

The Oklahoma Eagle

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By MATTHEW BROWN, ASSOCIATED PRESS

NATION
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SPECIAL
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GIFT GUIDE



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THE OKLAHOMA EAGLE IS SEEKING TO BUILD
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The Oklahoma Eagle is currently engaged in a significant initiative to enhance its ability to build reader trust. A3

ENROLLMENT VERIFICATION PROBLEMS DELAY
START OF PRIVATE SCHOOL TAX CREDIT

Families wanting to apply for a new private school income tax credit of up to \$7,500 per child will have to wait a little longer. A7



PHOTO ADOBE IMAGES

TPS *free meal program* could act as a
hedge against rampant food insecurity

Free Meals Program from A1

TULSA PUBLIC SCHOOLS (TPS) will expand its free meals program to include all students in district schools beginning in the 2024-'25 school year. Free breakfast and lunch are already automatically provided to all elementary school students in the district. Under new rules, meals will also be provided at no cost to middle and high school students across Tulsa. Over 15,000 students in thirteen schools and their families will benefit from the program expansion according to Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) records.

The TPS free meal program could act as a hedge against rampant food insecurity issues affecting Tulsans in general and members of Tulsa’s Black and brown communities in particular. The Oklahoma Eagle reported on the dilemma of food insecurity in its December 1 edition. See article here: <https://theokeagle.com/2023/12/06/post-pandemic-food-insecurity-worsens-for-black-americans/>

Multiple studies have directly linked food insecurity, poor nutrition, and hunger to decreased academic performance and chronic school absenteeism, all problems currently affecting Tulsa Public Schools. Food insecurity has increased sharply as federally sponsored assistance programs introduced during the COVID-19 Pandemic are ending. In its Community Insights Report released in 2022, The Tulsa Area United Way estimates that 50,000 Tulsa-area children are suffering from food insecurity.

Black and other underserved minority communities are disproportionately affected, including Hispanic, Latino and Tribal ethnic, racial and economically disadvantaged communities]. The 2022 United States Department of Agriculture report ERS-Household Insecurity said that Black households are nearly twice as likely to be food insecure as the national average. Food insecurity in Black households with children is 30 percent, those in poverty at 40 percent, and those with more severe food insecurity suffering “disrupted eating patterns” are almost 10 percent, according to the USDA report. The Tulsa Equality Indicators 2022 report and other demographic data reflects these conditions are prevalent in north Tulsa.

A modification of federal regulations caused the expansion in free meals to make “economic sense,” TPS Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Jorge Robles explained to The Oklahoma Eagle in an interview. While the Oklahoma City school district and other districts in Oklahoma have included secondary school students in an automatic enrollment program for free meals, the Tulsa district has not done so.

The expansion kicks off in the new school year

CFO Robles told the Eagle that TPS will add middle and high schools to the federally subsidized program that automatically enrolls all students for free school meals, but only beginning in the 2024-25 school year. During the two school years of the pandemic, the federal government funded all the expense for these meals for students nationwide. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, TPS resumed a more restrictive program that provided free meals to all elementary school students but not all secondary students. Some middle and high school students can still

receive free meals in Tulsa schools on an application basis under a separate USDA-sponsored program.

However, to qualify for free meals via the application, a household’s income can be no greater than 135 percent of the federal poverty level. While TPS reports almost 80 percent of district students are economically disadvantaged, only slightly over half of Tulsa’s secondary school students apply for and receive free meals on an application basis. Another ten percent pay a reduced price, while at least 5,000 TPS secondary students pay full price for meals, according to OSDE Child Nutrition reports. Most “children just above the cutoff for free student meals are children of color,” according to a USDA-sponsored study. LatinX, Black, multiracial American Indian and Asians make up 78 percent of TPS students including approximately 7,800 African American children.

Beginning nationwide in 2014-15, the USDA started the rollout of a program designed to avoid the pitfalls of an application-based program and dramatically expand the number of students receiving free meals at school. The USDA describes this Community Eligibility Provisions “an option that allows eligible schools, groups of schools, and school districts to offer free meals to all enrolled students.”

“CEP allows schools to offer breakfast and lunch each day at no cost to all students. CEP also eliminates unpaid meal charges, minimizes stigma, reduces paperwork for school nutrition staff and families, and streamlines meal service operations,” the USDA said when the program was finalized in September 2023. Other benefits of the program listed by the USDA are “decreased hunger, positive impacts on academic performance, [and] improves household food security.”

TPS participation

While TPS has been a partial participant in the (CEP) program since

Free Meals Program cont. A3

50k

The Tulsa Area
United Way
estimates that
50,000 Tulsa-
area children are
suffering from
food insecurity



PHOTO ADOBE IMAGES

An approach to strengthen reader confidence

Trusting News from A1

THE OKLAHOMA EAGLE, A TULSA, OKLAHOMA-based media organization that has served its community for more than 100 years, is currently engaged in a significant initiative to enhance its ability to build reader trust.

The Ecosystem Engagement Project, spearheaded by Oklahoma Media Center, aims to create a stronger, more productive relationship between media organizations and their readers, viewers and listeners. OMC, an umbrella organization representing more than two dozen media outlets across the state, launched the Ecosystem Engagement Project in April 2023 in support of its mission

to support and strengthen Oklahoma’s local journalism ecosystem and spur innovation.

The project is funded by a \$100,000 grant from the Inasmuch Foundation, an Oklahoma City-based philanthropic organization dedicated to improving journalism in Oklahoma and nationwide. The grant has been divided between twelve different news organizations across the state. All are participants in the project.

The project aims to create a stronger, more productive relationship between media organizations and their readers, viewers and listeners.

“This engagement project, which is based on polling and comprehensive research,

will help local newsrooms listen and learn information needs of their communities with the ultimate goal of building trust,” said Rob Collins, executive director of the Oklahoma Media Center

The Eagle’s participation is focused on closely engaging readers and potential readers of both the print and digital versions of the newspaper. Ultimately, we’d like to determine how much confidence you – our readers - have in the news that the Eagle publishes. We want to know whether you read the paper at all and if so what you like and don’t like about what you read. Where there are gaps in your trust in our products, we plan to work to address them. It’s all about us delivering

content that you feel is reliable and responds to your interests.

To participate in the program, The Eagle has received a grant for the Ecosystem Engagement Project, a portion of the funding provided by Inasmuch for the Ecosystem Engagement Project.

Oklahoma Eagle Managing Editor Gary Lee will direct the The Eagle’s News Ecosystem Endeavor. The initiative will begin in early December and continue until the end of March 2024.

The project has several components, initially establishing a core focus group to gain valued insight from community readers

Trusting News cont. A6

Free Meals Program from A2

before the COVID-19 pandemic it did not take advantage of the opportunity to enroll all students on multiple occasions. This year, OSDE records reflect 395 Oklahoma schools enrolled in the CEP program provide free meals to 134,470 students. Eighty-seven Oklahoma school districts include all their schools and students in the free meals program.

Asked about Tulsa’s partial participation, Jennifer Weber, Program Director of OSDE’s Child Nutrition Programs, would only say, “We want as many districts and schools to participate in CEP as fully as possible.”

Oklahoma City, the state’s second largest school district, has fully participated in the CEP program since 2018. Crystal Raymond, Media Relations Manager for Oklahoma City Public Schools, told the Eagle, “OKCPS feeds all students at no cost through CEP.”

TPS CFO told the Eagle the origins of restricting CEP participation to elementary school students “preceded my time” but was probably based on a cost benefit analysis. When The Eagle inquired why TPS had not included secondary students after the pandemic, Robles said, “It didn’t make sense to move to the CEP for secondary because it would mean less subsidy than if we use the forms.”

In a written statement Robles later added, “[T]he differentiated setup we’ve discussed already let us provide the best quality nutritional services to Tulsa Public Schools students with the least possible financial burden to their families.”

But when addressing the 2024-25 prospective expansion Robles also added, “We are excited for the opportunity to have the entire district in CEP and all the benefits this will offer to our secondary students.”



PHOTO ADOBE IMAGES

TPS will make the changes

OSDE records reveal that TPS could have elected to include all of the district’s students in the free meal program in 2019 or before. Had TPS exercised that option district-wide in 2019 as its USDA “base year,” it would have been fully reimbursed for 80 percent of student meals and partially compensated for the remaining 20% based on the CEP formula. The district must make up any cost difference with local or state-appropriated funds between USDA partially subsidized funding and actual meal cost for the 20% of students.

Weighing the alternatives, the Tulsa school district has carved out only elementary schools for full student participation in free meals. That left secondary schools to provide free meals to only some students who met the household income eligibility requirements.

However, in its new rule-making this year, the USDA altered the funding formula making the CEP alternative more financially attractive. The new rules also reduce a school district’s minimum threshold requirement, providing a more accessible and streamlined automatic meal program.

According to TPS’s Robles, USDA rule changes will provide a more significant subsidy for the Tulsa school district. Therefore, Robles said, TPS will include secondary students beginning in the school year 2024-25, but only when the “economics of that is going to change.” “We can comfortably apply the first semester in the 2024-25 school year.”

Oklahoma Child Nutrition Program Director Weber told the Eagle that the extent of school CEP participation in free meals for all students is an individual school district decision. She added that Oklahoma school districts decline or only partially participate because “they feel like they would have to invest too much.”

Ernie Fields, Jr.: A “Territory Band” Leader

By MICHAEL LAPRARIE, THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF OKLAHOMA HISTORY AND CULTURE



A “territory band” leader, Ernie Fields made his mark on a touring circuit that stretched between Kansas City, Tulsa, Oklahoma City, and Dallas in the 1930s and 1940s. Born in Nacogdoches, Texas, on August 28, 1904, and raised in Taft, Oklahoma, Fields settled in Tulsa after graduating in 1921 from the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. He soon began leading The Royal Entertainers, which became one of Tulsa’s most popular dance orchestras during the 1920s. Fields initially refused offers to join other bands, believing that touring was an unacceptable lifestyle. Ironically, the Great Depression forced him to take his own band on the road in the early 1930s.

The Ernie Fields Orchestra became one of the

most popular groups among African Americans in the Southwest. Playing exciting big band jazz at nightclubs and open-air pavilions, the band eventually caught the attention of record producer John Hammond. Under his guidance Fields went to New York in 1939 and recorded “T-Town Blues” for Vocalion, a nationally distributed record label. With this minor hit under his belt he began nationwide tours, culminating in a 1942 engagement in Harlem’s legendary Savoy Ballroom.

World War II interrupted the band’s initial success. Fields began entertaining troops, playing for more than one hundred camp shows and twelve overseas broadcasts. After the war he kept a scaled-down version of the band together and continued to feature popular Oklahoma City singer Melvin

Moore. Although the band regularly packed venues with dancers and teenagers in the Southwest, nationwide success seemed elusive. In 1959 Fields finally earned widespread recognition. His mambo-style version of “In The Mood” shot into the top ten on the Billboard pop charts, and after thirty years in the music business Ernie Fields had a gold record.

He retired from the music business in the late 1960s, settling permanently in Tulsa and residing there until his death on May 11, 1997. In 1989 he was inducted in to the Oklahoma Jazz Hall of Fame. His daughter Carmen pursued a successful career in broadcast journalism. Ernie Fields, Jr., followed his father’s footsteps into music business and worked as a saxophonist, producer, and talent agent at the end of the twentieth century.

ERNIE FIELDS, JR. (Ernie Fields, Jr. Collection, OHS).

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.

Featured Last Week



Post Pandemic Food Insecurity
Worsens for Black Americans



Fulton Street Books & Coffee
Has Moved To Greenwood



Poor Attendance Plagues
Tulsa Public Schools

The Oklahoma Eagle

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Robert K. Goodwin

Publisher 1972-1980

Edward L. Goodwin, Jr.

Co-Publisher 1980-2014

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Publisher 1936-1972

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- Integrity
- Righteousness
- Decency
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The Oklahoma Eagle

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PHOTO ADOBE IMAGES

For The Eagle, success in this project would mean a readership that is happier with the news product and more engaged.

Trusting News from A3

and sharing ongoing dialogue. The Eagle will engage, throughout the remaining months, in publishing a series of progressively informative narratives and soliciting reader feedback to best measure and improve key ‘trust’ metrics.

The Eagle also plans to regularly distribute complimentary copies of the newspaper at targeted locations across Tulsa throughout the period of the project. Similarly, we will enhance the circulation of the Eagle’s digital version.

In its effort to build trust with the public, we will solicit answers to some questions. Here’s a sample of the questions: what are your primary areas of interest regarding news? Does the Eagle respond to your news needs? Are there subjects that you think the Eagle should cover more or better? Are the areas of coverage in the paper that you believe should be decreased or eliminated? Do you trust what you read in the Eagle? If not, why not?

For The Eagle, success in this project would mean a readership that is happier with the news product and more engaged with those of us who work to deliver it. For us to reach that goal, you must engage with us. Readers who would like to participate in the project or know more about it should contact us at the following e-mail address: Trustingnews@theokeagle.com

100k

The project is funded by a \$100,000 grant from the Inasmuch Foundation, an Oklahoma City-based philanthropic organization dedicated to improving journalism in Oklahoma and nationwide.

The Eagle is one of twelve media organizations statewide to be included in the Oklahoma Media Center’s Media Engagement Project.

Here’s a list of the other news organizations:

- The OU Daily
- NonDoc
- VNN Oklahoma
- The Frontier
- The Oklahoman
- The Lawton Constitution
- KGOU
 - Enid News & Eagle
 - KOSU
 - Oklahoma Watch
 - Oklahoma Press Association

Delayed Start of Private School Tax Credit

Families wanting to apply for a new private school income tax credit of up to \$7,500 per child will have to wait a little longer. The Oklahoma Tax Commission said late Thursday it was delaying acceptance of applications after several schools had problems getting enrollment verification forms to parents and guardians. The portal was supposed to open at 8:30 a.m. Friday.

Enrollment Verification from A1

The opening for the Parental Choice Tax Credit will now be delayed until 2 p.m. Dec. 6, the Tax Commission said.

“The decision to delay the application start date was not made lightly,” the agency said in a written statement. “Despite being disappointed with the delay, we believe this adjustment is necessary to establish a ‘fair playing field’ for all taxpayers, since having the Enrollment Verification Form is a required part of the application process.”

Parents who encountered problems in recent days said they had turned in enrollment forms to their schools, which in turn had trouble uploading the verification documents to the website operated by a third-party vendor, Merit International Inc.

The tax credit is offered on a first-come, first-served basis, with priority given to families with household incomes of \$150,000 and below. The credit steps down at higher income levels, with households with income over \$250,000 eligible for \$5,000 tax credits per child. The median household income in Oklahoma is \$57,000, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Because of the delay, a 60-day priority period for families with household incomes of \$150,000 or less will extend to Feb. 5, 2024.

Lawmakers put a \$150 million cap on the program for tax year 2024. That will rise to \$200 million in 2025 and \$250 million in 2026.

Gov. Kevin Stitt, who taped a video for social media touting the program’s opening

140
More than 140 private schools across the state had registered to be eligible for the tax credit.

this week, said his office was notified about the delays and discussed it with House and Senate leaders. His preference was to push forward with the original timeline, but he understood the need for the delay.

“It was the Tax Commission’s call on that,” Stitt said in a brief interview Friday. “There were a few schools that for whatever reason there was a technical error on getting that information back out to their parents. Most schools across the state, most parents had all the information to apply on Dec. 1, but I think I heard there were about 4,500 parents that did not have it.”

Stitt, who has three children in private schools, said his family plans to take advantage of the income tax credit. Stitt, and his wife, Sarah, also have three older children.

“I think my wife was planning to fill out the form,” Stitt said. “Everybody knows what my salary is as the state of Oklahoma governor. Every bit helps. There’s caps on it, where we’re going to prioritize it with the \$75,000 and \$150,000 (income levels) all in one bucket. But we’re all anxious to find out how many people are out there, how many people sign up for it, and also how many new schools are started, which I’m real excited to see.”

More than 140 private schools across the state had registered to be eligible for the tax credit as of Friday afternoon, according to the parental choice tax credit website.

As lawmakers were formulating the policy this year, the Tax Commission expressed its concerns with the implementation of the law. The agency estimated it would take about \$1

million to set up the program in the first year.

The Tax Commission voted in September to sign a one-year, \$3.95 million contract with Merit to administer the tax credit program. It said it went with a private vendor because of the compressed timeline for implementation.

An agency spokeswoman said it was too soon to measure demand for the private school tax credits or share data about the website traffic and a call center set up to answer questions.

“Given the strong interest we have experienced from schools and taxpayers in the program, we continue to focus on ensuring that both the school and taxpayer experiences are transparent and fair,” Tax Commission spokeswoman Emily Haxton said in an email.

Senate President Pro Tempore Greg Treat, R-Oklahoma City, said he was frustrated with the delay.

“While I am agitated that the enrollment has been delayed, it is important to get it right to ensure fairness for all Oklahoma children looking to get the best education possible,” Treat said in a written statement on Friday. “While everyone knew undertaking a project of this size and magnitude would have different challenges, the Tax Commission must do whatever they can to provide parents and their children the best path forward.”

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.

Treasurer Criticizes Pension System For Taking Exemption His Office Exercised

Paul Monies, Oklahoma Watch

Oklahoma Treasurer Todd Russ has publicly criticized one of the state’s largest pension funds for taking an exemption to a new law forbidding state pension funds from doing business with financial companies perceived to be hostile to the oil and gas industry.

But Russ has quietly taken an exemption to the law when it comes to investments managed by his own office. The treasurer’s office exercised one for services from Bank of America and is negotiating with JP Morgan Chase on another exemption. Both companies are among six Russ placed on a list of restricted financial companies.

The exemptions illustrate how tricky it’s been for pension funds like the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System to navigate the Oklahoma Energy Discrimination Elimination Act. Lawmakers passed the law last year in response to concerns that large public financial companies were too focused on climate pledges and goals at the expense of investments in fossil fuels.

The treasurer’s office has hundreds of millions of dollars invested with JP Morgan Chase money market accounts, part of a \$16 billion portfolio managed by the office. Bank of America, meanwhile, provides credit card services to the state.

“The State Treasurer has determined that Bank of America provides services to the Treasurer’s Office that are not otherwise reasonably available,” said a May 3 letter to Bank of America’s public sector banking division. “Accordingly, the State Treasurer fully intends to continue the current contractual relationship with Bank of America as it applies to credit card services until further notice.”

In an interview, Russ said the state’s JP Morgan holdings are from typical banking operations offered by the company, not its investment division. His office continues to negotiate with JP Morgan on a possible exemption.

“It’s not really an investment with them, and they’re not holding a pure investment,” Russ said. “That is an area that at least for a while, we’re going to have to make some exceptions because there’s not anyone that can actually handle some of the transactional volumes. And it would probably take us 18 to 24 months to get set back up with somebody else.”

Russ said JP Morgan’s inclusion on the restricted financial company list was from the financial company’s investment policies. He conceded that profits from all of the company’s operations, whether banking or investments, were going to the same corporate entity.

“The parent company’s philosophical position is what it is, even though the banking side doesn’t make those kinds of decisions on the investment portfolios,” Russ said. “But until we can find appropriate relationships, we can’t really separate ourselves from those accounts. They are more of a day-to-day checking account than an investment.”



TODD RUSS, State Treasurer, center, and State Auditor and Inspector Cindy Byrd, discuss pension policies at the Sept. 12, 2023, meeting of the Oklahoma State Pension Commission at the Capitol in Oklahoma City. PHOTO PAUL MONIES/OKLAHOMA WATCH

that despite the claims, criticisms, misunderstandings of law and fact made in the (Pension Commission) letter and rhetoric displayed in meetings and the news media, the OPERS Board of Trustees and staff have been completely open and transparent in all actions and have at all times been willing to answer any questions regarding the RFP process and the resulting actions taken by the Board of Trustees,” the 16-page letter said.

Last month, the Senate held an interim study on the implementation of the energy boycott law. Russ told senators the law needs to be clarified on how exemptions are taken. He also agreed with several senators that a provision affecting cities and counties should be removed from the law.

The State Financial Officers Foundation, a nonprofit headquartered in Kansas, has been supplying talking points and opinion columns to Russ and fellow Republican state treasurers and financial officials. The materials critique the climate policies endorsed by shareholders of publicly traded banks and financial firms, part of a broader effort waged by conservative groups against environmental, social and governance policies.

Retiree files lawsuit over law

On Monday, a pensioner and former officer at the Oklahoma Public Employees Association sued the treasurer’s office over the energy discrimination law. Attorneys for Tulsa retiree Don Keenan filed for a temporary restraining order in Oklahoma County District Court. Keenan worked for the state for 11 years and later was a human resources director at a Tulsa refinery.

The lawsuit said the law is unconstitutional and interferes with the duties of pension system trustees to operate for the exclusive benefit of their beneficiaries. It also said the law was overly vague and violated free-speech protections.

“As a former employee of Sinclair Tulsa Refinery, Mr. Keenan does not have any objections to oil and gas operations and believes they are important and critical to the world economy,” the petition said. “However, as a retiree under the OPERS system, Mr. Keenan does object to his retirement benefits being depleted because the State of Oklahoma believes that making political statements with retiree dollars is more important than taking care of retirees themselves.”

In an emailed statement, Russ said the spirit and intention of the law is to protect Oklahomans and the economic base of the state.

Meanwhile, OPERS has responded to a September letter sent by the Oklahoma State Pension Commission at Russ’ request criticizing its process for taking an exemption to the energy boycott law. Russ, who chairs the State Pension Commission, said OPERS acted too quickly in taking the exemption.

Russ was the lone no vote when the OPERS board voted 9-1 in August to exercise a financial responsibility exemption to the law so it wouldn’t have to divest \$6 billion in pension assets managed by BlackRock Inc. Staff for the pension system said it could cost an estimated \$10 million to divest holdings from BlackRock.

The OPERS letter to the State Pension Commission, dated Nov. 9, said the OPERS board properly followed the law in taking an exemption. The pension system’s request for proposal process for other potential investment managers attracted 51 responses, a number in line with industry norms.

“It is important to note at the outset that despite the claims, criticisms, misunderstandings of law and fact made in the (Pension Commission) letter and rhetoric displayed in meetings and the news media, the OPERS Board of Trustees and staff have been completely open and transparent in all actions and have at all times been willing to answer any questions regarding the RFP process and the resulting actions taken by the Board of Trustees,” the 16-page letter said.

Book Review

IDA B. THE QUEEN: THE EXTRAORDINARY LIFE AND LEGACY OF IDA B. WELLS

By Michelle Duster, Atria/One Signal, 2021, 176 pp, \$27.00. ISBN 9781982129811

“I had an instinctive feeling that the people who have little or no school training should have something coming into their homes weekly which dealt with their problems in a simple, helpful way... so I wrote in a plain, common-sense way on the things that concerned our people.”

IDA B. Wells

IDA B. The Queen

John Neal The Oklahoma Eagle

This is the story of a woman who forged a life of fearlessness both as a human rights advocate and a journalist. The book is a biography and a legacy, at once. It recounts many of Wells’ accomplishments, from her birth as an enslaved child in 1862 until she died in 1931, and her legacy, which continues.

Ida B. the Queen is written by her great-granddaughter, Michelle Duster. But Duster credits the efforts of four generations of the family “to help and honor our foremother- Ida B. Wells Barnett.” History has been slow to recognize Black women’s historic civil rights contributions. The book is both biography and a legacy.

Wells’ life overlapped with those of Fredrick Douglas, the famed Black abolitionist and W.E.B. Dubois, the renowned sociologist. In 1892 Douglas wrote Wells a letter in which he exclaimed, “Brave woman! You have done your people and mine a service which can neither be weighed nor measured...my word is feeble in comparison. Working with Dubois, she co-founded the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

Born in Holly Springs, Mississippi, Wells received a solid education in the era of reconstruction, including the development of her writing and oratorical skills she would use throughout her life. At sixteen, she became head of the household when her parents and one sibling died of yellow fever. She quickly earned a teaching certificate and was able to care for and financially support her five other siblings.

Later she would take a teaching job in Memphis, Tennessee, where she resisted a Jim Crow law segregating public transportation. She was twice physically dragged from the train, biting one of her assailants on the hand on one occasion. She initially won a lawsuit against the railroad and was awarded \$500 until the Tennessee Supreme Court overturned it. She was still in her early twenties, demonstrating a tenaciousness that she would wield for the rest of her life.

She left teaching for an advocacy position in journalism. She would say of the power of the press, “The people must know before they can act, and there is no better educator to compare with the press.” Taking the pen name “Iola,” she began to write columns attacking injustice. “Her articles were popular and began to spread all over the country,” notes her great-granddaughter in her easy-to-read book. Wells challenged both gender and racial disparities and became nicknamed “Princess of the Press.”

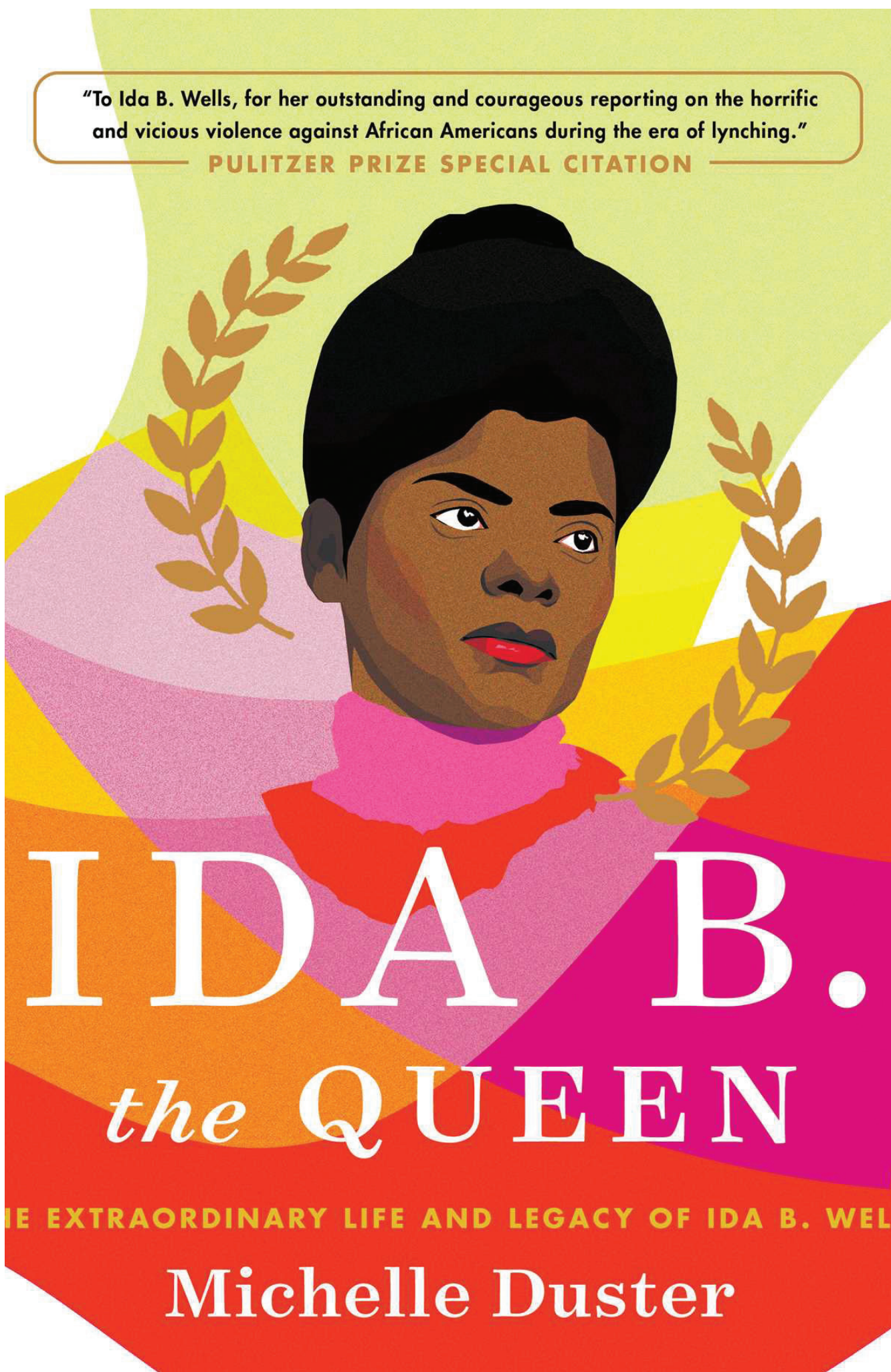
At age thirty, she moved to New York and became editor and part owner of the New York Page newspaper. That same year three friends were lynched by a white mob while defending their grocery store. Ida B. began a long career using her investigative journalistic skills, writing and speaking out against lynching, which had become common at that time. For the first time, this country’s citizens were reading about these horrific events from the perspective of Black people witnessing the events. She met with two presidents- William McKinley and Woodrow Wilson- trying unsuccessfully to make lynching a federal crime.

Two of her pamphlets gained wide notoriety: Southern Horrors: Lynch Law in All Its Phases and A Red Record: Tabulated Statistics and Alleged Causes of Lynching in the United States, 1892-1893-1894. She also co-wrote a pamphlet with Fredrick Douglas and took her message to the United Kingdom on speaking tours twice.

Wells’ life began to take a politically activist turn when she was in her mid-thirties. She co-founded the National Association of Colored Women in 1896, later co-founding the NAACP. But she became frustrated by the inactivity of the NAACP and the leaders of the suffragette movement. In the latter case, white women were asking Black women to take a back-row seat in their efforts to earn women the right to vote. But, of course, Ida B. would have none of that. So, when in 1913, white women asked Black women to trail behind them in a Washington D.C. march, Wells stealthily entered the march in progress in the front row.

Law enforcement harassed her all her life. They once tried to thwart her efforts to distribute commemorative buttons honoring Black soldiers who had been harshly treated. The FBI regularly documented her activities and blocked her attendance at an international conference by denying her a passport. They described her as a “Dangerous Negro Agitator.”

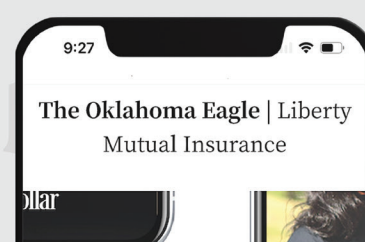
Throughout the book are biographical vignettes of the many lives Wells’ legacy affected, directly or indirectly. After she died in 1931, tributes, memorials, and monuments would spring up in many places around the country. In 2020 a Pulitzer Price Special Citation was posthumously awarded to her “For her outstanding and courageous reporting on the horrific vicious violence against African Americans during the era of lynching.”



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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

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Morning Worship
11:00 a.m.

Bible Study & Prayer Wednesday 7:00 p.m.
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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.

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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

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Ph: (918) 425-2077

Pastor Rick Bruner

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Tulsa OK
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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

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P: 918-587-1428
F: 918-587-0642

vernonamechurch@sbcglobal.net

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8:30 am

Worship Service
10:00 am

Wednesday
Bible Study
6:00 pm



Rev. Dr. Robert R. Allen Turner

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Sunday Evening Worship.....6:00 p.m.

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Fax:
918-584-1958

Prayer Line:
918-584-PRAY

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**MALCOLM X AND THE BLACK PANTHERS
EMPOWERED TEACHERS. WE CAN TOO**
Sharif El-Mekki of the Center for Black Educator Development says we must fight for
our students and teachers just like leaders from the past. **A13**

Survivors Say Trauma From Abusive Native American Boarding Schools Stretches Across Generations

BOZEMAN, Mont. (AP) — Donovan Archambault was 11 years old in 1950 when he was sent from the **Fort Belknap Indian Reservation in Montana** to a government-backed **Native American boarding school in Pierre, South Dakota**, where abusive staff forced him to abandon his community’s language and customs.

Matthew Brown, Associated Press



MYRNA BURGESS, with the Northern Cheyenne Tribe in southeastern Montana, speaks to someone at an event where she shared her experiences of abuse when she was a child at a Native American boarding school, during a U.S. Department of Interior listening session at Montana State University, Sunday, Nov. 5, 2023, in Bozeman, Mont. The Interior Department says more than 400 of the government-backed schools operated across the U.S. PHOTO **AP PHOTO/MATTHEW BROWN**

“It was
probably
the most
brutal time
of my whole
life...”

DONOVAN ARCHAMBAULT, FORMER STUDENT, NATIVE
AMERICAN BOARDING SCHOOL IN PIERRE, SOUTH DAKOTA

Archambault emerged bitter from the experience and said he drank alcohol for more than two decades before he finally pulled his life together, earning a master’s degree in education and serving as chairman of the Fort Belknap tribes.

“It was probably the most brutal time of my whole life,” Archambault recalled Sunday, “and it all stemmed from the trauma we suffered in the Pierre Indian School.”

Decades after the last Native American boarding schools stopped receiving federal money, the traumas inflicted by the abusive institutions are getting belated attention through a series of listening sessions hosted by federal officials across the U.S.

For over 150 years, Indigenous children were taken from their communities and forced into the boarding schools, which systematically abused students to assimilate

them into white society. Religious and private institutions ran many of the schools and received federal funding as partners in government programs to “civilize” Indigenous students.

Sunday’s event at Montana State University in Bozeman was the last of 12 stops on the “Road to Healing” tour by Interior Secretary Deb Haaland, a member of Laguna Pueblo in New Mexico who has prioritized examining the trauma caused by the schools.

The effects of the trauma have rippled through generations, fueling alcoholism, drug addiction and sexual abuse on reservations, said Jennifer Finley, a council member for the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes whose grandparents went to one of the boarding schools.

“When we talk about historical trauma I always think, ‘If only that’s all we had.’ But

we have fresh traumas piled on top of it every single day,” she said.

The U.S. enacted laws and policies in 1819 to support the schools and some continued to operate through the 1960s. An investigative report released last year by the Interior Department identified 408 government-backed schools in 37 states or then-territories, including Alaska and Hawaii.

The schools renamed children from Native American to English names, organized them into military drills and compelled them to do manual labor such as farming, brick-making and working on the railroad system, according to federal officials. At least 500 children died at the schools, according to the report — a figure that’s expected to increase dramatically as research continues.

One of Haaland’s deputies, Rosebud Sioux member Wizipan Garriott, has described

Boarding Schools Abuse cont. A13



INTERIOR SECRETARY DEB HAALAND speaks at the opening of a session to hear from survivors of government-sponsored Native American boarding schools at Montana State University, Sunday, Nov. 5, 2023, in Bozeman, Mont. The Interior Department says more than 400 of the abusive, government-backed schools operated across the U.S. PHOTO AP PHOTO/MATTHEW BROWN

Boarding Schools Abuse from A12

boarding schools as part of a long history of injustices against his people that began with the widespread extermination of their main food source — bison, also known as buffalo.

Tribes also lost their land base and were forced onto reservations sometimes far from their homelands.

Victims and survivors of the schools have shared tearful recollections of their experience during prior listening sessions in Oklahoma, South Dakota, Michigan, Arizona, Alaska and other states.

They told stories of being punished for speaking their native language, getting locked in basements and their hair being cut to stamp out their identities. They were sometimes subjected to solitary confinement, beatings and withholding food. Many left the schools with only basic vocational skills that gave them few job prospects, officials said.

Myrna Burgess, a Northern Cheyenne elder, said Sunday that she and her classmates faced escalating punishments for speaking their home language. First time they’d get hit with a ruler on the back of the hand. After a second offense they’d have to turn their hand over, to get hit on the palm. Another offense brought a strike to the back or head, she said.

“That was child abuse right there, but no one ever went to jail,” she said.

Archambeault said many of his classmates did not survive long enough to tell their stories and instead became victims of suicide, alcohol and violence that he traces back to the treatment they received at school.

A second investigative report is expected in coming months. It will focus on burial sites, the schools’ impact on Indigenous communities and also try to account for federal funds spent on the troubled program.

Montana had 16 of the schools — including on or near the Crow, Blackfeet, Fort Peck and Fort Belknap reservations. Most shut down early last century. Others were around recently enough that their former students are still alive.

A Native American boarding school school in the town of St. Ignatius on the Flathead Reservation was open until at least 1973. In southeastern Montana the Tongue River Boarding School operated under various names until at least 1970, when the Northern Cheyenne Tribe contracted it as a tribal school, according to government records.

The St. Labre school at the edge of the Northern Cheyenne continues to operate but has not received federal money in more than a century, according to government records.

The National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition has tallied an additional 113 schools not on the government list that were run by churches and with no evidence of federal support. By 1926, more than 80% of Indigenous school-age children — some 60,000 children — were attending boarding schools that were run either by the federal government or religious organizations, according to the coalition.

The coalition’s deputy chief executive, Samuel Torres, said Haaland’s tour was a positive first step in addressing the schools’ legacy. Next, he said, Congress must approve proposals to establish a truth and reconciliation commission, where survivors could continue airing their stories and the federal government’s role in the abuse could be further documented.

“Boarding schools lasted over 150 years. It’s going to take more than a couple of years of investigation,” Torres said. “It’s going to require generations. But this is where it has to start.”



PHOTO GETTY/KLAUS VEDFELT

Malcolm X and the Black Panthers Empowered Teachers. We Can Too

Sharif El-Mekki of the Center for Black Educator Development says we must fight for our students and teachers just like leaders from the past.

Sharif El-Mekki Word In Black

In November, nearly 1,000 educators, advocates, and allies attended the Center for Black Educator Development’s now-annual Black Men in Education Convening — BMEC 2023 in Philadelphia. Once again, it was a powerful and inspiring demonstration of the energy, determination, and talent that Black educators possess.

It is desperately needed because Black educators transform lives. And the great news is that there is interest. The Center for Black Educator Development raised almost \$3 million dollars through our Future Black Teachers of Excellence Fund to keep up with the demand of our Black high school students who participate in our Career and Technical Education courses through our school district partnerships across the country.

Thanks to researchers like Dr Ivory Toldson and others, we know that Black men who attend HBCUs list education among their top career choices. What deters them is often the deep racially based structures that serve as deep historical and entrenched barriers to leading classrooms of their own.

Research shows students benefit from higher graduation rates, reduced dropout rates, fewer disciplinary issues, more positive views of schooling, and better test scores when students have Black or Brown teachers.

Yet, Black men account for about 2% of teachers. Black teachers, overall, comprise just 7% of all teachers. In our public school system, which is enrolled by primarily Black and Brown students, this mismatch is plainly unacceptable, an outrage even.

And it’s been an outrage for generations. All of us who are fortunate enough to call ourselves Black educators have always known it.

Malcolm knew it. The Black Panther Party knew it too.

At the founding rally of the Organization of Afro-American Unity, the organization founded upon his return from his pilgrimage to Mecca and stay in West Africa, Brother Malcolm put Black education and Black educators in his historic remarks.

“Education is an important element in the struggle for human rights,” he said. “It is the means to help our children and our people rediscover their identity

and thereby increase their self-respect. Education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs only to the people who prepare for it today.”

But in decrying policies that Black America faces today, the failure of school integration, and the lack of resources compared to White schools, Malcolm also called out the absolutely critical role that Black educators, leaders, pedagogy, and curriculum have to play in the wellbeing and success of Black children.

“What do we want?” he asked the crowd. “We want Afro-American principals to head these schools. We want Afro-American teachers in these schools. Meaning we want black principals and black teachers with some textbooks about black people. We want textbooks written by Afro-Americans that are acceptable to our people before they can be used in these schools.”

The absence of Black educators from the classrooms full of Black children, as he observed, was a first-order issue in the education of Black children.

“Principals and teachers fail to understand the nature of the problems with which they work and as a result, they cannot do the job of teaching our children,” he said. “They don’t understand us, nor do they understand our problems; they don’t.”

The lack of cultural competency of teachers remains a high priority issue. Still today, a large majority — more than 6 in 10—of teacher prep grads — say they feel unprepared to teach in classrooms where Black and Brown students are the majority.

Malcolm’s demands in 1964 for Black children to receive an education that was both culturally fluent and affirming of their racial identity were mirrored two years later in the Black Panther Party’s Ten-Point Program.

Point 5 from the Program stated:

“We want education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society. We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in the present-day society. We believe in an educational system that will give to our people a knowledge of self. If you do not have knowledge of yourself and your position in society and the world,

then you will have little chance to know anything else.”

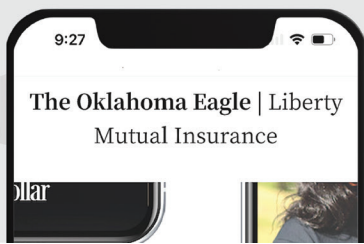
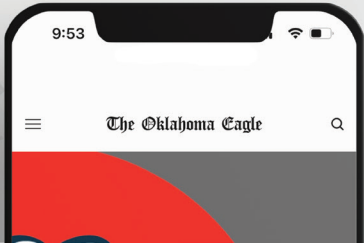
This “knowledge of self” was an empowering and critical demand for both the BPP and Malcolm X. As Malcolm also observed, Black children weren’t learning their true history.

“When we send our children to school in this country they learn nothing about us other than that we used to be cotton pickers,” he argued. “Every little child going to school thinks his grandfather was a cotton picker. Why, your grandfather was Nat Turner; your grandfather was Toussaint L’Ouverture; your grandfather was Hannibal. Your grandfather was some of the greatest black people who walked on this earth. It was your grandfather’s hands who forged civilization and it was your grandmother’s hands who rocked the cradle of civilization. But the textbooks tell our children nothing about the great contributions of Afro Americans to the growth and development of this country.”

Malcolm offered an aspirational and optimistic vision of what Black education could and should look like, as well as the transformative role that Black educators had to play in making that vision real. Similarly, the BPP’s 10th point shows what could have been, what could still be, if we embrace, elevate, and empower Black educators and children in our public schools.

“We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice, peace and people’s community control of modern technology,” it stated. “When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and nature’s God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.”

As Black educators, we must also seek to build our own forms of empowerment. Black education is a justice that remains delayed and thereby denied. We can only access a just education if we — as Black teachers, principals, and communities — claim our agency and fight for the preservation of it for our students.





STUDENTS create planters for local businesses and senior citizens as part of Community Services Day for the BEST! Mentoring Program. PHOTO PROVIDED

Oklahoma Foundation For Excellence Opens Applications For Boren Mentoring Initiative

Dr. Jerry Goodwin The Oklahoma Eagle

New and existing Oklahoma mentoring programs that serve students in grades K-12 can now apply for Boren Initiative Grants from the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence. The foundation offers two types of grants. Organizations and programs in their first three years of operation can apply for start-up grants of \$3,000, while existing mentoring programs are eligible for \$1,500 opportunity grants to

help fund programming, training, materials or other needs that advance excellence in mentoring. There will be two start-up grants and six opportunity grants available for the 2024 grant cycle. To be eligible, programs must serve K-12 age children in Oklahoma. Preference is given to organizations that work in partnership with local public schools. Programs must also

conduct background checks on all mentors, agree to report quantitative and qualitative outcomes, and provide proof of 501(c)3 status or proof of an agreement with a local public school district or other qualified 501(c)3 umbrella organization. The deadline to submit applications is Jan. 15, 2024. Applications are available at OFE.org.

The Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence is a statewide nonprofit that recognizes and encourages excellence in Oklahoma’s public schools. The foundation’s David and Molly Boren Mentoring Initiative promotes the growth and development of quality mentoring programs in Oklahoma.



DR. CORINICE WILSON (L-R), DR. KAYLA HARDING, AND RAMONA CURTIS presented a lecture entitled “Living Proof: African American Women and Leadership Lessons in the Academy” at the Oklahoma Women in Higher Education conference in November. PHOTO PROVIDED

Local Educators Present At Statewide Conference

Dr. Jerry Goodwin The Oklahoma Eagle

Tulsa Community College faculty and staff presented research at a statewide higher education conference in November. The topic was “Living Proof: African American Women and Leadership Lessons in the Academy.” Ramona Curtis, director for Workforce Programs; Kayla Harding, Ed.D., faculty department chair and associate professor for English; and Corinice Wilson, Ph.D., assistant professor of sociology, were the TCC representatives who delivered their address at the Oklahoma Women in Higher Education conference.

The focus of their panel discussion was to share their lessons of triumph, struggle, and opportunities for growth at the university and college level. Representing faculty, administrator, and professional staff, the presenters described their experiences that women endure as they juggle gender politics, parenting, authenticity, and the academy. One observation of the research was the burden that befalls Black women whose cultural classifications usurp their professional status as a learned professionals or experts in their respective

fields. A conclusion of the research, according to an abstract of the group’s presentation, was to support and encourage a more inclusive and equitable society that will involve recognizing and valuing individuals for their unique expertise and contributions, regardless of their race or ethnic background. For more information, contact Dr. Kayla Harding at kayla.harding@tulsc.edu.

Events

2023

DEC 8 & 9
National Association of Black Journalists – Tulsa Chapter Salute to Excellence Awards Gala (Dec. 8) and Professional and Community Workshops (Dec. 9), Tulsa Community College – Center for Creativity, 910 S. Boston Ave. For more information, contact nabjtsulasgala23@gmail.com.

DEC 9
Fourth Annual Local Author Conference and Book Fair at the Tulsa City County Library, 400 Civic Center, in the Pocahontas Greadington Learning and Creativity Center on Dec. 9 from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. A book fair will follow from 12 p.m. – 2 p.m. For more information, contact (918) 549-7323 or cas@tulsalibrary.org.

DEC 9
Greenwood Chamber of Commerce Third Annual World Class Winter Gala, Doubletree Hotel by Hilton – Warren Place, 6110 S. Yale Ave. on Dec. 9 at 5 p.m. For more information, visit https://historictulsaagreenwoodchamber.com/

DEC 9
The McLain Class of 1981 will be hosting its third annual Christmas Party on Dec. 9 from 8 p.m. – 1:30 a.m. at the Overflow Venue, 531 E. Apache (next to Janet’s Kitchen in the Apache Circle). Entertainment will be provided by DJ Kevin Mure. Admission will be collected at the door. For more information, For more information, contact Craig Bell at (918) 852-9546, Gary Pitts, (918) 810-3880, or Ollie Crawford, (918) 896-6473.

DEC 10
Troy J. Petit Sr. Book Signing for “Little King Learns... Hugs of Love” will be held on Dec. 10 at 1 p.m. at North Peoria Church of Christ Multipurpose Building, 2217 N. Peoria Ave. For purchasing a book, donations will be made to local charities - \$2/book sold will be donated to NPCOC Food Pantry and \$1/book sale will go to the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma. For more information, visit www.thetroybox.com.

2024

FEB 17, 18 & 24
Theatre North’s “Topdog/Underdog” performance at Tulsa Performing Arts Center, 110 E. 2nd St. For ticket information, call (918) 596-7111.

APR 12-13
National Association of Black Journalists Region III conference, Tulsa, Okla. Eleven states, including Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas, will be represented. For more information, contact Eva Coleman, Region III director, at evacolemannabj@gmail.com.

Class News – McLain Class of 1981 Celebrates 42nd Anniversary

Dr. Jerry Goodwin The Oklahoma Eagle

Men of the McLain Class of 1981 marked their 42nd anniversary by getting together during the summer. Many are recognizing near or 60th birthdays of classmates at the reunion. Attending the weekend activities were the following: Edmonds Owens, Quinton Brown,

Gary Pitts, Barry Shaver, M. V. Davis, Winston Barnes, Kenneth Owens, Dwayne Crawley, David BoBo, Craig Bell, Kenneth Cato, Joe Clark, Juan Smith, Greg Jackson, Paul Doyle, Terry Baccus, Libby Smith, and Ken Harris.

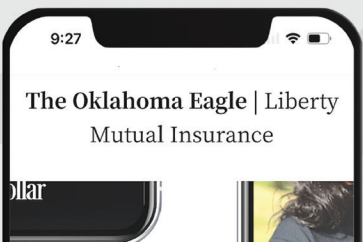
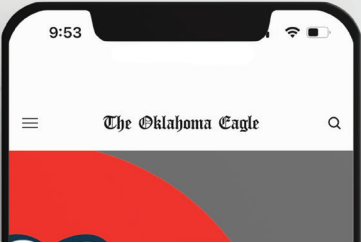


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The Oklahoma Eagle

Our Mission

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



POPUUP SHOPS & GIFT GUIDE

By Kimberly Marsh

2023
GIFT GUIDE

We Wish You
Bright And
Joyful
Holidays



1 Lotus
Acupuncture

Unique gifts, including
cupping sets, gua sha, herbs,
eye pillows and supplements.

**HOLIDAY
GIFTS**



The Boxyard



2 Splendid
Treasures

Fine home goods and gifts
DOWNTOWN

5th & Fab



5 Mi' Tea
Lounge

**UNIQUE
GIFT
IDEAS**



LAMIK
Beauty

Through a new successful program to launch brick and mortar storefronts for local entrepreneurs, six small businesses popped up downtown this month as part of the 2023 Popup Downtown program, now in its second year.

POPUUP SHOPS & GIFT GUIDE

By Kimberly Marsh

Downtown Tulsa Partners selected the six, of which four are black-owned, from 18 applicants. Two black-owned businesses, 5th & Fab and Mi’ Tea Lounge, were opened on Boston Avenue last November as part of the PopUp Pilot, and they continue to lease space in the same location today. The 2022 pilot made it possible for 11 entrepreneurs to open storefronts in nine vacant downtown locations and resulted in \$27,000 of revenue for those businesses.

Gift Guide from S1

Pop-Up Downtown allows emerging and growing entrepreneurs as well as established local brands to test the Downtown Tulsa market through affordable short-term leases in ground-floor retail spaces. The program also seeks to activate Downtown Tulsa through increased foot traffic and expanded diversity of Downtown business owners and shopping experiences, says Emily Scott, Director of Planning & Vitality at Downtown Tulsa Partnership. “Pop-Up

Downtown was designed to increase the amount of retail offerings Downtown for holiday shopping while amplifying the work of local minority small businesses and entrepreneurs.”

The participants also receive business consultation to help refine their business operations and maximize their potential for success; store staging and marketing consultation from downtown property owners including Elote Café & Catering, Foolish Things Coffee

Co., Mi Tea Lounge, Rabbit Hole Bar, Bounceless and Bite Way. More details about Pop-Up Downtown can be found at DowntownTulsa.com/PopUpDowntown.

The six new stores opened to foot traffic during the Downtown First Friday Crawl on Dec. 1, and their short-term leases continue through January 19th. These six stores and a few others are featured in our 2023 Holiday Gift Guide.

Black Pearl
Diamonds
Publishing

411 S. BOULDER AVE.

Music production services, apparel, artwork and literature Tulsa poet and publicist CNOTE Wilson has been involved in music and arts for decades. His first retail store will feature poetry that he has written along with other books, apparel that reflects his own philosophies in life, art prints and a music kiosk where musicians may license music in the store and then record it in an adjacent studio/lounge. Wilson will create his own productions from the studio as well and feature live entertainment on a regular basis. The space is not only for business, but also for building community through a common appreciation for the arts. Wilson said he intends to use this space to “lift the veil” on the music industry through mentorship on the business side of the industry, including the importance of licensing and retaining music rights. He’ll advise on the basics for people who want to score music, write songs, be a music publicist or a manager. Wilson said the industry is wide open and technology makes it easier to record, but having the paperwork and an understanding of copyright law is key. Wilson said he chose to apply to the PopUp program because he had seen his colleagues succeed within the previous cohort, and he intends to be here for the long term. His goal is to increase his artistic presence and product awareness through the storefront in the middle of the Central Business District, and extend his lease with the owners of the buildings once the PopUp program expires. Black Pearl Diamonds Publishing is featuring its mystery gift box for this holiday season, which will include a mix of products available in the store.



Da’ Shade
Room

THE BOXYARD, 502 E. THIRD ST., UNIT #4

Stylish eyewear, including prescription and reader frames Rene’ Bramlett, known as Mz Rene’, grew up in Chicago with glaucoma, subjected to teasing because of her “coke bottle” glasses. Once she was correctly diagnosed and found the right optometrists to help her improve her vision, she wanted to help others. Her storefront will be combined with her nonprofit, The Speak Eyes Foundation, to increase glaucoma awareness and during the holidays to be the entry point for youth ages 6-16 to enter a giveaway to receive a pair of blue light blocking eyewear. The 12 Days of Christmas Giveaway entries will be accepted at the store Tuesday to Thursday from 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m and until 6 pm on Friday and Saturdays, through Dec. 13. One of the 12 gift winners will be announced live on the shop’s Facebook site each day from Dec. 14 through Dec. 15. The store also will introduce “Holiday Specs to elevate your festive look this season.” Prescription lenses can be used in specific types of Da Shade room glasses, and Bramlett works with optometrists on referrals to find the right prescription and fit, and she works with vision insurers as well. The store has two lines of glasses, the Ja Mae, named for Bramlett’s Mother, and the Timeless Collection. There are three different types of frames: Fashion eyewear for \$80; Readers for \$20 and Optic frames for \$40-\$68.

Splendid
Treasures

624 S. BOSTON AVE., SUITE 108

FINE HOME GOODS
AND GIFTS

Splendid Treasures offers a downtown stop for cozy blankets, pillows, candles, bath products, kitchen towels and aprons, holiday foods and drinks, books and childrens gifts. Patsy Hoyle, owner of Splendid Treasures, said the Popup shop is based on the former Etsy store. The shop will be open and hosting events through January 15. Hoyle said her long term goal is to have a permanent retail shop where online merchandise may also be picked up. The gift guide features Gardiner’s Scottish fudge in two varieties. Hoyle said “the tasty fudge comes in an amazing holiday tin that can be reused or re-gifted.”



POPUUP SHOPS & GIFT GUIDE

By Kimberly Marsh



Fulton Street Books & Coffee

21 N GREENWOOD AVE

Should anyone perceive Fulton Street Books & Coffee’s recent grand opening, at 21 North Greenwood Avenue (next to Greenwood Rising), as merely a change of location to the historic district, that would completely miss the point of the event... A blame for the head, not the heart. Onikah Asamoa-Caesar has embraced, throughout the last several years, the full spirit of entrepreneurship, realized by the success of Fulton Street Books & Coffee. In Greenwood, Fulton accommodates patron demand with new operating hours, Monday through Saturday from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Sunday 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. A year-round host for local organizations, Fulton has thoughtfully provided a space for reading hours, book launches, spoken word events and private gatherings. The new Greenwood location will be a favored venue for creatives and audiences.

5th & Fab

427 S. BOSTON AVENUE, SUITE 101

LOCALLY DESIGNED CLOTHING FASHIONS, ACCESSORIES AND PERSONAL CARE

The founders of the Stylish Agency and Bounceless embarked on a new journey with 5th & Fab in 2022. The two have staying power. They’ve provided a downtown location for more than a year for not only for their own creations but also for other designers to have a place to show and sell their fashions. Lisa Jae is synonymous with fashion in Tulsa. She is a New York Fashion Week designer and celebrity Stylist to Karon Joseph Riley. She is dedicated to bringing more exposure to underrepresented fashion designers which is why 5th & Fab fit into her business plans. Jae She is behind many artists in Tulsa and she has recently been selected to design the Tulsa Opera debutante gowns. Her partner Chantelle Lott has designed a sports bra that literally hugs the body and keeps the upper torso in place when going for a run or a hard workout. (See her story in The Oklahoma Eagle online here.) 5th & Fab is full of jewelry and clothing from various designers, so it’s a must see for local fashion aficionados. As for the gift guide - there are so many one of a kinds and for just a glimpse of the quality and beauty you can find, the guide features local designs from a September 2023 5th & Fab runway show held in the art deco lobby of the iconic Mid-Continent Tower.



LAMIK Beauty

21 N GREENWOOD AVE



VEGAN BEAUTY PRODUCTS, MAKEUP SERVICES AND EDUCATION

Owner Kim Roxie started LAMIK in Houston, and learned about Tulsa through the entrepreneurship program Build In Tulsa. A participant in Popup Tulsa, Roxie has now brought her vegan makeup line made with natural and organic ingredients for multicultural women to a Tulsa storefront at The Boxyard. Starting in college, Roxie began a career as a makeup artist at a Houston mall but quickly realized the ingredients in makeup were toxic. She opened her own store selling handmade products. After her first investor, her mother, died of breast cancer, Roxie made it her mission to give women of color access to safe, natural beauty products. She had created paraben-free makeup and in 2018, closed her shop and focused on LAMIK. In March 2020, she launched LAMIK 2.0 as an E-commerce business to offer clean color cosmetics for women who historically have been marketed with more toxic makeup options. LAMIK, which is the backwards spelling of Kim plus the two first letters of her middle name, now represents “Love And Makeup In Kindness.” LAMIK is featuring a customer favorite: Show Out Mascara which visibly volumizes the lashes using a lightweight formula including fibers that extend lashes without irritation.

Sourdough Tulsa

11 E. RECONCILIATION WAY

SOURDOUGH BREADS AND STARTER KITS

Sourdough Tulsa opened a store in the Tulsa Arts District to show that there really is more you can do with sourdough bread than make a boule. There are sourdough cinnamon buns, sourdough waffles, sourdough cornbread in addition to bread boules. If you have a hard time getting started with baking projects, owners Breanna and Lawrence MacAlpine even have a starter you can buy. . The new Popup offers walk-in fresh purchases off the shelf and in-store orders, and online orders with a few

recipes to try. As far as this gift guide goes, any kind of bread makes a great present for people who are not gluten intolerant, so be sure you know if your giftee is good with bread. If all clear, orders of cinnamon buns for family breakfasts and a starter with a boule are good gift ideas. The lucky recipient then gets to enjoy bread right away and have the beginnings of a second batch with a recipe to make on their own.



POPUP SHOPS & GIFT GUIDE

By Kimberly Marsh



Mi' Tea Lounge

427 S. BOSTON AVENUE

ORGANIC TEAS,
HEALTH & WELLNESS

Tenesha Rush - aka Tea Rush - a soulful songstress is known through Tulsa as a musician and creator of the Annual Rush Fest, a musical festival held in several venues annually during the summer in Tulsa for six years. Rush is also the executive director of Travelin' Little Tea Party (TLTP) a nonprofit striving to create an intimate platform for honest musical expression by local artists with an aim towards reparative health and wellness. A few years ago, Tea spoke with passion and excitement about founding her new tea

company - aptly named Mi Tea - that would help people find a better path to wellness. She was eager to have a storefront to add to online sales. It all came together when Mi Tea - Dedicated to Quali-Tea - was offered a location through Downtown PopUp in 2022, for a place to try then buy the teas and a variety of drinks. Mi Tea features Organic Tea, Sea Moss from the region of Zanzibar Tanzania, Oils & other supplements that increase health and wellness. The lounge also serves as a gathering spot for local musicians, and R&B open mic. Of course,

we feature Mi' Tea teas of your choosing as gifts to give this holiday season. Our pick for this holiday season from Mi' Tea is Raspberry Sea Moss. It's a newly discovered algae species that carries 92 minerals, enhances thyroid health, strengthens the heart, boosts the immune system, soothes the digestive tract, boosts metabolism, fights infections, increases mental and emotional wellness.

Here are a few other local Black-owned businesses to shop for the holidays.

Oklahoma Toffee Company

THE MOTHER ROAD MARKET, 1124 S. LEWIS AVE.

Oklahoma Toffee was founded in 2017 by the educational and marital partnership of Chelsea and Anthony Chelsea as a way to help teachers as budget cuts threatened classroom progress. Oklahoma Toffee dedicates profits to help teachers across the state with immediate school supply needs. Toffee comes in several ways from the classic chocolate to dark chocolate pecan sea salt to macadamia nut, popcorn and pretzels. 20% of the profits from each bag sold go directly to helping teachers fund supplies that directly impact student learning. Be good to teachers this year and surprise Santa with a plate of toffee!

Silhouette

10 N. GREENWOOD AVE, SUITE C

Established in 2019 on historic Black Wall Street, Venita Cooper set out to look for Tulsa's sneakerheads. Silhouette Sneakers & Art is a highly-curated retail experience that brings limited and authentic sneakers and streetwear to Tulsa. The boutique features an art gallery showcasing a rotating selection of street-inspired art and programming that links sneaker culture enthusiasts and cultivates a new generation of sneakerheads. Cooper has been a sneakerhead since middle school when she persuaded her parents to pay \$120 retail for a pair of Nike Air Swoopes II in the black and royal colorway. For the holiday gift guide, we are featuring the Silhouette staff pick for the gift guide: Jordan 4 Retro SB Pine Green.

Dvinesweetz

W: [HTTPS://DVINESWEETZTREATS.COM](https://dvinesweetztreats.com)

Tea bombs and custom created cookies, cakes and more. When Tulsa poet, author and baker Ranesha Smith started posting her innovative and highly creative dessert creations on Facebook and Instagram, it was like she'd dropped a cake bomb on us. It was an explosion of colorful icings, unique designs, cheerful goodness and sheer joy. She added cake pops to fit every occasion from mother's day to Thanksgiving turkey pops. Then she expanded her dessert line to include Tea Bombs in a few special flavors, with the all time favorite being the Honey Tea Bomb. Smith's creations are online and can be ordered through the website, but for the best gallery of photos of her work be sure to check out Dvinesweetz Instagram and Facebook pages before ordering a custom design.

EMILY SCOTT, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & VITALITY AT DOWNTOWN TULSA PARTNERSHIP SAID, "POP-UP DOWNTOWN WAS DESIGNED TO INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF RETAIL OFFERINGS DOWNTOWN FOR HOLIDAY SHOPPING WHILE AMPLIFYING THE WORK OF LOCAL MINORITY SMALL BUSINESSES AND ENTREPRENEURS."

The Commemoration Fund provided funding to DTP for microgrants to all participants and has contracted with a project team led by local minority-owned firm Zakerion Strategies to provide expert guidance in the following categories:

- Business consultation to help participants refine their business operations and maximize their potential for success.
- Store staging consultation to assist participants in designing their store layouts and visual merchandising and creating an immersive shopping experience.
- Marketing consultation to help participants develop marketing strategies, including online and offline approaches, that will help participants reach a wider audience and drive sales.

DTP recognized Downtown property owners for their assistance and Supporters of Pop-Up Downtown which also includes 36 Degrees North, PartnerTulsa and TEDC Creative Capital, whose representatives selected program participants from among 18 applications; and the following businesses, whose owners will serve as mentors to Pop-Up Downtown entrepreneurs: Elote Café & Catering, Foolish Things Coffee Co., Mi Tea Lounge, Rabbit Hole Bar, Bounceless and Bite Way. "It has been wonderful to see the Tulsa business community embrace Pop-Up Downtown, and we look forward to seeing how participants will activate Downtown with increased foot traffic and diversity of shopping experiences," says Brian Kurtz, President & CEO of Downtown Tulsa Partnership. "We congratulate our newest group of Pop-Up Downtown entrepreneurs and thank each of them for believing in our neighborhood." More details about Pop-Up Downtown can be found at DowntownTulsa.com/PopUpDowntown.

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