZATION ON AI

Black Male Teachers Represent 2% of Education Workforce

In 2022, Kurt Russell, a Black male history teacher from Ohio  
BLACK MALE TEACHERS ON AI



HOW BLACK FAMILIES CAN BUILD GENERATIONAL WEALTH

Shelton Dotson, Northwestern Mutual advisor, says Black folks can begin to build generational wealth by creating a strategy and focusing on investment solutions.

By LAURA ONYENEHO, WORD IN BLACK

These days there are many ways to make money. Money, as we all know, helps us function daily. It is the medium that helps us obtain the things we need and want in our daily lives. Money may not buy happiness, but having it in ample amounts sure makes life easier. However, to maximize your money (get your paper right), here are some questions you need to ask yourself: “How are you making your money work for you?” and “Is your money making money?” The answer to both questions involves generational wealth, which is essentially any kind of asset that is passed down from one generation to the next (i.e. cash, investment funds, stocks and bonds, real estate properties or even businesses). In other words, generational wealth goes far beyond having an annual salary and a monthly income, most of which is often here today, gone tomorrow. Generational wealth gives you more flexibility and options in life. It gives you the freedom to live the life you desire and create the stability needed to take care of expenses or life emergencies for generations to come. Wealth, which again is significantly different than income, is vastly unequally distributed nationwide. Although significant progress has been made toward bettering the lives of Black Americans, since the civil rights movement, the wealth gap still remains. In 2022, the median weekly earnings for Black Americans was \$881 compared to \$1,101 for white Americans, according to the U.S Department of Labor. In addition to the income disparity, numerous other factors, including racial, economical and societal issues, have made it difficult for Black Americans to build generational wealth. Shelton Dotson is a Northwestern Mutual advisor. He spoke with the Defender to discuss ways Black people can start to build and sustain wealth today. Defender: Talk about the work you do to help others on their financial journey. Dotson: I’ve done personal literacy talks with some of my fraternity brothers. I’ve helped people get their feet wet when it comes to credit utilization and loans, and the pros and cons for different financial tools. Defender: What are some things that have kept African Americans from building wealth? Dotson: [The racial wealth gap] in the country causes the African-American community to have a smaller surplus and have less ability to save and do more wealth building. They are in survival mode instead of thriving. A lot of times in our community it’s a lot less frequent that they use a financial advisor to help them with a comprehensive financial plan to accomplish things like creating generational wealth, building retirement savings and having risk mitigation aspects taken care of. There are four big things associated with generational wealth which are business ownership, real estate investment, stocks and passive income. Defender: Financial values can’t be passed down without a strong foundation in basic financial education. How early should this information be taught?



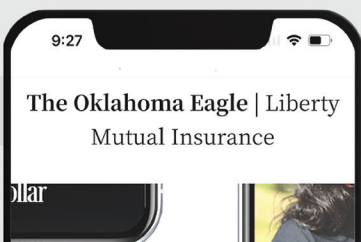
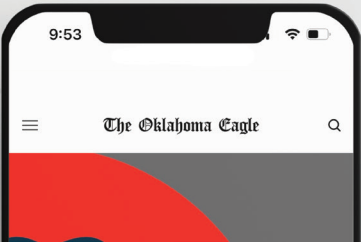
Dotson: It’s important to be taught financial literacy at an early age. I think high school should really be the point to focus on those real-life aspects. How to build credit, how to pay bills, taxes and debt, are some things that [should be priorities]. For example, in high school, I know my parents started teaching me about investing and credit, so once I had access to these resources, I didn’t abuse them. So, if you can grasp the basics, it will be easier to do more complicated stuff like transferring wealth and building assets. Defender: How can parents be more involved with their children? Dotson: Parents can start teaching their kids about being financially responsible. Making sure they don’t spend all of their money, build up an emergency savings, or teach them about credit. Build good money habits early. I can’t stress the importance of a financial advisor to help give a better understanding of how to maneuver when unexpected things come up like when a parent passes away. Defender: What are some tips to help people start building wealth? Dotson: – Figure out what your goals are in life. – Plan a strategy around the goals – Get a financial advisor for guidance and implementation of strategy. – Make sure you have vehicles set in place like a savings account – Focus on investment solutions, whether real estate or insurance. – Think about legacy estate planning in the case of someone dying. How will the wealth be transferred?

Marijuana Enforcement: Cont. On



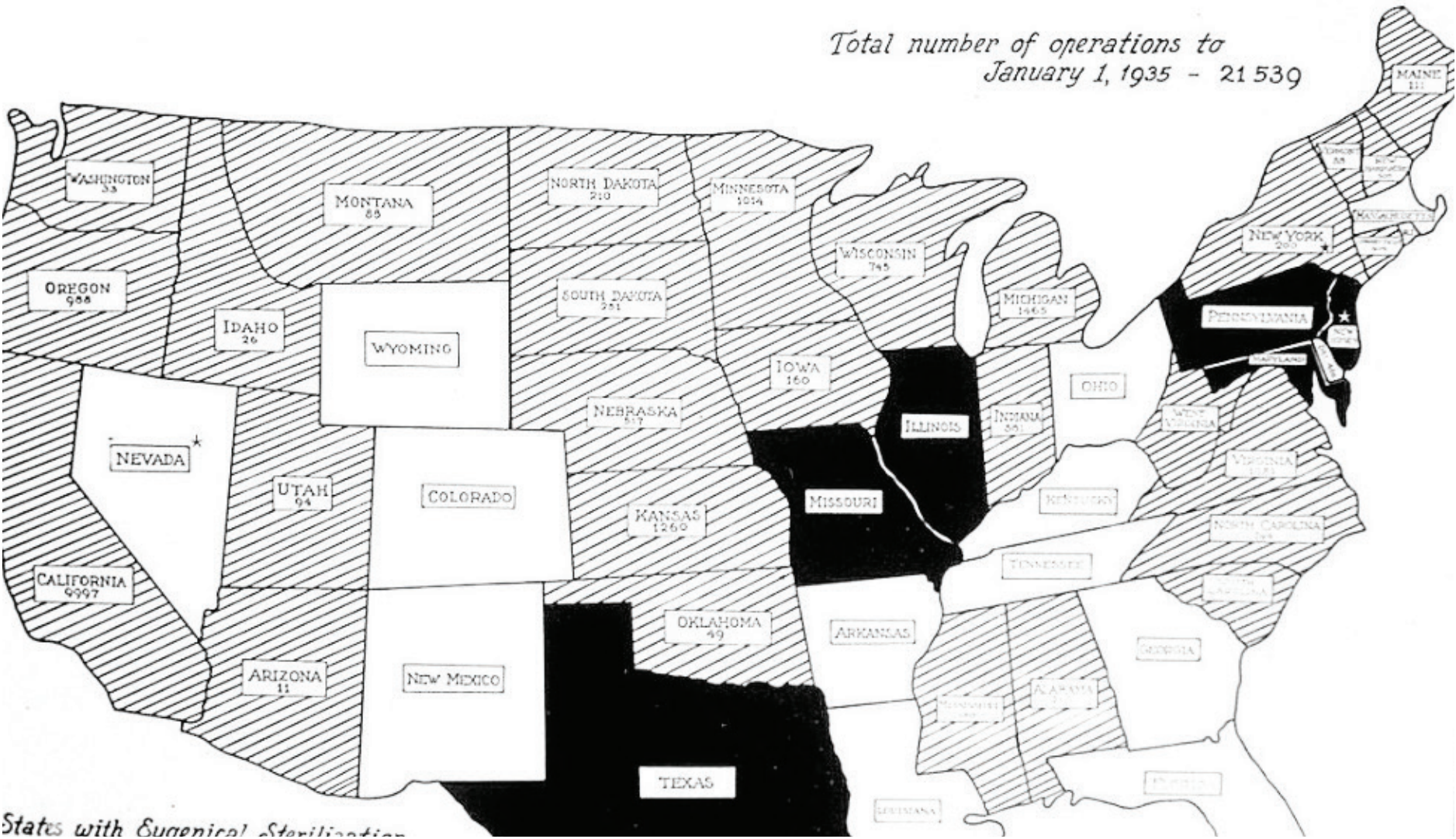
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LEGISLATIVE STATUS OF EUGENICAL STERILIZATION IN THE UNITED STATES  
AND THE TOTAL NUMBER OF OPERATIONS BY EACH STATE TO JANUARY 1, 1935.



“MISSISSIPPI APPENDECTOMY” *is one example of how eugenics attempted to limit the reproductive power of BLACK PEOPLE*

STERILIZATION from AI

and its pivot toward better ethics in recent decades.

“This time of reckoning with history is overdue, but it forms the foundation for a brighter future,” ASHG President Brandon Lee said in a statement.

In the January report, “Facing our History — Building an Equitable Future Initiative,” the organization revealed that many of its early leaders advocated for or participated in eugenics. Some even held leadership positions in eugenics associations prior to joining ASHG, which was founded in 1948.

Eugenics is founded on the immoral theory that deems groups of people as “unfit” human beings based on their genetics. Scientists — many of whom were white men — who adopted this idea used it to affirm preexisting prejudices about Black people and others held in society.

This led to the forced sterilization and genocide of Black people, immigrants, people with physical and mental disabilities, unmarried mothers, sex workers, those of lower economic status, and others.

Throughout the 20th century, 32 states adopted forced sterilization laws and participated in federally-funded sterilization programs.

“However, after World War II and the realization of how American eugenic policies inspired the atrocities of Nazi Germany, public popularity of eugenics collapsed,” the ASHG report states.

The collapse led to the founding of ASHG, according to the organization.

But eugenics has had a long-lasting impact on medical beliefs in the United States.

The “Mississippi Appendectomy” is one example of how eugenics attempted to limit the reproductive power of Black people.

Through the 1970s, Black women living in poverty were forced and coerced into

having hysterectomies or tubal ligations, preventing them from conceiving children.

In 1961, Fannie Lou Hamer, a civil rights activist from Mississippi, was given a non-consensual hysterectomy by a white doctor. The violation took place while she was undergoing surgery to remove a uterine tumor.

As recent as 2013, a report revealed that 148 female prisoners in California were sterilized between 2006 and 2010 without proper consent.

And in a 2016 survey, 40% of first and second-year medical students admitted to believing that “Black people’s skin is thicker than white people’s.” Others reported believing that Black people are not as sensitive to pain as white people. As a result, the trainees were less likely to properly treat Black patients’ pain.

As the science and medical industries face the aftermath of racist and prejudiced policy, ASGH has announced a plan for rectifying

its contributions.

The organization is suspending the use of individual names for its professional awards that are affiliated with eugenics or other harms.

It also plans to prioritize equity in its scientific and training initiatives, sustain advocacy for research diversity, and continue building inclusivity of its leadership, to name a few goals.

“The report and its findings are painful and document a history that must be told and taught so we can prevent its resurgence,” Lee said.

“The human genetics research community is deeply committed to realizing a future in which all people benefit from this knowledge, and this promising research depends on full and equitable participation. By acknowledging our history and apologizing for wrongs, t

BLACK MEN *currently account for less than 2% of the U.S. public school teacher workforce.*

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS’ NATIONAL TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL SURVEY AND DR. TRAVIS J. BRISTOL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

BLACK MALE TEACHERS from AI

in school buildings across the country.

Black men currently account for less than 2% of the U.S. public school teacher workforce, according to the National Center for Education Statistics’ National Teacher and Principal Survey and Dr. Travis J. Bristol of the University of California, Berkeley. This trend has been attributed to the lack of mentorship or misalignment in certain educational environments.

In the aftermath of a pandemic that brought to light glaring educational inequities and hurdles teachers face in the classroom, the number of Black male teachers dwindles daily. As teacher retention becomes more of a hot-button issue, elected officials at the local and federal level are exploring ways to attract and keep more people in the profession, including a salary increase, revamping teacher evaluations, and creating a teacher pipeline from local schools.

Black Male Educators in the Community: Langston Tingling-Clemmons

Teachers like Langston Tingling-Clemmons provide examples of Black male leadership in the classroom.

Tingling-Clemmons, who was recently featured in The Informer for his take on the social studies standards revamp, continues on his mission to help students to gain a holistic knowledge of U.S. history and make connections between the past and present day, as it relates to their daily lives.

Clemmons, a native Washingtonian and DC Public Schools (DCPS) alumnus, comes from a family of educators. He currently teaches eighth grade U.S. History at Jefferson Middle School Academy in Southwest. Previous stints include Friendship Public Charter School – Woodridge Elementary &

Middle School, where he also served as a history teacher during the Obama presidency.

While teaching hadn’t always been in the cards for Tingling-Clemmons, he entered the profession in 2010 as a Teach for America

Fellow after graduating from Bucknell University in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania. He said the first two years were trial by fire. However, he would later come to improve his classroom management and better ensure

that students gravitated toward the content.

Throughout his 13 years of teaching, Tingling-Clemmons has taught hundreds of young people, many of whom he still provides mentorship. Tingling-Clemmons has helped shape DCPS curriculum, and collaborated on shaping the African-American History elective taken in District high schools.

At the height of the pandemic, Tingling-Clemmons represented his fellow Washington Teachers’ Union members in demanding that the Bowser administration delay the return to in-person learning.

In the aftermath of George Floyd’s murder, Tingling-Clemmons has also become more intentional about channeling youths’ frustrations into civic engagement. Activities over the last couple years include Q&A sessions with D.C. Councilmember Charles Allen (D-Ward 6) and classroom discussions about council legislation that directly affects students.

In coming to recognize his influence as a Black male educator, Tingling-Clemmons said he works day in and day out to bring some sort of relevancy to U.S. History for students who, like he did, are coming of age in the nation’s capital.

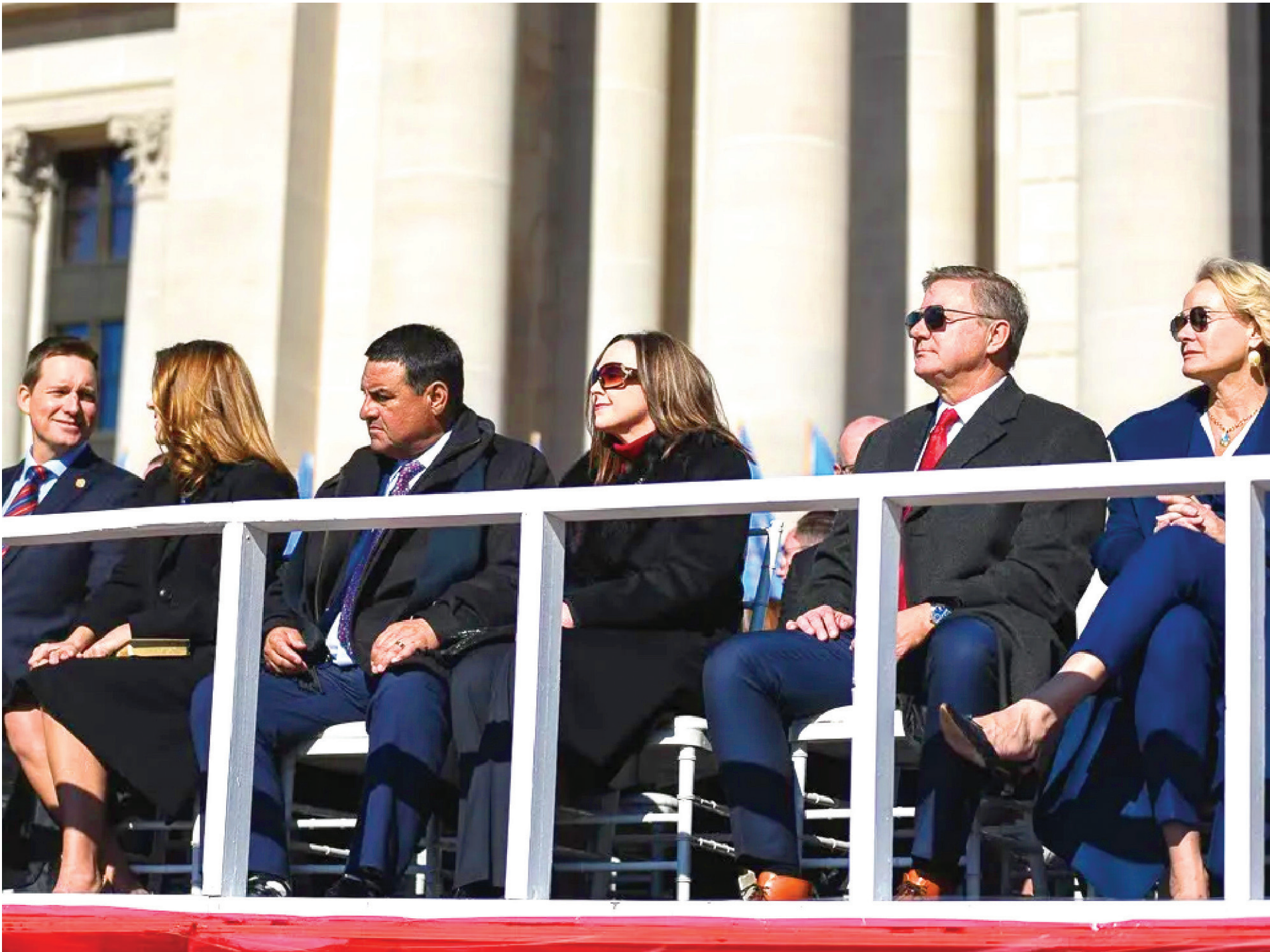
“I’ve seen students get angry about things told to them that’s not true and get highly upset about things that are happening,” Tingling-Clemmons said. “I try to bring something relevant to their lives every month. Those types of lessons and the lessons that dismantle the lies told about Thomas Jefferson and Christopher Columbus encourage my students to see the things that have been taught. I create a classroom that questions how racism plays a part in U.S. history.”



LANGSTON TINGLING-CLEMMONS is a teacher at Jefferson Middle School in Washington, D.C.



PHOTO WHITNEY BRYEN/OKLAHOMA WATCH



STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL GENTER DRUMMOND (second from right) and his wife Wendy, (far right) sat in the front row during the inauguration ceremony at the Capitol on Jan. 9, 2023.

## Drummond: Top Priority

# Stepping Up Enforcement AGAINST ILLEGAL MARIJUANA GROW OPERATIONS

### MARIJUANA ENFORCEMENT *from AI*

barbecue restaurant Swadley's; former Epic Charter Schools officials; and an early pandemic relief program for educational spending. He's slowed the pace of scheduled death penalty executions and filed or joined several state lawsuits against the federal government.

On Thursday, Drummond's office said it would take over the prosecution of an attorney charged in October in Garvin County with 13 felony counts alleging illegal marijuana business practices. The attorney, Matt Stacy, was Gov. Kevin Stitt's hospital surge advisor in the first year of the coronavirus pandemic. Stacy has denied wrongdoing.

Drummond said stepping up enforcement against illegal marijuana grow operations is among his top priorities. He also wants to help find common ground with Oklahoma tribes in the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court's McGirt sovereignty decision on criminal prosecutions on tribal land.

As attorney general and the state's top law enforcement officer, Drummond said he essentially runs a law firm of 220 attorneys and investigators.

"In the past, I don't know that past administrations have actually utilized the breadth and scope of the AG's office," Drummond said. "I am a student of the law, and I have researched carefully for this position. I do think my skills are aligned with what the needs of the state are."

Drummond, 59, first ran for attorney general in 2018. He narrowly lost the GOP primary runoff to incumbent Mike Hunter. Drummond ran again last year, defeating John O'Connor in the Republican primary. He then beat Libertarian Lynda Steele in November by 48 percentage points. No Democrat filed for office.

Oklahoma Watch recently sat down with Drummond at the attorney general's offices in Oklahoma City. The following is an edited transcript of that conversation.

Oklahoma utility customers are paying for decades for fuel costs over just a few days during the winter storm in February 2021. Given that the attorney general has a duty to represent ratepayers in utility cases at the Oklahoma Corporation Commission, what's your philosophy on the attorney general's role there?

I do not pretend to be an expert in all matters of law. I've dived deep in the area of utilities and regulation in the Corporation Commission so that I can have some competency in that scope. I'm not going to claim competency yet, but I'm going to claim a lot of hours spent understanding the role of the AG.

I believe clearly the attorney general's office is the protector of the ratepayer. That doesn't mean we are the antagonist of the utilities, because frankly when I walk in a room and turn on a light switch, I would prefer the light to come on. But at the same time, there needs to be a healthy tension so that the utility companies are paid fairly but not egregiously where there's an undue burden to the ratepayer.

Did you see anything from the utility ratepayer-backed bond process (to pay for the storm costs) that stuck out to you?

With 20-20 hindsight, it was devastating to the

## I think (Oklahoma Medical Marijuana Authority) has morphed into more of an administrative office and less of an enforcement office.

JERRY MOORE,  
Oklahoma CIO

state that we fought about it and didn't immediately securitize when the (interest) rate structure was low. So now we're going to pay \$2 billion in interest. Had we not fought among ourselves and acted like rational business people, that interest rate would probably be one-half (of that amount).

At the end of the day, (Storm) Uri happened. Prices went up to \$1,200 (per unit) from \$1.90. It was a crazy time. My predecessor (John O'Connor) wanted to go sue all the oil and gas companies. I'm an economist by training, and previously, I've sold commodities in cattle and oil and gas. So I understand how the market is structured. I don't think it's the role of the attorney general to dictate to the utilities on how they consume or purchase their fuel.

I think the market forces, the unseen hand of Adam Smith, came into play and prices went through the roof. Our oil and gas companies could have said, "No. We choose not to sell. No lights. No gas. Sorry." So I don't blame the industry for selling at the market value. I'm an economist. It's a free market; that's what it dictated. I think the utilities probably walked away going, "We didn't look so smart, and maybe we should blend forward contracting (for fuel purchases) with spot marketing."

Do you have new people at your office's Utility Division?

Those that were affiliated with this area of law are no longer in that area of law. I brought in new subject matter experts so we have a fresh start to do it right.

What are you going to do differently on illegal marijuana enforcement?

I think (Oklahoma Medical Marijuana Authority) has morphed into more of an administrative office and less of an enforcement office. (Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs) is focused on the trafficking of fentanyl and opioids that are coincidentally aligned with the organized criminal element in our illegal (marijuana) grows. My office has a bunch of attorneys and a bunch of agents, so we're going to use that skill set to do the forensic research and analysis to find these bad guys. We're going to augment OBN. We'll stay in our lane, but we'll be adjacent to them and make a big difference.

Our three largest legal grow operations in the state of Oklahoma provide all the marijuana needs for legal customers. We are a gross exporter of marijuana. Nobody's got their eye on that ball. OBN is cracking down on the illegal grows. OMMA is trying to make sure that legal people have licenses. Somebody needs to stop the gross export of marijuana.

Is that marijuana being illegally diverted to border states?

I think it's much more sophisticated. I think it's going in trucks to New York and other states. They can take our legally grown marijuana and sell it for a hundred times the price that can sell in Oklahoma into California. It's a remarkable profit center. So my agency will focus on the civil asset forfeiture and the environmental abatement of the grows. I'm seeking legislation that will require an (environmental) bond to basically put Humpty Dumpty back together again after we shut down an illegal grow. On civil forfeiture, we will take their pickups and their hydroponics and their guns and their real estate.

How are you approaching the McGirt decision and federal-state power conflicts?

Our solicitor general's office defends Oklahoma from federal overreach and prosecutes on behalf of Oklahoma to establish a clear separation of federal and state powers under the 10th Amendment.

We're expending considerable efforts not in attacking Native American tribes, but in working

on a resolution that makes McGirt a workable solution and not an impediment. We're not enriching outside attorneys at a \$1,000 an hour (on contract.) We're terminating all those relationships, and we're going to utilize Oklahomans to resolve an Oklahoma issue with Native American tribes who are also Oklahomans.

Your office has taken over several high-profile prosecutions regarding spending at the Tourism Department and federal relief funds for education through the governor's office. But you also apologized to a former Stitt cabinet secretary, David Ostrowe, for being investigated by Mike Hunter's office when he was attorney general. What is the proper role of the multicounty grand jury?

In my 28-year practice of the law, I've become intimately familiar with conflict of interest. We need to respect conflicts of interest, and we need to wall out people who have certain agenda items or issues. As the AG, I need to fully disclose any personal interest in any case. I think all of those things were compromised: I think the men and women in my office who prosecuted Ostrowe and the multicounty grand jury were given only half a deck of cards. And I think if they had been given the whole deck of cards, they would've probably refused to proceed.

PAUL MONIES has been a reporter with Oklahoma Watch since 2017 and covers state agencies and public health. Contact him at (571) 319-3289 or pmonies@oklahomawatch.org. Follow him on Twitter @pmonies.

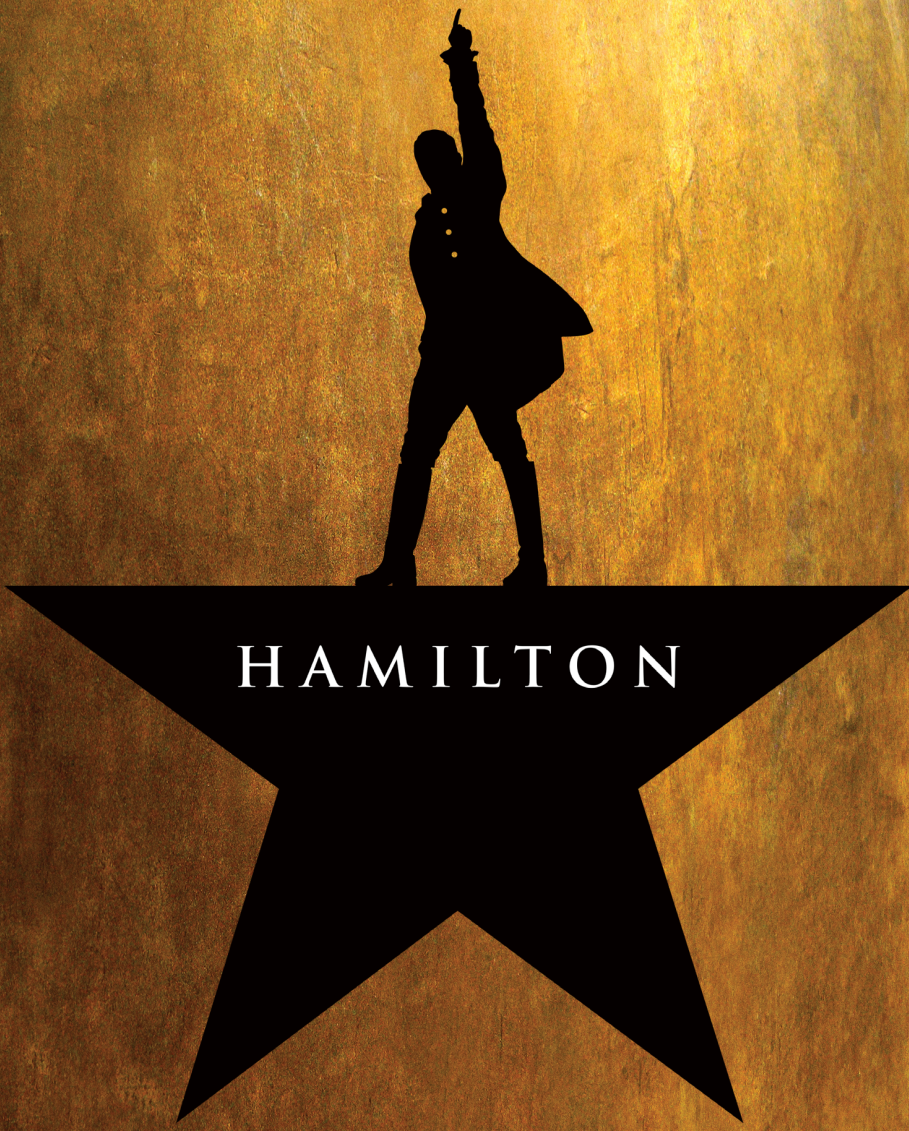
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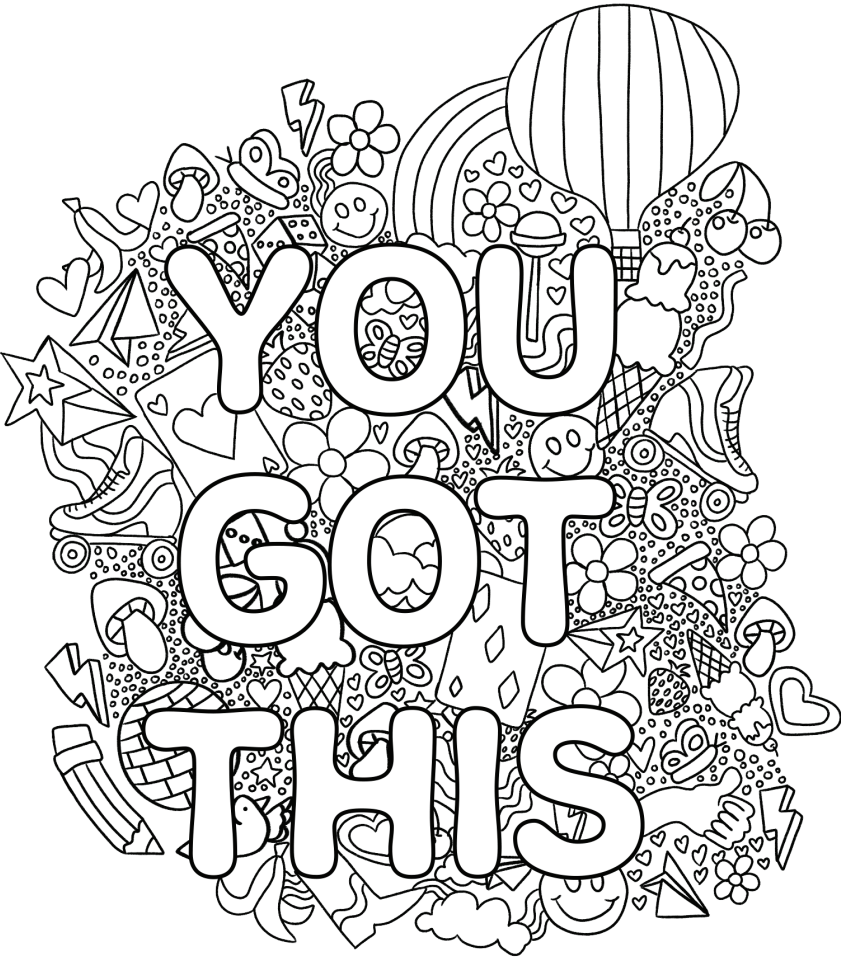


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