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By UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN, WORD IN BLACK

NATION
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By WAYNE CAMPBELL, WORD IN BLACK

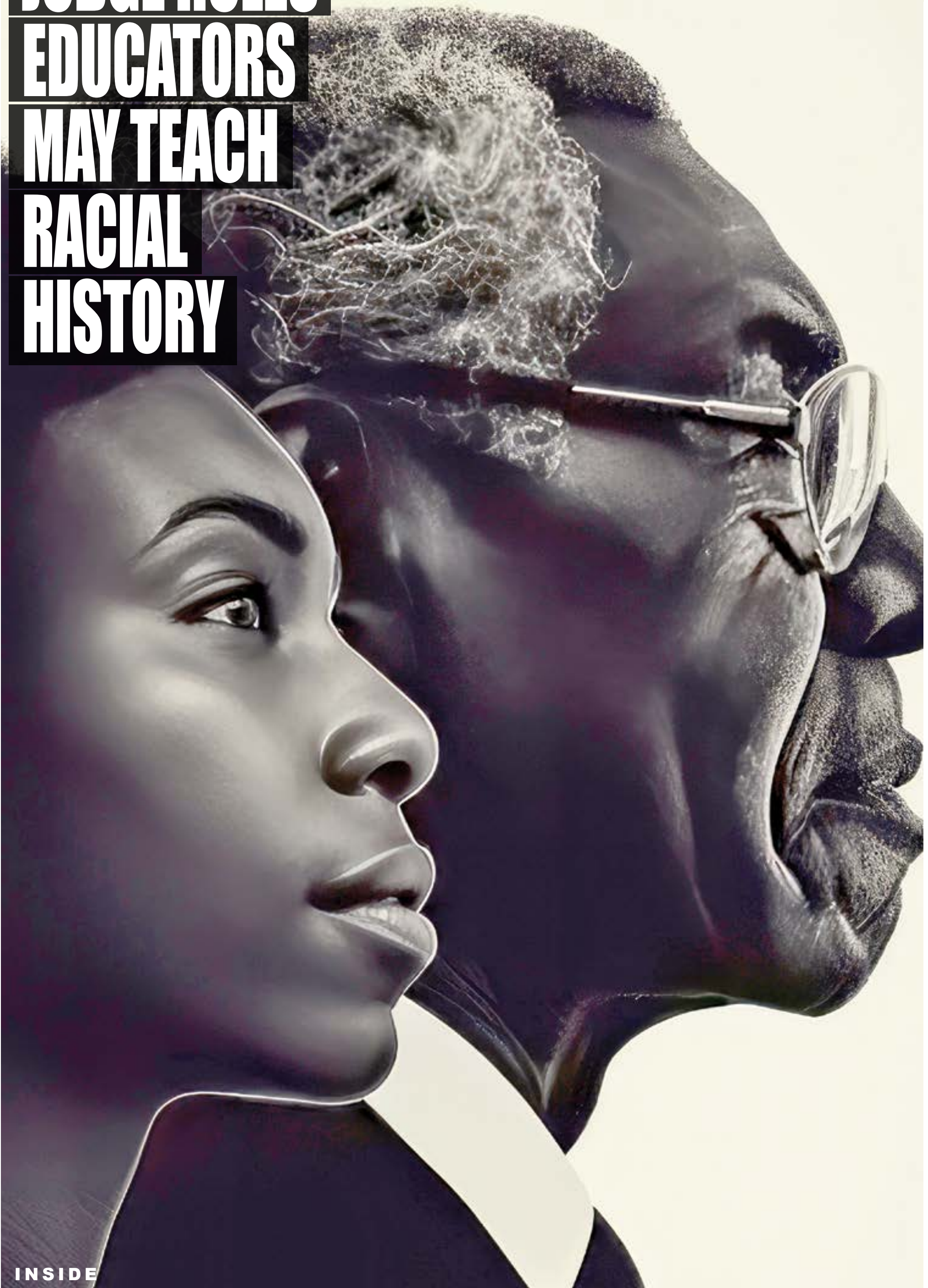
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**EAGLE RECEIVES TOP AWARDS
IN ANNUAL OKLAHOMA PRESS
ASSOCIATION CONTEST | A5**

**SCOTUS SIDES WITH TRIBES, DOJ SUES
OKCPS, 'RAPE CULTURE' ALLEGED AT
TULSA JUVENILE CENTER | A8**

**OKLAHOMA LEGISLATIVE
LEADERS STRIKE BUDGET
DEAL | A9**



PHOTO ADOBE IMAGES

History

Judge Rules Educators May Teach Racial History

John Neal
The Oklahoma Eagle

A federal court judge has blocked enforcement of key provisions of an Oklahoma law that aimed to restrict educators from teaching America's sordid racial history. This legal battle centers around HB 1775, a law passed by the Oklahoma legislature in 2021, which restricts teachers from discussing race and gender. Judge Charles B. Goodwin, U. S. District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma, has granted a partial preliminary injunction that "will significantly curb the impact of Oklahoma's classroom censorship law," according to a statement released by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), a key plaintiff in the lawsuit.

Cont. A5

Rosenwald Schools: Historic Black Schools

By CYNTHIA SAVAGE, THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF OKLAHOMA HISTORY AND CULTURE



During the first half of the twentieth century educational opportunities for African American schoolchildren were stifled by racism, a shortage of money, and inadequate facilities. Beginning in the mid-teens, however, black schools throughout the south received much needed financial assistance from the Julius Rosenwald Fund. In 1913 Julius Rosenwald, president of Sears, Roebuck and Company and philanthropist for a variety of causes, began providing limited funding for the construction of black schools in Alabama. Due to the success of this endeavor and the persistent need in Alabama and other southern states, the Julius Rosenwald Fund was formally established in 1917. The fund

was active in the states of Oklahoma, Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.

The Rosenwald Fund's initial activity was to aid in the construction of new buildings for black schools. Although the fund did not supply all the money necessary for the erection of new buildings, it did provide sufficient money to act as an impetus for the local district to better their facilities. In Oklahoma the Rosenwald Fund aided in the construction of 198 education-related buildings in forty-four counties between 1920 and 1932. Of the 198 buildings, 176 were schoolhouses, ranging in size from one-teacher

to twenty-two-teacher, sixteen were teacherages, and six were shops. The Rosenwald school building program ended in Oklahoma and nationally in 1932.

In addition to constructing schools the Rosenwald Fund contributed money for black school libraries, transportation to separate consolidated schools, African American teacher education, and black colleges and universities. The fund also had programs related to health and medicine, race relationships, and miscellaneous other activities related to human well-being. The Julius Rosenwald Fund continued in operation until 1948 when, as intended by Julius Rosenwald, all monies had been spent, and the trustees dissolved the fund.

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.

ROSENWALD HALL AT NEW LIMA in (19687.
TO.N033.67.1.4, Chester R. Cowen Collection, OHS)

The Oklahoma Eagle

Founded in 1921

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- Robert K. Goodwin**
Publisher 1972-1980
- Edward L. Goodwin, Jr.**
Co-Publisher 1980-2014
- Edward L. Goodwin, Sr.**
Publisher 1936-1972
- Theodore B. Baughman**
Publisher 1921-1936

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Principal
- M. David Goodwin**
Principal
- Ross D. Johnson**
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Featured Last Week



Oklahoma Court Dismisses Race
Massacre Lawsuit



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By Thier Deeds



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(LEFT-TO-RIGHT) GARY LEE AND ROSS D. JOHNSON, The Oklahoma Eagle Managing Editor and Principal/Creative Director respectively, join in celebration of the 102-year old publication's first place awards during the Oklahoma Press Association's 2024 Better Newspaper Contest Awards gala, June 8, at the Sheraton Hotel in downtown Oklahoma City. PHOTO SAM LEVRAULT MEDIA

OPA Awards

Eagle Receives Top Awards In Annual Oklahoma Press Association Contest

Staff
The Oklahoma Eagle

OKLAHOMA CITY – The Oklahoma Eagle – one of America’s oldest Black-owned newspapers and an institution that rose from the ashes of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre – won a record number of top journalism honors in the Oklahoma Press Association’s 2024 Better Newspaper Contest Awards.

The newspaper won 20 awards – besting the 18 awards we won in 2023 – at the OPA Awards Banquet on June 8 at the Sheraton Hotel in downtown Oklahoma City.

The weekly newspaper won a total of nine first place awards for the OPA’s Division 4 category, the best showing since resuming participation in the contest in 2022.

The Eagle garnered the most first place and total awards of any other publication in its division. First place awards to Managing Editor Gary Lee and Principal Ross Johnson led the notable tally of the newspaper’s citations.

The Midwest City Beacon and Mustang Times each finished with 10 awards to tie for second most awards. There are 180 state newspapers and news organizations represented by OPA.

“

We understand our mission and we know our history.

JAMES O. GOODWIN, Publisher,
The Oklahoma Eagle

In addition to the awards, Eagle publisher, owner, and third-generation Oklahoma journalist James O. Goodwin, Esq., received the H. Milt Phillips Award, the highest honor given by the OPA Board of Directors. He is the first Black person to receive the award in its 44-year history.

Goodwin thanked the Eagle’s staff for helping the media company sustain its 102-year legacy of producing important, quality, and critical journalism that continues to make an impact.

“We understand our mission and we know our history,” Goodwin said. “We don’t shy away from our responsibility to uplift our community, to celebrate our successes, to report on our challenges, and to hold elected officials and institutions accountable for decisions that negatively impact our progress toward equality, equity and inclusion.”

The publisher cited the Eagle’s leadership team, led by Managing Editor Gary Lee, Dr. James “Jerry” Goodwin, Ross Johnson, and M. David Goodwin.

“These awards represent a remarkable accomplishment for the Eagle,” managing editor Lee said. “They are the result of the consistently dogged work by a staff that combines thoughtful reporting, piercing writing, and impactful design to produce the paper week after week. I am grateful that OPA has honored the labors of Team Eagle.”

“We continue to benefit from our shared commitment to leaning forward together,” Johnson said. All of the awards earned this year are a clear indication of what is possible when we build upon our strengths.”

In OPA’s Better Newspaper Contest, the Eagle was honored in the following categories:

- **First place for “Layout & Design”** for the June 23, Aug. 18 and Sept. 29 editions. The judges said the Eagle was a “Clear winner. Bold cover layouts, almost magazine like, but on a metro page. Reminds us of The Sunday New York Times. Inside pages a little more uneven.” The Midwest City Beacon and the Mustang Times finished in second and third places, respectively.
- **First place for “Editorial Writing”** for these three editorials: “The Destruction of Democracy: GOP’s Scheme,” “The Killing of Tyre Nicholas,” and “Invasion of Greenwood.” “This is a master class in editorial writing,” the judges said of the editorials, penned by Ross Johnson. “Compelling, well researched and well written.” The Midwest City Beacon and the Mustang Times finished in second and third

Cont. A7

History

HB 1775: Prohibiting discussing “how historic beliefs about race led to the enslavement & subjugation of Black men and women.

From A3

This legal battle centers around [HB 1775](#), a law passed by the Oklahoma legislature in 2021, which restricts teachers from discussing race and gender. Judge Charles B. Goodwin, U. S. District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma, has granted a partial preliminary injunction that “will significantly curb the impact of Oklahoma’s classroom censorship law,” [according to a statement released by the American Civil Liberties Union \(ACLU\)](#), a key plaintiff in the lawsuit.

Goodwin’s ruling this month has been a long-awaited victory for critics of the statute, who began their fight against it when it was passed three years ago. The implications of this law were starkly evident in Tulsa Public Schools (TPS), which suffered a downgrade in its accreditation due to ‘implicit bias’ training.

While not explicitly naming TPS, Judge Goodwin’s ruling shields all Oklahoma school districts under the Oklahoma Academic Standards state statutes as the lawsuit progresses and the adjudication continues.

In addition to finding several provisions unconstitutionally vague, the ruling clarified what educators can teach in the classroom. One penalty for violating HB 1775 is revoking a teacher’s license or teaching certification. Emerson Sykes, a national ACLU staff attorney who argued the case for the plaintiffs before the court, said, “K-12 teachers are now safe from the Act’s [HB 1775] most confusing restrictions” in a statement released following the ruling.

Megan Lambert, legal director for ACLU of Oklahoma, added, “We will continue to defend Oklahoma’s students and teachers from politically motivated censorship and racial discrimination.” The ACLU, a key plaintiff in the lawsuit, has been instrumental in advocating for the rights of educators and students in this case.

State and Education Department enjoined

The preliminary injunctive relief applies to enforcement actions the State of Oklahoma and the Oklahoma State Board of Education

can take. The plaintiffs, formally named the “Black Emergency Response Team et al.,” cleared a high hurdle to obtain the injunction in the ruling. The decision was dated June 14. In particular, Judge Goodwin noted that a preliminary injunction is an extraordinary remedy, citing in his analysis the conditions that the plaintiffs had to establish. They include the following:

1. A substantial likely success on the merits.
2. Irreparable injury to the movant [plaintiff] if the injunction is denied
3. The threatened injury to the movant outweighs the injury to the party opposing the preliminary injunction.
4. An injunction would not be adverse to the public interest.

Applying these high standards, the Court found that multiple key law provisions of the statute should be struck down. Two of the so-called “prohibited concepts” Oklahoma lawmakers sought to censor concerned

classroom instruction and discussions about discrimination and the treatment of others based on race or sex.

Judge Goodwin found these provisions were “simply unclear” to the point of being unconstitutionally vague.

Six of the eight concepts were not temporarily enjoined. Still, Judge Charles Goodwin made clear that language elsewhere in the law enabled teaching that “mistaken beliefs about the superiority of one race have existed in history [and] how such beliefs exist now.”

The judge disallowed another sentence in the HB 1775 text that he said could be reasonably interpreted as prohibiting discussing “how historic beliefs about race led to the enslavement and subjugation of Black men and women...” and thereby, the ruling allows the truthful teaching of the country’s racist history.

Judge Goodwin also clarified an interpretation of a provision in HB 1775, which the Oklahoma State Board of Education

Cont. A6

History

Teachers should not be impeded in truthfully depicting racist events of the past

From A5

wrongly used to downgrade Tulsa Public Schools accreditation in 2021. The sanction was the result of a complaint by a white teacher at Memorial High School who said she felt discomfort from an outsourced training course on implicit bias, which she alleged “shame white people for past offenses in history.”

The course merely factually noted the role some whites have played in America’s racial history. Judge Goodwin wrote that coursework about adverse racial events was permitted to make persons uncomfortable so long as they were not taught that their race “should itself be a cause of that discomfort or shame.”

Where the teaching of history goes from here

While not granting a temporary injunction against the controversial statute in its entirety, the ruling made clear teachers should not be impeded in truthfully depicting racist events of the past or America’s struggle with bias and discrimination as it continues to exist today.

Oklahoma Attorney General Gentner Drummond defended the law for the State of Oklahoma. While his office could appeal the enjoined portions of the law to the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals, it has not yet done so. Drummond’s office issued a statement to The Oklahoma Eagle.

“It is gratifying the Court rejected the push by the ACLU and its fellow plaintiffs to allow teaching that one race is inherently superior



PHOTO ADOBE IMAGES

to another,” it said. “Our office is reviewing the full ruling, which is complicated and nuanced.”

Oklahoma ACLU’s Lambert told The Oklahoma Eagle that the portions of the Act not enjoined will be decided on their merits in the same court. Lambert added, “HB 1775 has no place in the classrooms. K-12 educators now have much-needed guidance regarding what they can teach and can rely on the Oklahoma Academic Standards as a safe haven from the reach of HB 1775.”

Oklahoma City African American schoolteacher Anthony Crawford helped bring the lawsuit forward as a plaintiff. He told The Oklahoma Eagle in an interview he was afraid he would be fired for teaching the unbiased truth about the country’s racial past. (See <https://theokeagle.com/2024/02/23/the-fate-of-oklahoma-race-based-law-may-be-decided-soon/>)

Following the ruling, Crawford said, “Judge Goodwin’s ruling pushes our state closer to justice, especially for marginalized communities who have not only been historically abused but academically as well. We will continue to fight and convince the court that we are on the right side of the law.”

JOHN NEAL, the author, is a former resident of Sand Springs. He is well versed in urban renewal, its uses and abuse, as a former city manager in Oklahoma and departmental consultant for the city of El Paso, Texas. In 2008, he was that city’s planning director when the city won multiple awards for its planning accomplishments. He is now retired and resides in Austin, Texas.



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LEFT: JAMES O. GOODWIN, The Oklahoma Eagle publisher, owner, and third-generation Oklahoma journalist James O. Goodwin, Esq., receives the H. Mill Phillips Award, the highest honor given by the OPA Board of Directors. PHOTO PROVIDED (RIGHT) THE OKLAHOMA EAGLE TEAM. (LEFT-TO-RIGHT) Dr. Jerry Goodwin (Principal), Gary Lee (Managing Editor), Sam Levrault (Production Manager), James O. Goodwin (Publisher, owner), Emily Warner (guest), Kimberly Marsh (Contributor), David M. Goodwin (Contributor), Cassandra Dalrymple (Office Manager) and Ross D. Johnson (Principal and Creative Director), join in celebration of the 102-year old publication's well-earned awards during the Oklahoma Press Association's 2024 Better Newspaper Contest Awards gala, June 8, at the Sheraton Hotel in downtown Oklahoma City. PHOTO SAM LEVRAULT MEDIA

OPA Awards

Category sweep: First, second, and third place in News Story competition

From A5

places, respectively.

- **First, second and third places in "News Story"** were awarded to Gary Lee for three stories: "Tulsans Unite To Oppose Bid For Takeover Of The City's School System," "Will Justice Prevail For Race Massacre Survivors?" and "Tulsans Remember Tina Turner, A Down-To-Earth Rock Star."

For his first-place award, the judges noted that his story was "well sourced and researched reporting on an important issue. Good job bringing in personal accounts of the impacts." For his coverage on the Tulsa Race Massacre, the judges said it was a "well written update on an incredible story." On his tribute to Tina Turner, the judges said "nothing beats the local angle on a national story, or in this case, international. A well written, anecdote laden piece."

- **First and second places for "Feature Story"** for entries Lee's Tulsans Remember Tina Turner, A Down-To-Earth Rock Star" and M. David Goodwin's profile on author and Eagle contributing writer Victor Luckerson, "A book that finally tells Greenwood's epic story." For Lee's story, the judges commented: "What a great feature on the hardest working woman in show business. Great storytelling and review of one of the most iconic women in the industry." For Goodwin's entry, the judges said it was a "compelling story on the 'missing link' in our Black towns. Thoroughly research. Great entry."

- **First and second places for "Business Story"** for entries by Gary Lee "All The Fixins: Welcome to Black Wall Street's New Eatery," and Kimberly Marsh's profile, "Popup shops."

- **First and second places for "Education Story"** for Gary Lee's continuing series on the how the COVID-19 pandemic impacted Oklahoma's public education system and its students; and John Neal's coverage on Oklahoma's controversial law that allows parents to use state money to fund their children's private education. For Lee's first place award, Two Tulsa Educators Who Overcame The Pandemic's Challenges, the judges noted it was "part of a larger series, but this one was my favorite because of the before, during and after-COVID context." For Neal's second place award, "Public funding, private schools," the judges said it was "an incredibly well-written explanation of how Oklahoma's school credit system will work and the challenge of the policy."

“We don’t shy away from our responsibility to uplift our community, to celebrate our successes, to report on our challenges, and to hold elected officials and institutions accountable for decisions that negatively impact our progress toward equality, equity and inclusion.”

JAMES O. GOODWIN,
Publisher, The
Oklahoma Eagle

- **First and second places for "Column Writing"** for three of John Neal's columns: "It's No Surprise: Black Tulsans continue to struggle at an alarming rate" "Many Black Neighborhoods Are Not A City Priority," and "Post Pandemic food insecurity worsens for Black Americans." Kimberly Marsh received second place for three columns: "Scenes from the revival of the community," "Revivalists envision future for All-Black Towns," and "Popup shops."
- **First and third places for "Photo Essay/Picture Page."** For first place, Basil Childers and Ross Johnson were honored for "Revivalists envision future for All-Black Towns." "Great photos that illustrate the theme," the judge said. "Well composed, nicely arranged." Sam Levrault won third place for "Tulsans take the state in 'Reflections.'" "Beautifully arranged page. Nice photos of cast. Congratulations," the judge said.
- **First and second places for "Front Page Design"** for Ross Johnson and Samantha Levrault for the Aug. 25 and July 21 editions, respectfully.
- **Second place for "In-Depth Reporting"** for Lee for the "Students of the COVID-19 Era. "Weaving together general information and compelling personal accounts, this project shows empathy while providing strong context for post-COVID impacts."
- **Second place in "Community Leadership"** for an ongoing series, "Students of the COVID-19 Era," investigating how the BIPOC community has been impacted by the deadly pandemic and the resiliency to persevere and succeed. "A very thorough work. Well done," the judge said. The Midwest City Beacon received first place for its "Food Drive" story project.
- **Third place for "News Content"** for the April 7, Aug. 25 and Sept. 29 editions that judges said had "striking front page designs and creative approaches to storytelling."

The Eagle competed in the OPA's Division 4, which includes weekly newspapers serving communities with populations of more than 19,000 people.

Members of the Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association judged almost 1,450 entries from 74 Oklahoma news publications.

Receiving the Oklahoma Newspaper Foundation's Beachy Musselman Award was Bruce Willingham, publisher and editor at the

McCurtain Gazette.

Willingham has held his city and county officials accountable in McCurtain County for more than 40 decades. He joined the McCurtain Gazette as executive editor in 1985. He and his wife Gwen bought the Gazette and Broken Bow News in 1988.

Willingham has covered about 100 murder trials in McCurtain County since 1980 and led multiple investigations that led to changes in the community.

In 2023, Willingham suspected McCurtain County commissioners of conducting business after meetings adjourned. The shocking conversation he recorded and published made national news as it revealed racist remarks and threats made against him and his son, longtime Gazette reporter Chris Willingham. The threats came after the Gazette's coverage of multiple problems in the sheriff's department.

The recipient of the Musselman Award is selected by the Oklahoma Newspaper Foundation Board of Trustees.

Other journalists honored at the OPA's convention included the following:

- The Half Century Club inducted four new members: John Ferguson, editor of the Wagoner County American-Tribune; Susie Glasscock, office supervisor at the Stillwater News Press; Joe Hight, longtime editor at The Oklahoman and now director of the Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame; and Jeff Mullin, former senior writer and current columnist at Enid News
- Stillwater News Press received first place in the OPA Magazine Contest.
- Ray Lokey Memorial Award for Excellence in Reporting, presented to Clifton Adcock, The Frontier.
- Editorial Sweepstakes Award, sponsored by ONG, presented to Kim Poindexter, Tahlequah Daily Press.
- Column Sweepstakes Award, sponsored by ONG, presented to Jennifer Sharpe, The Journal Record.
- Daily, Semi- or Tri-Weekly Photo of the Year, sponsored by OGE Energy Corp., presented to Richard R. Barron, The Ada News.
- Weekly Photo of the Year, sponsored by OGE Energy Corp., presented to Kyle Lomenick, The Perkins Journal.
- ONF Joseph H. Edwards Outdoor Writer of the Year presented to Connor Choate, Marietta Monitor.

OKLAHOMA PRESS ASSOCIATION

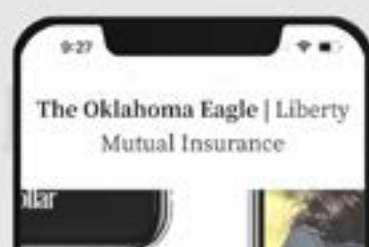
The purposes of this Association shall be educational and to safeguard and advance the newspaper and news media profession in the State of Oklahoma, so that both the profession and the public may benefit.

The Oklahoma Press Association is proud of its history serving Oklahoma's daily and weekly newspapers, and now online news media. OPA is the oldest trade association in Oklahoma.

The Oklahoma Eagle

Our Mission

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





THE OKLAHOMA COUNTY COURTHOUSE is located in downtown Oklahoma City. PHOTO BENNETT BRINKMAN

SCOTUS

Legal Roundup: SCOTUS sides with tribes, DOJ sues OKCPS, ‘rape culture’ alleged at Tulsa Juvenile Center

Tristan Loveless, Bennett Brinkman and Michael McNutt
NonDic

As the Oklahoma Legislature adjourned sine die at the end of May, lawmakers passed a slew of last-minute bills and approved a slate of executive nominations.

With all the activity happening at the Capitol, you might have missed other important news in recent weeks, including numerous legal developments concerning existing cases and new litigation.

The following roundup offers updates and introductions to important legal cases from the last few weeks. Readers should be aware that one of the cases described below discusses allegations of rape.

St. Isidore case allowed to continue in Oklahoma County

On Wednesday, Oklahoma County District Court Judge Richard Ogden allowed a case against St. Isidore of Seville Catholic Virtual School to continue after he dismissed one of the plaintiffs’ claims against it but sustained three others.

Ogden’s decision came after a three-hour hearing wherein lawyers for the defendants — St. Isidore, the Statewide Virtual Charter School Board, State Board of Education and State Department of Education — argued the case should be thrown out because the plaintiffs — a group of 10 taxpayers — lacked standing and had failed to state plausible claims.

The plaintiffs, who include Senate District 47 candidate Erin Brewer, brought the case in July 2023 as an attempt to block St. Isidore from opening. If the school does open this August as planned, it would be the nation’s first religious

“

Service members are called to leave their home and work to serve and protect us,... It is our job to make sure their employment rights are protected once they return home

U.S. Attorney Robert J. Troester,
Western District of Oklahoma

charter school. Charter schools are public schools that can be privately run, but opponents say affiliating a charter school with a church violates the U.S. and Oklahoma constitutions.

“[Plaintiffs] don’t have a connection to St. Isidore,” Phil Sechler, who represents the SVCSB, said during Wednesday’s hearing. “They don’t work there. They don’t go to school there. (...) They allege only that they pay taxes.”

But Ogden only agreed the plaintiffs lack standing for their first claim that the school had failed to agree not to discriminate against students and employees based on religion. The plaintiffs’ three other claims — that St. Isidore’s policies will result in discrimination, that the school will not adequately educate children with disabilities, and that it violates prohibitions against public schools teaching religious curriculum — will remain issues in the case.

“We’re pretty happy with how it went today,” said Alex Luchenitser, one of the plaintiffs’ lawyers. “Public funds should not go to support religious schools. St. Isidore wants to create essentially a religious public school that’s never existed in the history of the United States. It would be un-American. It would fundamentally change and harm our public education system.”

Sechler argued after the hearing that a separate but related case pending before the Oklahoma Supreme Court and brought by Attorney General Gentner Drummond could render this case irrelevant.

“The Oklahoma Supreme Court’s decision will have a big impact on claims two, three and four,” Sechler said. “We think the Supreme Court knows the timing of the opening of St. Isidore, and so that’s why we expect the court is going to rule fairly imminently on the pending matter.”

Barring a Supreme Court decision, the lawyers are all expected back in court in a matter of

weeks for a hearing on the 10 plaintiffs’ motion for a temporary injunction blocking the school from opening. Ogden set aside three days in late July to conduct an evidentiary hearing.

DOJ sues Oklahoma City Public Schools

On May 29, the U.S. Department of Justice announced it had filed a lawsuit against Oklahoma City Public Schools on behalf of Michael McCullough, a former band teacher in the district and member of the U.S. Air Force reserves who says he was not reemployed after he was called to active duty in 2022, while teaching in the district.

Lawyers for the DOJ said in their complaint against OKCPS that McCullough was encouraged to resign after he told the district he would have to leave for the remainder of the spring 2022 semester to fulfill his duties. While his contract status for the 2022-2023 school year had already been uncertain, McCullough alleges that he was not renewed for the next school year and was not hired for open positions in the district.

The district’s actions could be a violation of a U.S. law that requires employers to reemploy reserve service members upon completion of their active duty orders.

“Service members are called to leave their home and work to serve and protect us,” U.S. Attorney Robert J. Troester for the Western District of Oklahoma said in a press release. “It is our job to make sure their employment rights are protected once they return home. My office will continue to vigorously defend the rights justly earned by those who serve our country.”

According to the complaint, this is the second time McCullough has had to deal with employment issues with OKCPS. In 2022, McCullough and the district settled a similar dispute dealing with a 2021 matter after he



OKLAHOMA GOV. KEVIN STITT kicks off the eighth session of budget negotiations with House and Senate leaders at the Capitol in Oklahoma City on Wednesday, May 22, 2024. PHOTO PAUL MONIES/OKLAHOMA WATCH

Legislative Budget Deal

Oklahoma Legislative Leaders Strike Budget Deal

Paul Monies
Oklahoma Watch

Oklahoma's Republican legislative leaders agreed Wednesday to a budget framework that will result in approximately \$12.5 billion in spending in fiscal year 2025, which starts July 1.

Lawmakers will consider budget bills in the next few days, as staff work late hours to finalize the language and numbers. The Senate may have to meet Saturday and the House may have to meet on Memorial Day to get the budget across the finish line, although timelines were fluid. The session ends May 31.

The agreement, reached in the eighth meeting of a budget summit that started May 6, marks the first time late-stage budget negotiations were out in the open. Those negotiations were occasionally tense and sometimes punctuated by walkouts. They continued early Wednesday afternoon as participants at times struggled to speak above the sounds of a visiting high school drumline playing on the fourth floor of the Capitol rotunda. The budget summit concluded a little while later with handshakes and a selfie taken by Gov. Kevin Stitt.

"Friction is a good thing," said Senate President Pro Tempore Greg Treat, who pushed his chamber to embark on a more transparent budget process this year. "It's an ugly process at times, people got to see all the warts and everything this year. But friction drives a much better product. ... We

didn't get everything we wanted, but that's the way the process works."

House Speaker Charles McCall said the negotiations gave the public a front-row seat to the complexities behind putting together a state budget.

"It's not set up to be easy," McCall said.

Negotiations dragged earlier in the week as the sides met for just half an hour on Monday afternoon. The House and Senate appeared to move closer on Tuesday, but the Senate still had concerns over the House's position over a possible veto override of any potential budget agreement as the session wound down.

Republican Gov. Kevin Stitt appeared to break the logjam on Wednesday morning as he kicked off the day's budget summit meeting. He promised not to veto the budget if lawmakers agreed to add \$20 million to the Quick Action Closing Fund, an economic development tool used at his discretion to close business expansion or relocation deals.

Stitt also wanted a smaller-than-recommended salary increase for district court judges and money to stay in a litigation fund for the effects of the U.S. Supreme Court's McGirt decision on tribal jurisdiction. He asked lawmakers to come up with a framework to start business courts, specialized courts to handle corporate disputes he touted in his State of the State address in February, but that idea went nowhere this session.

House and Senate budget negotiators agreed to those requests from the governor. They then spent several hours going

over some final points of negotiation, including how much to dedicate to deferred maintenance. They settled on \$350 million, with 45% going to state buildings, 45% to higher education and 10% for state parks.

Budget negotiators also agreed to add \$177 million to the Legacy Capital Fund, a pot of money created last year to fund long-term projects without resorting to state bond sales. Among the new projects to be funded are the demolition of an aging parking garage for the Department of Environmental Quality, an animal diagnostic lab at Oklahoma State University and a new training center for the Department of Public Safety.

With Treat and McCall both term-limited, Stitt said he'll miss them next year in budget discussions. But he said he had confidence in both House Speaker-Designate Kyle Hilbert, R-Bristow, and Senate Pro Temp-Designate Greg McCortney, R-Ada.

A personal income tax cut, priorities of both Stitt and McCall, was not part of the final budget agreement. The Senate held to its position that the elimination of the state's 4.5% sales tax on groceries should be the session's only major tax cut. Stitt signed the grocery sales tax measure into law in late February, although local governments can still collect their share of the grocery sales tax.

Still, Democratic leaders in the House and Senate said the budget didn't do enough to address the problems of working Oklahomans.

"While we appreciate this agreement should negate the need for yet another

costly special session, we are concerned the budget doesn't address critical needs facing citizens in every district of the state," Senate Democratic Leader Kay Floyd said in a press release. "This is not a bipartisan budget, because it misses important opportunities to invest more in our schools, health and mental health, and other programs that would have improved the lives of working Oklahomans and their families."

House Minority Leader Cyndi Munson of Oklahoma City said Democrats were kept out of the public budget summits, leading to fewer discussions about child care expenses, hunger and health care for the neediest Oklahomans.

"Instead, we have observed Republican infighting, which unnecessarily prolonged the budget process," Munson said. "Now the process is being rushed, which does not give legislators, stakeholders, or the public enough time to fully understand the budget and know how our tax dollars will be spent. In the future, we need to work together on bipartisan solutions that address real challenges in our state and benefit all Oklahomans."

Note: This story and headline have been updated to reflect the latest, reconciled numbers based on the House's online budget portal.

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.

SCOTUS

HB 4156: Federal Authority Infringement to Regulate Foreign Commerce

From A8

made a complaint to the Veterans' Employment and Training Service. His second complaint with VETS resulted in the new litigation.

In a statement, district spokeswoman Crystal Raymond said the complaint is under review.

"OKCPS has been made aware of the lawsuit from the U.S. Department of Justice and our legal team is reviewing it," Raymond said. "The district will work through the legal process accordingly. We cannot provide any further comment at this time."

DOJ, ACLU allege HB 4156 violates principles of federalism

The U.S. Department of Justice and the American Civil Liberties Union filed separate lawsuits in May challenging a controversial state immigration law that criminalizes entering and remaining in Oklahoma without "legal authorization." HB 4156 passed through the Oklahoma legislature in April, was signed by Gov. Kevin Stitt and is set to take effect July 1.

The pair of lawsuits filed in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma both requested the court to prevent the implementation of the new law. The enforcement of a similar bill passed in Texas was blocked by the federal 5th Circuit Court of Appeals. Any appeal of cases related to the Oklahoma bill would be heard by the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals.

The Department of Justice's suit argued that HB 4156 is unconstitutional because it violates principles of federalism.

"If HB 4156 takes effect, it would interfere with the exclusive authority of the federal government to control noncitizens' entry and reentry into, and presence in, the United States to conduct foreign relations," Department of Justice attorneys wrote.

The DOJ brief focuses on two ways the bill upsets federalism. First, the brief argues that federal law preempts state immigration laws. The federal preemption doctrine prevents states from passing laws related to topics with comprehensive federal regulations.

Second, the brief focuses in on the commerce clause and argues HB 4156 would infringe on federal authority to regulate foreign commerce, "which has long been understood to encompass the regulation of both persons and commodities."

In their case, ACLU filed a petition that makes virtually the same arguments as the federal petition, while adding an argument that the bill's removal provisions violate the constitutional prohibition on cruel and unusual punishment.

"HB 4156 violates the Eighth Amendment because it requires noncitizens convicted of state illegal entry or state illegal reentry to leave the state within 72 hours of their conviction or release from custody," ACLU attorneys wrote. "This effectively results in their banishment from the state and constitutes cruel and unusual punishment."

The United States Supreme Court does not appear to have directly addressed the question of whether banishment or exile qualifies as cruel and unusual punishment, although a few lower courts have reviewed the concept with mixed results. The banishment of North Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem from Indian reservations within state boundaries has become probably the most famous contemporary example of banishment, but probation conditions requiring one to leave a state or county and regulations on where sex offenders may stand as more common types of banishment statutes.

The federal brief also referenced HB 4156's removal provision, but in the context of its potential effect on foreign relations.

"By permitting state officials to effectively exile noncitizens from the state, HB 4156 risks international controversy and possible retaliations against United States citizens in foreign countries," cautioned the DOJ brief.

Attorney General Gentner Drummond defended HB 4156 in a May press release, arguing that federal preemption would not prevent Oklahoma from enforcing the new immigration law.

"Oklahoma is exercising its concurrent and complementary power as a sovereign state to address an ongoing public crisis within its borders through appropriate legislation," Drummond said. "This law is a powerful tool to combat those foreign nationals who enter and remain in this country illegally, and who become involved in serious criminal activity such as illegal marijuana-grow operations, fentanyl distribution, sex trafficking, and labor trafficking."

On Wednesday, Oklahoma director of special litigation Zach West filed a motion to combine the two lawsuits, saying the Attorney General's Office had met with both petitioning parties and that neither party opposed consolidating the cases since they share similar legal claims.



PHIL SECHLER (left) walks past opposing counsel Alex Luchenitser as they wait to talk to reporters after a hearing in Oklahoma County District Court on Wednesday, June 5, 2024. PHOTO: BENNETT BRINKMAN

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By permitting state officials to effectively exile noncitizens from the state, HB 4156 risks international controversy and possible retaliations against United States citizens in foreign countries.

U.S. Department of Justice and the American Civil Liberties Union, Case Brief

Judge: Cabinet secretaries fall under dual office-holding statute

A district court judge has ruled mostly in favor of an opinion by Attorney General Gentner Drummond that a governor's Cabinet secretaries are subject to Oklahoma statute prohibiting dual office-holding.

Oklahoma County District Court Judge Richard Ogden issued an opinion May 31 saying that, since 2021 when Senate Bill 913 was passed and signed into law, Cabinet secretaries "categorically are officeholders or officers of the state of Oklahoma" and subject to the prohibition against dual office holding. However, Ogden disagreed with Drummond's view that an officeholder who takes a second office effectively has vacated that first office. Ogden ruled that any dual officeholder in a governor's Cabinet can be forcibly removed only through a quo warranto proceeding, which can be initiated by the attorney general or a district attorney.

Drummond issued his opinion in February after being asked by State Sen. Mary Boren (D-Norman) whether Tim Gatz, who at the time was serving as executive director of both the Oklahoma Department of Transportation and the Oklahoma Turnpike Authority as well as transportation secretary on Gov. Kevin Stitt's Cabinet, could hold all three positions. Gatz subsequently resigned.

Stitt, who sought a court ruling on Drummond's opinion, could appeal Ogden's decision, request a rehearing or seek a change in state law. Legislators this past session approved SB 1196 to protect the dual roles of Blayne Arthur, who serves as both secretary of agriculture and as commissioner of the Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry. Stitt vetoed the measure, saying it was unnecessary because the law was clear that he could select a Cabinet secretary from agency directors.

It has been common practice for a governor's Cabinet members to serve concurrently as heads of state agencies. But Ogden said that changed in 2015 when Gov. Mary Fallin issued an executive order giving Cabinet secretaries veto power over proposed administrative rules "and certainly since 2021" when SB 913 was approved. When legislators approved that law without making exceptions for Cabinet secretaries, it signaled their intent not to exclude them "from the general rule against dual office holding," Ogden wrote.

Stitt is weighing his options, according to a statement from his office.

"Although the governor is pleased the court held that AG opinions cannot be used to remove agency directors or Cabinet secretaries,

we are disappointed that the court otherwise felt confined to the AG's analysis, disrupting decades of precedent," said Abigail Cave, Stitt's director of communications.

Drummond's office issued a statement saying the attorney general was pleased the court affirmed his official opinion.

"He is committed to working with the governor and Cabinet secretaries to ensure the smooth operation of state government in compliance with the ruling," press secretary Leslie Berger said.

SCOTUS sides with tribes on health care costs in 5-4 decision

In a 5-4 decision, the United States Supreme Court ruled federal law requires the federal government to reimburse tribal governments who operate their own health care facilities under the Indian Health Service's "self determination contracts" for some additional costs they incur running their own expanded programs.

Under existing federal law, a tribal government may take over responsibility for running its own health care services from IHS, a federal agency.

The federal government is responsible for providing funding to cover the additional costs tribes incur running their own facilities, such as auditing, hiring a legal department and hiring a human resources department. IHS facilities do not have these additional costs because they use other federal agencies for personnel department, auditing and legal representation.

When tribes operate their own health systems — such as the Cherokee Nation and Chickasaw Nation in Oklahoma — federal law allows tribes to collect money from public and private insurance systems and spend that money on health care related expenses. The question before the Supreme Court was whether the federal government was required to pay for the additional costs related to providing that care.

In the court's majority opinion, Chief Justice John Roberts found that the federal government must reimburse the additional cost incurred by self-operational tribal health care systems that provide additional care based on money collected from insurance systems. Justice Brett Kavanaugh wrote the dissent, arguing the court was upsetting a prior interpretation used for 30 years. Kavanaugh said the court's ruling would cost the federal government an additional \$800 million to \$2 billion annually.

Cherokee Nation Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin Jr. called the SCOTUS decision a "victory for all of Indian Country."

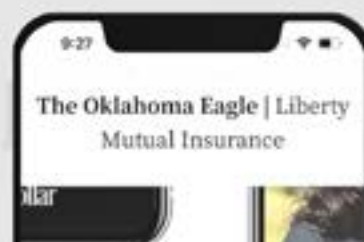
"Since Cherokee Nation assumed self-

Cont. A11

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.





THE TULSA COUNTY FAMILY CENTER FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE is located in downtown Tulsa. PHOTO TRISTAN LOVELESS

SCOTUS

Lawsuit: County juvenile detention center failed to prevent employees from sexually abusing inmates

From A10

governance over our health care system, we have dramatically improved the quality of care and services available to tribal citizens,” Hoskin said in a statement. “Yet when we reinvest revenues into expanded care, we have not received the same support as other federal health care programs. With this ruling, self-governances tribes will finally receive that equitable support.”

Citing Corporation Commission, company blames high natural prices on extreme weather

In a motion to dismiss filed in Osage County District Court on June 3 alongside more than 400 pages of exhibits, attorneys representing ET Gathering and Processing LLC argued that prior decisions by the Oklahoma Corporation Commission and other courts should prevent new litigation about the cause of high natural gas prices during Winter Storm Uri in 2021.

The company, a subsidiary of Energy Transfer, argued that Attorney General Gentner Drummond’s office failed to make adequate arguments for its claims filed in April on behalf of the Grand River Dam Authority that natural gas marketing companies engaged in price manipulation, contract violation and civil conspiracy to make large profits during the historic storm. The company’s motion also requested that the lawsuit be transferred to Oklahoma County if it is allowed to continue.

The argument to transfer the case if it continues is based on a clause in the contract between ET Gathering and the Grand River Dam Authority requiring suits between the parties to be filed in Oklahoma County. Since Osage County District Court is not part of the state’s e-filing pilot program, court filings for the current suit have been physically delivered to the county courthouse in Pawhuska.

The motion also argues that the Oklahoma Corporation Commission already determined the cause of the high natural gas prices was the extreme weather and that the attorney general’s office failed to raise arguments during the earlier proceedings. The Corporation Commission has issued

several decisions and reports related to Winter Storm Uri costs with largely the same initial findings, all in 2-1 decisions with Commissioner Bob Anthony dissenting.

“The stench of these rotten deals is so pervasive, people on the outside are beginning to pinch their nose and look toward the Jim Thorpe building with wrinkled brows wondering what the hell is going on at the Oklahoma Corporation Commission,” Anthony wrote in an April 2023 dissent. “Not only are these public injustices rotting from a putrid core of greed, public corruption and regulatory capture, but so are the various layers of whitewash that have been repeatedly and sloppily applied by their proponents and apologists over the last two years.”

While Anthony’s dissents are fiery and eye-catching, the commission’s official findings generally support ET Gatherings’ argument that winter weather caused the spike in natural gas prices. Anthony, the longest serving corporation commissioner in state history, is term limited this year after serving six six-year terms. He has served one more term than the prior record holder, Ray C. Jones.

Lawsuit alleges ‘rape culture’ at Tulsa County Family Center for Juvenile Justice

A civil lawsuit filed against Tulsa County and a slate of other defendants alleges the county’s juvenile detention center failed to prevent employees from sexually abusing multiple former inmates. The allegations include detention officers trading vapes, marijuana gummies and other gifts or unauthorized privileges to inmates — all of whom were under 18 at the time of their confinement — in exchange for sexual favors.

The lawsuit follows Tulsa County District Attorney Steve Kunzweiler filing criminal charges against former detention officer Jonathan Hines, also a named defendant in the civil suit, on April 26 and June 5. Hines faces charges for child trafficking, possessing a cell phone in a jail, destroying evidence and soliciting indecent photos from a minor.

Filed in U.S. District Court for the Eastern

District of Oklahoma against Tulsa County’s Board of Commissioners, its District Court Juvenile Bureau, leaders of the Oklahoma Office of Juvenile Affairs and more than a dozen employees, the lawsuit accuses Hines of sexually assaulting at least four different inmates and a family member. State law and federal law both define sex between a government employee and a person in their custody as rape.

While Hines is the only former employee of the Tulsa County Juvenile Detention Center currently facing criminal charges, the civil lawsuit makes similar allegations against other named and unnamed detention officers. The suit also alleges that agency leadership failed to address the known “rape culture” problem at the facility.

“The juvenile detention center promotes rape culture within its walls and each and every one of the defendants is culpable, in some fashion, for committing said act, promoting said culture or for turning a blind eye, despite overwhelming information, evidence, and documented proof that said depravities were occurring to children,” the suit argues. “Defendants have been aware of these facts and circumstances since mid-2023, likely before, and have chosen to do nothing to intervene in the pervasive culture within the juvenile detention center.”

Filed May 23 by attorneys Donald Smolen II, Michael Smith and Chris Brecht on behalf of 20 “Child Doe” defendants and one “Jane Doe” defendant, the suit makes additional allegations against detention officers other than Hines, including:

- That former detention officer Austin Zenzen grabbed an underage inmate’s genitals while he used the bathroom;
- That former employee Mandi Lee Raymond traded sex for vape pens with at least one underage inmate;
- That former detention officer Dquan Doyle sexually assaulted at least two underage inmates in exchange for marijuana products; and
- That former employee Cindy Treadway “was involved in a romantic relationship” with at least one underage inmate.

According to the lawsuit, the situation at the Tulsa County Family Center for Juvenile Justice eventually culminated in a detention officer allegedly threatening the attorney representing an inmate allegedly raped by Hines, telling them “you need to tell your client to keep his mouth shut” in the parking lot of the detention center April 19. The officer later denied making that comment and other comments to the attorney.

On April 24, the Tulsa County Public Defender’s Office notified various agencies of the April 19 incident. Within 20 minutes of the public defender’s email, District Judge Kevin Gray — who oversees the Tulsa County Juvenile Justice Center as the head of Tulsa County District Court’s Juvenile Division — sent an email to Anthony Taylor, the former facility’s director.

TRISTAN LOVELESS is a NonDoc Media reporter covering legal matters and other civic issues in the Tulsa area. A citizen of the Cherokee Nation who grew up in Turley and Skiatook, he graduated from the University of Tulsa College of Law in 2023. Before that, he taught for the Tulsa Debate League in Tulsa Public Schools.

BENNETT BRINKMAN became NonDoc’s education reporter in August 2022 after completing a reporting internship. He holds a bachelor’s degree in journalism from the University of Oklahoma and is originally from Edmond. Email story tips and ideas to bennett@nondoc.com.

MICHAEL MCNUTT became NonDoc’s managing editor in January 2023. He has been a journalist for nearly 40 years, working at The Oklahoman for 30 years, heading up its Enid bureau and serving as night city editor, assistant news editor and State Capitol reporter. An inductee of the Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame, he served as communications director for former Gov. Mary Fallin and then for the Office of Juvenile Affairs. Send tips and story ideas to mcnutt@nondoc.com.



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Monday Worship - 6:00pm
Wednesday Bible Study - 5:00pm

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Pastor Ruthie I. Howard



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Ph: (918) 425-2077

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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

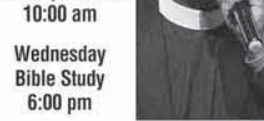
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307-311 N. Greenwood Ave.
P: 918-587-1428
F: 918-587-0642
vernnamechurch@sbcglobal.net

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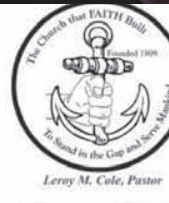
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Detroit's Legacy of Housing Inequity Has Caused Long-Term Health Impacts



As recently as 2019, formerly redlined areas had almost 30% lower homeownership rates and a \$60,000 difference in median household income compared with mostly white areas in Detroit. PHOTO CHARLES OMMANNEY/GETTY IMAGES

Housing Inequity

Rising rents, poor living conditions, and barriers to affordable and safe housing put the health of Motor City residents at risk.

Housing Instability Risks Greater

Roshanak Mehdipanah, University of Michigan; Kate Brantley, University of Michigan, and Melika Belhaj, University of Michigan
Word In Black

Detroiters who face rising rents, poor living conditions, and systemic barriers to affordable and safe housing are at greater risk of poor health, our research finds.

We study the connection between housing inequities and health, with the goal of informing local, state and national policy. Our focus is on how interdisciplinary research on housing relates to equity in health, race, income and aging.

Housing instability can take many forms, including living in overcrowded or inadequate conditions, having to make frequent moves, or spending the bulk of household income on a place to live. These stressors can lead to an increased risk of eviction, homelessness, poor mental health, and even physical illness.

Half of Detroit's residents are renters who earn a median household income of \$26,704, nearly \$13,000 lower than Michigan's median, according to American Community Survey data.

We also found that 60% of renters in Detroit are cost-burdened, meaning they

spend more than 30% of their income on housing-related costs, including rent and utilities.

A Legacy of Discriminatory Housing Practices

These issues didn't develop overnight. Detroit's current racial housing inequities are influenced by the legacy of redlining. Redlining refers to the federally sponsored practice of banks and insurers refusing or limiting loans, mortgages, and insurance within Black neighborhoods.

The effects were long term. As recently as 2019, formerly redlined areas had almost 30% lower homeownership rates and a \$60,000 difference in median household income compared with mostly white areas that were provided with better opportunities beginning nearly a century ago.

Beyond the financial effects, research also shows that the practice of redlining in Detroit is associated with self-reported poor health, heart disease, and poor vision among current residents of these areas.

Tax Foreclosure Leads to Poor Health

Discriminatory housing practices continue today, often taking the form of foreclosures and evictions.

Cont. A14

Physically Inactive

New Study Shows 1.8 Billion Adults are 'Physically Inactive'

WHO warns of health and economic consequences

Wayne Campbell
Word In Black

A recent study by researchers from World Health Organization (WHO), together with academic colleagues and published in The Lancet Global Health journal, found that nearly one third (31 percent) of the world's adult population, 1.8 billion adults, are physically inactive. That is, they do not meet the global recommendations of at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity per week. Alarming, this is an increase of 5 percentage points between 2010 and 2022.

The WHO says if this trend continues, the proportion of adults not meeting recommended levels of physical activity is projected to rise to 35 percent by 2030. Shockingly, the global estimate of the cost

Cont. A14

Housing Inequity

30,000 Evictions Filings Before COVID-19



PHOTO ADOBE IMAGES

From A13

In the past two decades, Detroit has experienced one of the highest tax foreclosure rates in the country.

At the height of the foreclosure crisis in 2015, approximately 6,408 owner-occupied homes were repossessed by the county, displacing those Detroiters and putting them at a higher risk of poor mental health.

This has led to more sales at auction to investors and speculators, who tend to evict more tenants than other types of landlords and to allow their properties to fall into disrepair.

Eviction, Poor Housing Quality, and Health

Detroit saw about 30,000 eviction filings annually before the COVID-19 pandemic.

After a few years of respite due to pandemic-era housing policies, evictions have climbed back toward prepandemic levels. In 2023,

more than 20,000 Detroiters had evictions filed against them.

Research connects eviction to a range of poor physical and mental health outcomes.

Even the Detroiters not at risk of eviction often pay increasing rental costs for poor-quality housing despite attempts by the city to implement a rental ordinance requiring landlords to register and obtain a certification of compliance with Detroit's rental ordinance.

Research shows that 9 in 10 pandemic-era eviction filings involved properties not in compliance with local health and safety codes, including those that regulate lead hazards. At the same time, much of the housing stock continues to decline as it ages and compliance efforts are not well enforced.

Some who are evicted have nowhere to go. In January 2023, 1,691 Detroiters were experiencing homelessness, increasing their risk of mental health challenges, disease and even death.

Policies That Have Worked

There is some good news. Tax foreclosures in Detroit have decreased significantly from the height of the tax foreclosure crisis.

We partly attributed this to the pandemic-era moratorium on tax foreclosures initiated by the Wayne County Treasurer's Office, which ended in 2023. The county also oversees the Michigan Homeowner Assistance Fund and programs such as Pay As You Stay and the Detroit Tax Relief Fund, which have helped clear tax debt for homeowners.

Programs such as Detroit's Homeowners Property Exemption program have exempted some low-income homeowners from paying property taxes in an effort to prevent tax delinquency.

However, our research shows that despite efforts to raise awareness about these programs, few qualifying households access them. This places them at risk for foreclosure and possible displacement.

New Policy Directions

Detroiters' resilience and persistent advocacy have led to significant wins for housing justice, helping to translate community concerns into city policy.

In 2022, residents successfully organized for the right to counsel for qualifying low-income Detroiters facing eviction.

The city could also follow the lead of other U.S. cities, such as Philadelphia, by exploring eviction diversion and mediation models to reduce eviction filings.

More targeted efforts are also needed to invest in Black homeownership to ensure stability and encourage long-term residence.

CONTRIBUTORS: Roshanak Mehdipanih is an associate professor in public health at the University of Michigan; Kate Brantley is a research area specialist at the University of Michigan, and Melika Belhaj, is a research associate at the University of Michigan.



PHOTO ADOBE IMAGES

Physically Inactive

Mental health and physical health are closely connected

From A13

of physical inactivity to public health care systems between 2020 and 2030 is about US\$ 300 billion (approximately US\$ 27 billion per year) if levels of physical inactivity are not reduced.

WHO officials define physical activity as any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that requires energy expenditure. Physical activity refers to all movement including during leisure time, for transport to get to and from places, or as part of a person's work or domestic activities. Research indicates that both moderate- and vigorous-intensity physical activity improve health. Popular ways to be active include walking, cycling, wheeling, sports, active recreation and play, and can be done at any level of skill and for enjoyment by everybody.

Physical activity is beneficial to health and well-being and conversely, physical inactivity increases risk for non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and other poor health outcomes. Together, physical inactivity and sedentary behaviors are contributing to the rise in NCDs and placing a burden on healthcare systems. WHO states that improving levels of physical activity will benefit health and well-being and contribute to attainment of global NCD targets and a number of the Sustainable Development Goals. However, this will require increased commitments and investments by member states; innovation and contributions from non-state actors; cross sector coordination and collaboration and ongoing guidance and monitoring from the World Health Organization.

Benefits of Physical Activity

Mental health and physical health are closely connected. Although not a cure-all, increasing physical activity directly contributes to improved mental health and better overall

health and well-being. Exercise causes your brain to release 'feel good' chemicals like endorphins and serotonin that help improve your mood. Physical inactivity is one of the leading risk factors for non-communicable diseases mortality.

People who are insufficiently active have a 20 percent to 30 percent increased risk of death compared to people who are sufficiently active. Sedentary behavior is any period of low-energy expenditure while awake such as sitting, reclining or lying. Lives are becoming increasingly sedentary through the use of motorized transport and the increased use of screens for work, education and recreation. There is also a generational impact of physical inactivity.

Parents who are physically inactive are likely to nurture their children in a similar manner. It is therefore imperative that parents realize that they do not only have a responsibility for themselves but also for the future generations. It is also important that physical education, commonly called P.E., be taken more seriously in our schools. Too many of our children are overweight or are obese as the emphasis of our education system turns to science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Evidence shows higher amounts of sedentary behavior are associated with the following poor health outcomes in children and adolescents: increased adiposity, poorer cardiometabolic health, fitness, behavioral conduct/prosocial behavior and reduced sleep duration. In adults, there can be increased all-cause mortality, cardiovascular disease mortality and cancer mortality and incidence of cardiovascular disease, cancer and type-2 diabetes.

Global Statistics

The highest rates of physical inactivity were observed in the high-income Asia Pacific region (48 percent) and South Asia (45 percent), with

levels of inactivity in other regions ranging from 28 percent in high-income Western countries to 14 percent in Oceania. Rates of inactivity in the Americas were also higher than the global average, at 36 percent. Of concern, disparities remain between gender and age. Physical inactivity is still more common among women globally compared with men, with inactivity rates of 34 percent compared to 29 percent. This was also the case in the Americas, with inactivity rates of women at 41 percent, compared to 30 percent for men. Additionally, people over 60 are less active than other adults, underscoring the importance of promoting physical activity for older adults.

The WHO Global Action Plan on Physical Activity provides policy recommendations for countries and communities to promote physical activity and ensure everyone has more opportunities to be regularly active. Examples of these recommendations include policies that ensure access to walking, cycling and non-motorized transport; that increase physical activity opportunities in schools, workplaces, childcare centers and in healthcare service delivery; and that increase accessibility and availability of community sports and public open spaces.

The WHO states that implementing effective policies to increase levels of physical activity requires a collective effort, coordinated across multiple government departments at all levels, including health, transport, education, employment, sport and recreation, and urban planning. It also demands national and local engagement from nongovernmental organizations, various sectors, stakeholders and disciplines to support the implementation of policies and solutions that are appropriate to a country's cultural and social environment. Priority should be given to policy actions that address disparities in levels of physical activity, promoting, enabling and encouraging physical

activity for all.

Prioritize Your Health

Are you satisfied with your level of physical activity? If yes, you do not need to read any further. However, if your answer is no, let us continue the conversation. Many of us think of gym membership when the conversation of being physically active comes up. The fact is not many of us have that disposable income necessary to sign up at a gym. So what can we do? There are inexpensive methods such as YouTube that provide a host of videos on fitness and wellness that can be accessed. There is also a place for Human Resources departments in engendering a culture of physical activity in the workplace. It would be useful for companies to invest in after work, work out sessions in designated areas where employees can access a trainer or gym equipment at reduced cost or free depending on the company.

Collective efforts based on partnerships between government and non-governmental stakeholders are critical in promoting a culture of physical activity and wellness. Without a doubt this is a public health emergency and urgent action is required. Governments need to find innovative approaches that will target the least active people and to reduce inequalities in access to measures promoting and improving physical activity. Too many of us complain about not finding the time. However, we all need to analyze our unique situations and create a plan that will increase our physical fitness and wellness.

In the words of Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General, we must renew our commitments to increasing levels of physical activity and prioritize bold action, including strengthened policies and increased funding, to reverse this worrying trend.



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(LEFT) EVA MAHAJAN, a Bank of America Student Leader intern, is a senior at Jenks High School. She is a junior class representative. She has an interest in working with nonprofit organizations. PHOTO PROVIDED (RIGHT) SANLUN KHUP, a senior at Union High School, has been selected to participate in the Bank of America Student Leader program. She is vice president of the Student Council. After she completes her education, her plans are to operate a nonprofit. PHOTO PROVIDED



Bank of America Announces 2024 Tulsa Student Leaders

Dr. Jerry Goodwin
The Oklahoma Eagle

Paid Summer Internship Program Connects Tulsa Teens To Career Building Opportunities

Bank of America announced the selection of two Tulsa, Okla. high school seniors as Student Leaders® (#BofAStudentLeaders) program team members. Sanlun Khup and Eva Mahajan, from Union High School and Jenks High School respectively, will join a national team of interns that will enroll in an eight-week paid summer internship providing students with first-hand experience in serving their communities.

Khup and Mahajan will develop leadership and practical workforce skills while working with Iron Gate Tulsa, a local nonprofit and Tulsa's largest stand-alone soup kitchen and grocery pantry. Iron Gate's mission is to feed the hungry and homeless of Tulsa every day.

The 2024 Tulsa Bank of America Student Leaders are the following:

- Sanlun Khup, a rising senior at Union High School, was selected for her vast involvement in local volunteer and leadership organizations. As a camera director and volunteer at her local church, she is committed to delivering messages and experiences to those unable to attend in person. Khup is vice president of the student council and hopes to one day start her own nonprofit.

- Eva Mahajan, a rising senior at Jenks High School, was chosen for her experience with the Youth Philanthropy Initiative and her role as a leader in her school. Eva is the junior class representative and is interested in expanding the nonprofit experience across Tulsa.

"Each year, we get to meet some of the most impressive, motivated students across Tulsa through the Bank of America Student Leaders program. It is rewarding to see them follow their passion for community service and develop real-world leadership and work experience along the way. We look forward to the work Sanlun

and Eva will accomplish this summer with Iron Gate," said Bill Lissau, president of Bank of America Tulsa.

Later this summer, the Student Leaders will travel to Washington D.C., for a week-long, all expenses paid, national leadership summit focused on the power of cross-sector collaboration and community advocacy. At the summit, the students from across the nation will discuss the importance of civic engagement and meet with members of Congress.

"The Bank of America Student Leaders program offers a wonderful way for Iron Gate to engage with our local students while having extra support throughout the summer. We are so excited to welcome Sanlun and Eva and their fresh perspectives to the team!" said Carrie Vesely Henderson, executive director at Iron Gate Tulsa.

Launched in 2004, the Student Leaders program expanded to Tulsa in 2019, and has recognized 300 community-focused juniors and seniors from across the U.S. annually.

The Iron Gate Tulsa program assignment will provide students with the opportunity to work with residents living in poverty and help foster a welcoming place for those in need. Khup and Mahajan will work collaboratively with Iron Gate Tulsa leadership to discover new opportunities to better serve their communities.

Former Educator Presents Children's Book At Program: Magic City Books, Rudisill Library, And Small Wonders Academy To Sponsor Program

Dr. Jerry Goodwin
The Oklahoma Eagle

Charity Barton, author and former Tulsa Public Schools educator, recently announced the publication of her new book, "We Did That! - A Black History Children's Book," which will be the featured book for a children's program at Magic City Books, 221 E. Archer St., on June 22 from 2 p.m. - 4 p.m.

"We Did That! - A Black History Children's Book" takes readers on an immersive journey into the triumphs of Black people, presented in a vibrant and engaging format. Barton, a TEDx Talk presenter and podcast host uses the paperback book to offer puzzle pages, coloring activities, stories with comprehension questions,

and competitive challenges. Barton presents various opportunities for "readers of all ages (to) explore pivotal moments in Black history while actively participating in the stories."

"The event promises to be a fun and educational afternoon filled with activities for kids, including interactive sessions for both children and adults, snacks, a raffle, and more!", Barton shared.

Event sponsors are Magic City Books, Rudisill Regional Library, and Small Wonders Academy.

As a former Los Angeles Unified School District and Tulsa Public Schools educator, Barton was inspired by her students' passion, natural talents, and curiosity. She observed that students who were sure of themselves engaged differently in the classroom compared to those lacking a sense of belonging. She is committed to setting every student up for success by fostering

a strong sense of identity and self-belief through her work.

Barton is a seasoned communicator and advocate for diverse narratives, with three degrees in communications and a passion for storytelling. Her interests span travel, self-care, Black history, media literacy, public speaking, and dreaming big. She hosts a podcast show, "Only in Your Dreams," a platform exploring the boundless possibilities of dreaming big. She has also served as an in-game host for the University of Tulsa Athletics and a live host for TU Giving Day.

The event is open to the public, but registration is requested for materials and supplies to be available. Registration is at <https://www.facebook.com/events/2501660646703065/>

For more information, www.cboriginal.com.

Tulsa Drillers Announces Upcoming Events



A PORTRAIT OF JACKIE ROBINSON, the first Black to play in Major League Baseball in the modern era, overlooks ONEOK Field, home of the Tulsa Drillers, from the wall of a building in the Greenwood Business District. PHOTO PROVIDED

Dr. Jerry Goodwin
The Oklahoma Eagle

Tulsa Drillers, the American Major League Baseball minor league team, is a Double-A affiliate of the Los Angeles Dodgers. Since its opening in 2010, ONEOK Field has been the Drillers' home and is in the historic Greenwood District.

Juneteenth Celebration

The Tulsa Drillers will celebrate Juneteenth on June 15. Its 15th annual celebration of the now national holiday will be a salute to the Negro Baseball League.

Organized by Mary L. Williams of Color Me

True, the program will feature Terri McConnell, an internationally renowned gospel recording artist, who will sing the National Anthem. The event will begin at 6 p.m. at ONEOK Field.

Recently, the Major League Baseball organization officially added players' statistics from the Negro Leagues to its historical records.

MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred said, "We are proud that the official historical record now includes the players of the Negro Leagues. This initiative is focused on ensuring that future generations of fans have access to the statistics and milestones of all those who made the Negro Leagues possible. Their accomplishments on the field will be a gateway to broader learning about this triumph in American history and the path that led to Jackie Robinson's 1947 Dodger debut."

Local Retailer Partners With Tulsa Drillers

Tulsa Drillers has partnered with SCHEELS, a sporting goods retailer scheduled to open in October, to give away tickets and gift items to a contest winner on June 29.

The Double-A affiliate of the Los Angeles Dodgers team is in partnership with SCHEELS by offering four premium tickets to a baseball game on June 29 to a contest winner.

The winner will also receive a YETI Tundra cooler, a \$100 SCHEELS gift card, and will have the opportunity to throw out the first pitch at the game.

To enter the contest, visit scheels.com/press. Registration is open until June 20. Winners will be selected and notified on June 21.

SCHEELS has entered a three-year agreement with the Tulsa Drillers. In the future, the sporting goods store will be introducing new-sponsored mascots, featuring a golfer, softball player, and angler.

"We are so excited to partner with the Tulsa Drillers organization and what better way to kick off our partnership than with an awesome giveaway!" said Tulsa SCHEELS Store Leader, Pete Philippi.

"We love joining and becoming part of the local community ahead of our grand opening. Being able to partner with a community staple and share our passion for not only our community, but sports and recreation, is what we love to do!"

For more information, visit <https://www.milb.com/tulsa> and www.scheels.com/tulsa.

Events

June

June 14

New Rudisill Regional Library Groundbreaking Ceremony is to be held at 901 N. Greenwood Ave., 11 a.m. - 12 p.m. For more information, contact (918) 549-7367.

June 14 - 15

Tulsa Juneteenth Festival will host a five-day event. For more information, visit www.tulsajuneteenth.org.

June 14 - Jun. 28

Young Entrepreneur Summer Program will be sponsored by the Greenwood Cultural Center, 322 N. Greenwood Ave., 8:30a.m. - 4:30 p.m. The program combines literacy, art, and entrepreneurship providing an avenue for children to meet Black authors, explore new books, and create their own book. Students are required to have completed K-5 grade. Breakfast and lunch will be provided. For more information, contact (918) 596-1020 or mburdex@greenwoodculturalcenter.com.

June 14 - Jul. 13

Bristow Train and Depot and Museum, 1 Railroad Pl., will be hosting "Voices and Votes: Democracy in America" exhibition. From the Smithsonian's Museum on Main Street, the exhibition explores the complex history of the nation, including The Revolution, Civil Rights, Suffrage, Elections, Protests, and the Rights and Responsibilities of Citizens. The project is touring the state. For more information, visit www.okhumanities.org or call (918) 367-9335

June 14 - Aug. 14

Oasis Fresh Market, 1725 N. Peoria Ave., is sponsoring free breakfast and lunch for kids and teenagers under 18 years old from Mon.-Fri. during the summer. Breakfast will be served from 9 a.m. - 10 a.m. and lunch will be available from 12 p.m. - 2 p.m. Extracurricular activities will be offered to the kids and teenagers. For more information, call (918) 935-2092 or send an email to storemanager@oasisfreshmarket.net.

June 14 - Oct. 26

The Original Black Wall Street Merchant Marketplace is open in the Greenwood Business District, 122 N. Greenwood Ave., on Saturdays from 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. In addition to vendors, live music, line dancing classes, yoga classes, sound body and soul meditation and sound bath sessions, and free health care screenings will be offered. For more information, visit www.theoriginalbwsmarketplace.com or send an email to hello@tulsacountyliving.com

June 15

Tulsa Drillers will salute Negro Baseball League at ONEOK Field at 6 p.m. Mary L. Williams of Color Me True and the Drillers will celebrate this occasion during its 15th annual Juneteenth celebration. Internationally renowned gospel recording artist Terri McConnell will sing the National Anthem. For more information, visit <https://www.milb.com/tulsa>

June 17

Wayman Tisdale Foundation Ninth Annual Jazzy Strokes Golf Fundraiser will be held at Belmar Golf Course, 1025 E. Indian Hills Road in Norman. For more information, visit www.waymantisdalefoundation.org or (918) 933-8742.

June 18 - 22

Lawton Chautauqua is sponsoring "Lift Every Voice: 60 Years Since the Civil Rights Act" at the Albert Johnson Sr. Conference Center, 91 NE Maine St., Lawton, Okla. Workshops are scheduled for 10 a.m. - 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. - 3 p.m. The evening in-character performances are planned for 7 p.m. All events are free and open to the public. For more information, contact <https://www.lawtonok.gov/?navid=56> or (580) 581-3450.

June 22

Magic City Books, 221 E. Archer St., presents author Charity Barton and her book, "We Did That! A Black History Children's Activity Book," 2 p.m. For more information, contact (918) 602-4452.