

MAYOR LONDON BREED DELIVERS STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

San Francisco, CA – Mayor London N. Breed today joined delivered her annual State of the City Address at Pier 27, where she set forth her vision for San Francisco to be a safer and more welcoming city, a center of excellence and opportunity, and a city that drives the economy and future of the Bay Area and California.

The Mayor highlighted the progress made on her work to aggressively take on challenges San Francisco is facing, encouraging in embracing change, and becoming a city of yes.

Throughout her remarks, the Mayor shared a vision of a San Francisco that has gone through three phases, including a pandemic response, a recovery from the impacts, and currently, a time to find opportunities that will continue to lift up the City and position for a stronger future.

“I’m tired of the people who talk about San Francisco as if our troubles are inevitable and our successes a fluke. Our successes are not a fluke,



The Mayor reinforced her top priorities, including continuing gains on public safety, creating safe and clean streets, addressing homelessness and the fentanyl crisis, and bringing new investment and people to Downtown through housing and universities

and they’re not fleeting,” said Mayor Breed. “They’re the product of years of hard work, collaboration, investment, creativity, and perseverance. They’re the output of thousands of people, in government and out, who believe in service not cynicism.”

The Mayor celebrated those who have worked to support San Francisco through its recent challenges and commended the workers, residents, businesses, and

community partners who are committed to lifting up the City as efforts to move forward continue, despite others’ interest to create distracting and divisive rhetoric.

She presented San Francisco’s critical moment of much needed change to bring opportunity, underscoring the importance of bold leadership and a committed City workforce to work in partnership with community

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SAN FRANCISCO FEBRUARY 2024 CRIME NUMBERS: PROPERTY CRIME AND VIOLENT CRIME REMAIN DOWN

San Francisco, CA – Mayor London N. Breed today released numbers showing the continued reduction in crime in San Francisco in February, the result of increased and coordinated enforcement efforts by local, state, and federal agencies that are partnering to make San Francisco a safer place for residents, workers, businesses, and visitors.

Overall crime numbers remain down in San Francisco in 2024, building on major improvements seen in 2023, when the City saw decade low crime rates.

February 2024 Trends: Crime Remains Down

San Francisco crime trends continued this positive momentum. Compared to February 2023:

- Property crime is down 29%
- Violent crime is down 17%
- The February reductions



SF crime reductions remain broad-based with drops in theft, robberies, assaults, and burglaries – zero homicides recorded in SF in February

in crime are broad-based, with declines in robbery, motor vehicle theft, larceny theft (including car-break-ins), assaults and more. Examples include:

- 37% reduction in larceny theft (includes car break-ins and retail theft)
- 20% reduction in robberies
- 14% reduction in burglaries

No homicides in SF this month
Last Six Months: Both Property Crime and Violent Crime Down

These trends are part of a significant reduction over the last six months in San Francisco. Since September 1, compared to the same time period from the previous year:

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Super Tuesday Victories Sets Stage for Biden Trump Rematch

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior
National Correspondent
@StacyBrownMedia

President Joe Biden and his twice-impeached and four-times indicted predecessor, Donald Trump, emerged victorious on Super Tuesday, wrapping up their respective party nominations and setting up a rematch of the volatile 2020 election.

More than a dozen states participated in primaries and caucuses, constituting the most significant nominating race day, and shifting the focus from the one-by-one march through early-voting states.

Despite signs of potential weaknesses in their election strategies, both Biden and Trump faced challenges. Numerous progressives, reportedly disillusioned with Biden, opted for the “uncommitted” option in places like Minnesota and Michigan, while college-educated suburbanites leaned towards alternatives to Trump. While the 15 states in contention didn’t officially



More than a dozen states participated in primaries and caucuses, constituting the most significant nominating race day, and shifting the focus from the one-by-one march through early-voting states.

provide Trump with enough delegates to secure the GOP nomination for a third consecutive time, he closed the gap, leaving little room for his main rival, Nikki Haley, who suspended her campaign on the morning after. Haley and Biden earned victories in the District of Columbia’s primaries held the Sunday before Super Tuesday.

The latest delegate estimate revealed Trump’s substantial gain of 617 delegates on Tuesday, propelling his overall

count to 893, or 92% of those awarded, putting him on the brink of the 1,215 delegates required for clinching the GOP nomination. In contrast, Haley lagged significantly with only 66 delegates.

“They call it Super Tuesday for a reason,” declared Trump, whom a civil jury twice sanctioned for sexually assaulting a writer and a New York judge found guilty of massive business fraud.

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In Richmond, Tony Thurmond Hosts Oral Exploration of City’s Rich Black History

Antonio Ray Harvey | California Black Media

California State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SSPI) hosted an oral history presentation for Black History Month at DeAnza High School in the Contra Costa County city of Richmond.

In front of a diverse group of public officials, guests and students from five other campuses within the West Contra Costa Unified School District -- attending in person and by ZOOM -- panelists shared their experiences of Black life in the city 16 miles northeast of San Francisco.

“I am a believer that the best history is living history and today you have an opportunity to hear from many who have made history in this community,” Thurmond told the students. “They are incredible leaders who have watched this city and how it has grown, evolved, and changed.



California Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond hosted the Black History Month event at DeAnza High School. Thurmond is a Richmond City Councilmember and a former member of the State Assembly.

They share this with you from a first-person narrative.”

An educator, social worker, and public-school parent, Superintendent Thurmond served on the Richmond City Council, the West Contra Costa Unified School Board, and in the California State Assembly representing District 15 before he was elected SSPI in 2018.

At the Black History Month event, Thurmond introduced

several community elders who have made significant whose contributions have impacted to the city of Richmond.

Those special guests included Nathaniel “Nat” Bates, eight-time Richmond City Council member; Audrey Miles, former West Contra Costa Unified School District Board President, the first

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Asm. Corey Jackson Co-Chairs Joint Hearing on California’s Mental Health Crisis

By Stacy M. Brown

On Feb. 26, Assemblymember Corey Jackson (D-Moreno Valley), a member of the California Legislative Black Caucus (CLBC), co-chaired an informational hearing on the escalating severity of California’s mental health crisis, and the challenges that prevent health care professionals from adequately addressing it.

The discussion was a bicameral session led by the Assembly Select Committee on California’s Mental Health Crisis and the Senate Select Committee on Mental Health and Addiction.

The hearing, titled “What’s Working and What’s Coming: Opportunities in Addressing California’s Mental Health Crisis” was led by Jackson and Sen. Scott Weiner (D-San Francisco), the two committee chairs.

One of the issues the hearing focused on was the shortage of mental health professionals in the state, particularly in inland regions.

Jackson said the Legislature will take a fresh approach to evaluating mental health policies. After implementing them, he says, members will continue to assess the rollout and impact of the policy and make corrections when and if necessary.

“Just because we have made

some historic decisions when it comes to our mental health system, that doesn’t mean it is the end of the discussion. It means that we still have work to do,” said Jackson in his opening statement.

“Our work will not stop until that population is stabilized and they are receiving quality and timely services that meet their individual needs,” Jackson added.

During the two-hour session that included time for public comment, a number of policy experts and medical practitioners, including a paramedic, spoke about “progress on workforce development” and “community engagement.”

Among other issues, the



Asm. Corey Jackson (D-Moreno Valley) chaired a hearing on the severity of California’s mental health crisis. The discussion was led by the Assembly Select Committee on California’s Mental Health Crisis and the Senate Select Committee on Mental Health and Addiction.

testimonies touched on shortcomings of existing mental health programs, resources practitioners need to improve patient treatment, shortages in the

public health workforce and how the race, ethnicity and languages of the current workforce do not match the increasing diversity of California’s population.

S.F. Crime Continued from page 1

Property crime is down 30%

Violent crime is down 4 %

These efforts reflect the work of local law enforcement, including the San Francisco Police Department (SFPD), the San Francisco Sheriff’s Office, alongside their state and federal partners at the California Highway Patrol, California National Guard, and

the Drug Enforcement Agency.

The San Francisco District Attorney and U.S. Attorney’s Office continue to aggressively prosecute cases, including drug crimes.

This data is publicly available on SFPD’s Crime Data Dashboard.

In 2023, overall crime was at its lowest point in the last ten years, other than in 2020 when

San Francisco and the region was mostly shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Recent examples of enforcement activities include:

SFDA secured conviction for drug dealing in the Tenderloin (2/9/24)

SFPD Plainclothes operations lead to robbery arrests (2/10/24)

SFPD Night operations

lead to 23 arrests at drug markets (2/12/24)

SFDA Secures conviction for commercial burglary, vandalism, attempted theft (2/14/24)

“We remain focused on delivering a clean and safe city for our residents, businesses, and visitors,” said Mayor London Breed. “This is the result of the work of

our officers, sheriff deputies, and prosecutors, as well as the strong partnerships we’ve built with state and federal law enforcement. But we aren’t resting on this progress. We are continuing to work, to add more tools for investigations, to grow police staffing, and to invest in communities so that we have a stronger, more resilient City.”

Study Reveals Officer-Involved Killings of Unarmed Black Individuals Linked to Adverse Sleep Outcomes in Black Community

By Stacy M. Brown

NNPA Newswire Senior

National Correspondent

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A comprehensive national study has brought to light distressing connections between officer-involved killings of unarmed Black individuals and adverse sleep outcomes within the African American community. The research was published in the journal JAMA Internal Medicine and utilized a nationally representative repeated cross-sectional design. It delved into the repercussions of structural racism on sleep health outcomes following incidents of police violence.

The central inquiry of the study focused on whether

officer-involved killings of unarmed Black individuals are associated with adverse sleep health outcomes in the community. Utilizing a difference-in-differences design, researchers examined changes in sleep duration among non-Hispanic Black individuals before and after exposure to such incidents.

“There are lots of reasons why Black Americans’ sleep — at least in terms of duration as well as quality — is worse than for potentially other groups,” said lead study author and associate professor of medical ethics and health policy at the University of Pennsylvania, Dr. Atheendar Venkataramani.

“Part of it has to do with some economic factors, the types of jobs people are in,

the environments people are living in — with regards to the noise or crime or things that are around — and the experience of discrimination can also create stress, which is bad for sleep.”

Data from the US Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS) and the American Time Use Survey (ATUS) were analyzed, covering 2013, 2014, 2016, and 2018 for BRFSS and 2013-2019 for ATUS. The study included responses from 181,865 Black and 1,799,757 white participants in the BRFSS and 9,858 Black and 46,532 white participants in the ATUS.

The findings revealed a stark reality: non-Hispanic Black individuals were more

likely than their non-Hispanic White counterparts to report short sleep (less than 7 hours) or very short sleep (less than 6 hours) following an officer-involved killing of an unarmed Black person in their area of residence. The trend persisted after nationally prominent incidents, irrespective of location within the United States.

The study suggests a concerning association between exposure to officer-involved killings and racial disparities in sleep health. It further posits that these sleep disparities may play a mediating role in broader health outcomes linked to structural racism.

The study underscored the pervasive impact of structural



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racism on racial disparities in sleep health outcomes. The implications for public health are significant, with study authors emphasizing the need for a deeper understanding of the systemic issues contributing to these outcomes and the development of targeted interventions to

address the root causes. Medical professionals have urged policymakers, healthcare professionals, and communities to collaborate in addressing the underlying issues to foster a society where everyone can enjoy equal access to health and well-being.

Concluding Black History Month, California Black Caucus Honors “Unsung Heroes”

By Stacy M. Brown

Losing out a month of Black History Month events, the California Legislative Black Caucus (CLBC) honored 12 Californians with its “Unsung Hero” award during a ceremony held at the State Capitol on Feb. 26.

The awards recognize individuals who have made significant contributions to civic life within each CLBC member’s district.

Assemblymember Reggie Jones-Sawyer (D-Los Angeles) presided over the ceremony and presented a resolution on the Assembly floor celebrating the extraordinary work the award recipients are doing in their respective communities.

“The CLBC created the Unsung Hero Awards in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. – to celebrate those who embody his philosophy and ideas,” said Jones-Sawyer, a member of CLBC. “We continue this tradition with this distinguished

group of individuals.”

This list of honorees included city of Fairfield librarian Mychael Threats (Assemblymember Lori Wilson, D-Suisun City), Treehouse’s CEO and founder of Prophet Walker (Assemblymember Isaac Bryan, D- Ladera Heights), Young and Prosper Foundation’s Chris Jones (Assemblymember Akilah Weber, D-La Mesa), Oakland African American Chamber of Commerce’s President Cathy Adams (Assemblymember

Mia Bonta, D-Alameda), and Los Angeles Unified

School District’s Government Affairs advisor Carolyn Fowler (Assemblymember Tina McKinnor, D-Inglewood).

Awards were also given to Brother 2 Brother At-risk Mentoring and Gang Prevention’s co-founder Mervin Brookins (Assemblymember Kevin McCarty, D-Sacramento), KBLA Radio 1580 talk show Host Dominique DiPrima (Reggie Jones Sawyer, D-Los

Angeles)), California Justice and member of the California Supreme Court Leondra R. Kruger (Assemblymember Chris Holden, D-Pasadena), Vice Chair of Compton Unified School District’s Board of Education Dr. Ayanna Davis (Assemblymember Mike Gipson, D-Carson), and Moreno Valley youth advocate Kymberly Taylor (Assemblymember Corey Jackson, D-Moreno Valley).

On the Senate side, Dr. Thomas Parham, the 11th President of California State

University Dominguez Hills, was honored (Sen. Steven Bradford, D-Inglewood). His wife Davida Parham accepted the award on his behalf. Fran Jemmott, founder of California Black Women's Health Project and the Jemmott Rollins Group, was escorted to the Assembly floor for her award by Assemblymember Bryan, who stood in for Sen. Lola Smallwood-Cuevas (D-Los Angeles).

New California Bill Responds to SCOTUS Affirmative Action Decision

By Stacy M. Brown

Last year, when the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) banned the consideration of race in college admissions, some

members of the California Legislative Black Caucus (CLBC) and other lawmakers condemned that decision.

Last week, Assemblymember Phil Ting (D-San Francisco) introduced a bill, Assembly Bill (AB) 1780, that he

says is a policy response to the SCOTUS’s ban on Affirmative Action.

AB 1780 aims to prohibit private colleges and universities in the state from granting preferential treatment to applicants who are related to donors

or alumni, if the institution receives CalGrant funding.

“The practice is commonly known as ‘legacy admissions’ heavily tips the scales towards someone related to a donor or alumni of the university or college. The legislation aims to level the playing

field by giving all students a fairer shot when applying to schools,” read a press release from Ting’s office.

“We want to make sure that every student applying to the most elite schools in our state has an opportunity and that it's fair and equitable,” said Ting

at a Sacramento rally where he announced the legislation.

Ting says California’s state-funded institutions do not consider income provide preferential treatment to children or relatives of donors and alumni.

Justice Department Finds Unconstitutional Jailing Practices in Lexington, Mississippi Police Department

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior
National Correspondent

The U.S. Department of Justice has announced that the Lexington Police Department in Mississippi, situated in one of the nation’s poorest counties, has unconstitutionally incarcerated individuals for unpaid fines. The revelation follows an ongoing investigation into alleged civil rights violations by the police in Lexington, initiated by the Justice Department in November.

In a letter addressed to Katherine Barrett Riley, the attorney for the city of Lexington, Federal prosecutors asserted that the police department imprisoned people for outstanding fines without determining their financial means, violating the Fourteenth Amendment. The letter stated, “Thus far in our investigation, which is continuing, we have reviewed

hundreds of case files, watched hours of body-worn camera footage, and interviewed dozens of witnesses, including Lexington residents and LPD leadership, officers, and staff.”

The investigation raises significant concerns about the city and the police department’s conduct, leading to incarceration for nonpayment of fines without assessing individuals’ financial capabilities, violating the Fourteenth Amendment. Prosecutors cited recent guidance from the Department of Justice, emphasizing that individuals cannot be incarcerated solely due to their inability to pay fines or fees.

Todd W. Gee, U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Mississippi, expressed grave concern over the police conduct. “One-third of Lexington’s residents live below the poverty line. The burden of unjust fines and fees undermines the goals of rehabilitation and erodes the community’s trust in the

justice system,” Gee remarked.

Kristen Clarke, the Department of Justice’s assistant attorney general for civil rights, urged an end to a “two-tiered system of justice” based on income. She emphasized the urgency of addressing the issues uncovered in Mississippi and expressed readiness to collaborate with officials to end harmful practices.

Prosecutors argued that Lexington’s police violated the constitutional prohibition on wealth-based detention by requiring arrested individuals to pay outstanding fines before release and by issuing and executing warrants for unpaid fines. Lexington, with an 86% Black population and a poverty rate nearing 30%, has a storied place in civil rights history, having elected the first Black man to the Mississippi Legislature in 1967.

The broader investigation into the Lexington Police Department encompasses allegations of excessive force, discriminatory policing, and



In a letter addressed to Katherine Barrett Riley, the attorney for the city of Lexington, Federal prosecutors asserted that the police department imprisoned people for outstanding fines without determining their financial means, violating the Fourteenth Amendment.

First Amendment violations. Sam Dobbins, the city’s former police chief, was terminated after an audio recording surfaced, revealing his use of racial slurs, and boasting about on-duty killings. Justice Department officials met with city leaders last week, and local officials

pledged to collaborate with the Justice Department to reform procedures.

“As our investigation proceeds, we ask the City and LPD promptly to assess the serious concerns we identify in this letter and advise us how they intend to remedy them expeditiously,”

Justice Department officials concluded in the letter. “We will continue to examine whether there is a pattern or practice of conduct by law enforcement officers that deprives people of their rights related to the collection and enforcement of fines and fees in violation of federal law.”

Super Tuesday Continued from page 1

“This is a big one,” continued Trump, who was ordered to pay nearly \$500 million for his New York crimes and \$90 million for the sexual assault guilty finding. “And they tell me, the pundits and otherwise, that there’s never been one like this.”

Despite facing challenging headlines and low approval ratings, Biden maintained his dominance on Super Tuesday, securing approximately 80% of the vote, while Trump struggled to reach that threshold. Although Haley posed a more formidable challenge, Biden retained solid support from his party’s rank-and-file.

Looking ahead to the general election in November, Trump faces potential headwinds like those he encounters now, including four criminal trials that could potentially land him an 800-year prison sentence. Conversely, Biden has room to win over intra-party detractors, especially those critical of his handling of Israel’s conflict in Gaza, where the

administration has increased its call for a ceasefire.

Meanwhile, in California, the battle for the U.S. Senate seat left vacant after Dianne Feinstein’s death intensified. Rep. Adam Schiff will face former baseball star Steve Garvey, a Republican and Trump supporter. Garvey secured a spot in the top

two alongside Democrat Schiff, outpacing Democratic Reps. Barbara Lee and Katie Porter. Sen. Laphonza Butler, appointed after Feinstein’s demise, had earlier pledged not to run for the seat in 2024.

“We have a clear path to victory,” Biden’s campaign said in a memo circulated late Tuesday. “A significant

share of moderate and Haley voters across the country are saying that Trump cannot count on their votes in a general election. The November election will be a very close general election contest like all modern presidential elections are... but, we have a clear path to victory.”

The Sun-Reporter

EDITORIAL

We wish to plead our own cause.
Too long have others spoken for us.

Freedom's Journal, March 16, 1827.

Whales Are Dying and the Fossil Fuel Industry is Lying

By Ben Jealous

Whoever would have thought fossil fuel industry front groups would make whales and other marine species a cultural wedge issue? However, thanks to a deception campaign targeting wind energy that’s exactly where we find ourselves.

The Marine Mammal Stranding Center in New Jersey rescues and rehabilitates live beached animals and performs necropsies on the remains of dead ones to pinpoint their causes of death. Sheila Dean, one of the group’s founders, describes how the rampant misinformation connecting whale deaths to sonar used in surveying the seafloor for

offshore wind farms is making her job more difficult. And it is distracting people from what is really killing the whales: vessel strikes, climate change, plastic pollution, and entanglement in fishing gear and marine debris.

“I’ve been doing this for 47 years. We had a lot of whale deaths in 2023 but there have been years we’ve had more. In 2013 we had a lot of whales and dolphins washing up. Our necropsy data show a wide variety of possible causes of death, including blunt force trauma from suspected vessel strikes. If the sonar from mapping was killing marine life, our shores likely would have been littered with hundreds, if not thousands of dead and dying marine mammals.”

The frenzy that has been

whipped up against offshore wind energy has thrust Dean’s organization into the storm. Anti-wind activists and the people they have duped are demanding close examination of whale’s ears to show signs of damage from sonar. But most beached whale remains are in an advanced state of decomposition, making that impossible.

Where there have been beached animals that have not been too decomposed, mostly dolphins, the MMSC and its partners have gone the extra mile and incurred great cost for CT scans and lab analysis. The results? No evidence of auditory trauma.

Scientists have been clear. Disruptions in the whales’ feeding patterns, water salinity, and currents are likely the result of climate change.

Dean points out the whales are following their food source, which is what brings them into the shipping lanes.

Finding no evidence that sonar mapping for offshore wind farms is connected to the whale deaths, groups like Dean’s are being targeted as if they are part of some cover up fueled by the wind industry. Dean is clear that her organization takes no money from the wind industry.

Meanwhile, the real problems behind the increase in whale deaths go unaddressed. And with climate change perhaps the largest overriding problem, and our transition away from fossil fuels to clean energy the solution... well, it is not hard to see how this is by design.

Lies and deceit have always been the stock-in-trade of the fossil fuel industry’s public relations and lobbying efforts. Back in 2009 when I was national president of the NAACP, the lobbying firm for a major coal industry group faked a letter to Congress from our Albemarle-Charlottesville chapter in Virginia to stop a climate bill. The letter even used NAACP letterhead and declared opposition to the American Clean Energy and Security Act, a bill we actually supported!

So let us follow the money behind the rising tide of local front groups opposing offshore wind development. The organizing efforts and litigation come from organizations with benign names like the

American Coalition



Ben Jealous

for Ocean Protection and Save Right Whales.

Those organizations link back to dark money groups like the Texas Public Policy Foundation, the Caesar Rodney Institute, and the Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow. And those groups are funded by fossil fuel interests like ExxonMobil and the Charles Koch Foundation. Major players include operatives who have been on the forefront of climate denial for years and involved in previous political smear jobs like the Swiftboat Veterans for Truth.

These groups opposing wind energy are not just screaming their lies into the wind. They are shifting public opinion. A Monmouth poll shows public support for New Jersey’s offshore wind projects has dropped from 76 percent to 54 percent in the wake of the disinformation campaign around whale deaths.

The Northeast as a region has been among the most forward-thinking when it comes to the use and development of

renewable energy. If these groups are successful in blocking the development of renewable energy adoption and production in the Northeast, it does not bode well for the rest of the country. And the fossil fuel industry knows it.

We are already seeing Big Oil and Gas target solar with blatant misinformation targeted at communities across the country. A recent NPR report detailed how one group connected to polluters and climate deniers, the so-called Citizens for Responsible Solar, “has helped local groups fighting solar projects in at least 10 states including Ohio, Kentucky and Pennsylvania.”

So if it has not already, misleading campaigns of the fossil fuel industry could be coming to a town near you. Remember if you see a group opposing clean energy, it is usually a good idea to follow the money behind the message.

Ben Jealous is the Executive Director of the Sierra Club and a Professor of Practice at the University of Pennsylvania.

JPMorgan Chase Celebrates 5 Years of Advancing Black Pathways

By Micha Green | The Washington Informer

In a celebration that included a pre-reception, delectable three-course dinner and powerful panels, JPMorgan Chase commemorated five years of its Advancing Black Pathways (ABP) initiative on Feb. 22. Hosted at the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC), the event highlighted ABP’s many efforts toward empowering Black communities, and offered an opportunity to celebrate Black brilliance, resilience and excellence.

“I count it a privilege to stand before you during Black History Month in this beautiful, Black museum, dedicated to uplifting the rich history of Black people marked by struggle, resilience and triumph. And it is an honor to celebrate Advancing Black Pathways’ fifth anniversary, reflective of our sincere

and firm commitment to be a part of the triumphs and advancement of Black people,” she said Alicia Wilson, managing director of JPMorgan Chase’s Regional Philanthropy for North America.

In alignment with JPMorgan Chase’s overall diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) strategic framework, ABP works to strengthen the economic foundation of Black communities throughout the nation and world. Since February 2019, through funding, educational programming, training and more, the initiative has worked to recruit and retain diverse talent, develop leaders, support Black-owned businesses and improve the financial health of Black communities globally.

“Across the firm, we live by the belief that the strength of our business is linked to the vitality of the communities we serve, and so we show up,” explained Wilson, who said she’s traveled across the nation bearing

witness to the JPMorgan’s Chase’s philanthropic and community efforts. “We show up as listeners and learners, eager to hear from local residents, community advocates and policymakers about how we can help solve local challenges.”

Advancing Black Pathways bolsters people with tools and opportunities to be: financially literate, healthy and wealthy; to grow in business and entrepreneurship; support education opportunities and offer career and skills development; and increase community relationships through constructive partnerships with organizations that can drive DEI efforts worldwide.

“Through our various initiatives and commitments, we have created opportunities, promoted economic empowerment, and broken down barriers for Black individuals and businesses,” said Byna Elliott, global head of Advancing Black Pathways.



Advancing Black Pathways bolsters people with tools and opportunities to be: financially literate, healthy and wealthy; to grow in business and entrepreneurship; support education opportunities and offer career and skills development; and increase community relationships through constructive partnerships with organizations that can drive DEI efforts worldwide.

Over the past five years, ABP has been quite busy.


According to an overview released by JPMorgan Chase, ABP has supported over 16,000 Black-owned businesses and entrepreneurs, offering boot camps and coaching, and creating more economic opportunities in African American communities.

Further, ABP has been committed to advancing

educational and career opportunities for Black students and supporting historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs).

In addition to the initiative’s \$30 million commitment to HBCUs, JPMorgan Chase is the first financial institution to partner with the National Pan-Hellenic Council and all nine historically Black Greek letter organizations, also known as the “Divine Nine.”

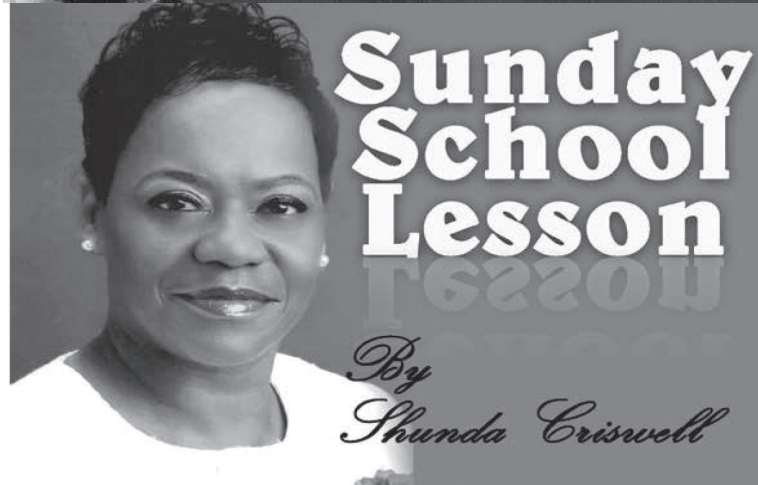
“Sustainability is the key word for all of us. Endowments represent sustainability. So improving, increasing, enhancing our endowments, that’s what we’re focused on a lot,” explained Dr. Glenda Glover, president of Tennessee State University and former international president of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. “Making sure students are properly educated, it takes funding to do that.”



THE SUN-REPORTER

RELIGIOUS SECTION

THE BAY AREA'S CHURCH NEWS & ACTIVITIES



Sunday School Lesson

By Shunda Criswell

Jesus' Claim Deity

Lesson Text: John 8:31-38, 48-56, 58-59

Place: Jerusalem

Time: 29 A.D.

Jesus Himself is the truth that sets us free. He is the source of truth, the perfect standard of what is right. He frees us from continued bondage to sin, from self-deception, and from deception by Satan. He shows us clearly the way to eternal life with God. Thus, Jesus does not give us freedom to do what we want, but freedom to follow God.

As we seek to serve God, Jesus' perfect truth frees us to be all God means. In John 8:34, 35, sin has a way of enslaving us, controlling us, dominating us, and dictating our actions. Jesus can free you from this slavery that keeps you from becoming the person God created you to be. If sin is restraining, mastering, or enslaving you, Jesus can break its power over your life. When Jesus says those who obey won't die, he is talking about spiritual death, not physical death. Even physical death,

however, will eventually be overcome. Those who follow Christ will be raised to live eternally with him. Also, in John 8:56, God told Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation, that through him all nations would be blessed (Genesis 12:1-7; 15:1-21). Abraham had been able to see this through the eyes of faith. Jesus, a descendant of Abraham, blessed all people through his death, resurrection, and offer of salvation. (Life Application Study Bible). This is one of the most powerful statements uttered by Jesus. When he said that he existed before Abraham was born, he undeniably proclaimed his divinity. Not only did Jesus say that he existed before Abraham; he also applied God's holy name (I Am—Exodus 3:14) to himself. This claim demands a response. It cannot be ignored. The Jewish leaders tried to stone Jesus for blasphemy because he claimed equality with God. But Jesus is God. How have you responded to Jesus, the Son of God? In John 8:59, In accordance with the law given in Leviticus 24:16, the religious leaders were ready to stone Jesus for claiming to be God. They

well understood what Jesus was claiming, and because they didn't believe he was God, they charged him with blasphemy. Ironically, they were really the blasphemers, cursing and attacking the very God they claimed to serve! ((Life Application Study Bible). Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?— The "say we not well" refers to John 7:20. "A Samaritan" means more than "no Israelite at all"; it means one who pretended but had no manner of claim to the title—retorting perhaps, this denial of their true descent from Abraham. (A Commentary: Critical, Experimental, and Practical on the Old and New Testaments). Jesus answered, I have not a devil—What calm dignity is here! Verily, "when reviled, He reviled not again" (1Peter 2:23). Compare Paul (Ac 26:25), "I am not mad," He adds not, "Nor am I a Samaritan," that He might not even seem to partake of their contempt for a race that had already welcomed Him as the Christ and began to be blessed by Him. The scripture continues with the declaration, "seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh—that is,

evidently, "that seeketh My glory"; requiring "all men to honor the Son even as they honor the Father"; judicially treating him "who honoreth not the Son as honoring not the Father that hath sent Him" (read John 5:23. (A Commentary: Critical, Experimental, and Practical on the Old and New Testaments). If He honored Himself (see verse 50), His glory would have no value. The Father... is the One who will do the work of vindication. Yet the hostile unbelievers claimed a relationship to God. It is obvious that they were in error. Jesus' Father is God; their father was Satan. In the deepest intimacy Jesus has a relationship and union with God but His enemies did not. Jesus knows the Father, but they did not know "to come to know by experience or observation") Him. For Him to deny this would be to lie just as they were lying. Jesus did know the Father and obey Him (keep His Word, see vs. 52). The unbelieving Jews were not Abraham's descendants spiritually (John 8:39). But here when Jesus referred to your father Abraham, He meant they were physically related to him.

Abraham rejoiced to see My day, that is, the messianic salvation which God promised ("all peoples on earth will be blessed through you"; see Genesis 12:3). Abraham by faith was granted a son Isaac, through whom the Seed (Christ) would come. How much of the messianic times God revealed to His friend Abraham is unknown. But it is clear that he knew of the coming salvation, and he rejoiced in knowing about it and expecting it. Finally, in John 8:58, Jesus' deity is revealed. Jesus affirmed His superiority over the prophets and Abraham. Abraham came into being; but when he was born, Jesus was already existing. I Am is a title of Deity (please read Exodus 3:14; Isaiah 41:4, also Isaiah 43:11-13 and John 8:28). The Jews' response in John 8:59 showed they understood it that way. Jesus, because of His equality with God (read Philippi2:6 and Colossians 2:9), existed from all eternity (John 1:1). (The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty). Saint Be Blessed!!!

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Mayor Breed
Continued from page 1

and business partners to find creative and commonsense solutions that will deliver a better San Francisco for all.

Mayor Breed pointed to recent progress in reducing crime, bringing people indoors and off City streets, improving neighborhood vibrancy, and a growing economy as reasons for residents to take pride and believe in not just what San Francisco can accomplish, but its future.

The Mayor highlighted progress made to deal with public safety challenges, specifically in the Tenderloin and South of Market areas, to deter open-air drug sales and use, and other crime impacting the City’s recovery progress. Last year, San Francisco saw the lowest crime rates in the last decade, aside from 2020 when the City shutdown because of the pandemic. She attributed this to the collaboration with local, state and federal levels.

“To shut down drug markets in the Tenderloin and South of Market, we coordinated every

public safety agency you can name – local, state, and federal,” said Mayor Breed. “I appealed to Governor Newsom, and he stepped up by sending the California Highway Patrol and National Guard investigators. President Biden and Speaker Emerita Pelosi delivered the US Attorney and Drug Enforcement Agency to interrupt the sale and trafficking of fentanyl. And these efforts have paid off.”

The Mayor doubled down on citywide efforts to address homelessness in San Francisco. Since 2018 under the Mayor’s direction, the City has worked and invested aggressively to help more than 15,000 unhoused individuals exit homelessness. In the last year alone, the City has helped more than 1,500 people into shelter from encampments, and the number of tents on City streets is down 37% in the last six months, which is at the lowest levels since before 2018.

“I want to be clear about something, because I know some people don’t necessarily feel that homelessness has improved, but it has,” said Mayor Breed. “The number of people living on the street

is down considerably from its pandemic peak. We were the only county in the Bay Area to see unsheltered homelessness go down in the last Point-in-Time count cycle. Our encampment teams are bringing people indoors and bringing down the tents, despite attempts by the courts, and by some advocates, to obstruct our efforts.”

In 2022 and 2023, the City worked with trade groups, business owners, builders, neighbors, and City departments to create the Mayor’s Roadmap to San Francisco’s Future, a comprehensive plan for a dynamic, resilient Downtown with residents, nightlife, and businesses. In just the first year of the Mayor’s Roadmap, the City focused on stabilization of the City’s retail footprint by filling storefronts through programs such as Vacant to Vibrant, creating attractions, and delivering tax incentives.

The Mayor spoke of her vision for a 24/7 Downtown offering vibrant, mixed-use walkable neighborhood offerings including transit, restaurants and bars, and nightlife venues. Key to that is continuing to support

innovative industries that will continue to drive the economy, like Artificial Intelligence, which is projected to add 12 million square feet of office in San Francisco by 2030. But office alone is not the only answer to the future of Downtown.

The Mayor also announced her goal of 30 by 30 -- bringing 30,000 new residents and students to Downtown by 2030. To accomplish this, the City will create more housing, including through conversions, and bring in universities to create a more dynamic Downtown that serves as a Center of Excellence.

“We are working with thought leaders, business folks, and educational institutions to make Downtown a hub, a Center of Excellence,” said Mayor Breed. “We’ve invited the University of California and Historically Black Colleges and Universities to join us, and some are coming as early as this summer. We’re working with other universities, and our existing anchors, UC Law, USF and San Francisco State University. Imagine that! Students, professors, researchers, and employees

walking from dorm room to classroom, from startup to conference space,

from the Ferry Building to City Hall. Cross-pollinating ideas, cross-pollinating companies. We will be leading the way in AI, climate tech and biotech and things we haven’t even yet imagined. Housing, students, innovation – that’s our future!”

During the State of the City Address, Mayor Breed spoke of the San Francisco’s need for more housing, a critical component to meeting the State’s Housing Element mandate, which requires San Francisco to build 82,000 new homes over the next eight years. The Mayor reemphasized successful projects including last year’s groundbreaking for the Potrero Power Station and re-launching a new phase of housing on Treasure Island.

The Mayor outlined other priorities for 2024, to include building on the momentum of Muni’s transit recovery and reliability, early childcare and education, San Francisco’s progress of reaching a goal of zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2040, and delivering basic City services for San

Franciscans more equitably, quickly, and efficiently.

Mayor Breed also heralded the voters support from Tuesday’s election and rejected the notion that San Francisco has abandoned its values.

“Building homes and adding treatment beds is progressive,” said Mayor Breed. “Wanting good public education and an effective police force—valuing the safety of our seniors in Chinatown and the Bayview, our immigrant and working families in the Tenderloin—is progressive. We are a progressive, diverse city—living together, celebrating each other: LGBTQ, AAPI, Black, Latino, Palestinian and Jewish. That has not changed and it will not change.

Mayor Breed gave her address at the Pier 27 Cruise Terminal, a location on the waterfront of San Francisco that welcomes visitors from all over the world. This is her sixth annual address. The previous events have been held at the LGBT National Center for the Arts, San Francisco City Hall, Moscone Center, Mission Rock, and Pier 70.

Tony Thurmond
Continued from page 1

Black woman elected to that role; and Myrtle Braxton, former Chair of the Richmond Parks and Recreation Commission and former member of the National Parks and Recreation Commission.

John Marquez, Contra Costa College board member and former Richmond City Council member for 18 years; and Ahmad Anderson – son of former Richmond Mayor Irma Anderson and member of the Cal Berkeley Football Hall of Fame –were also panelists who spoke during the 90-minute discussion that ended with a question-and-answer segment.

A brief video tribute was

paid to Irma Anderson was shown during the presentation. Anderson was the first Black woman elected as City Council member and Mayor of Richmond. At the time of her election, she was the first Black woman to be elected to a major California city. Mrs. Anderson passed away on Jan. 24 at the age of 93.

“Mayor Anderson and I were neighbors. We lived three doors away from each other,” Braxton said. “Ahmad, her son, and my children grew up together. I knew Mayor Anderson personally and I knew how community-oriented she was in the city of Richmond and our neighborhood. I was so proud of her because she would

listen to you and do whatever she could to help you.”

Incorporated on Aug. 7, 1905, and instituted as a charter city on March 24, 1909, the city of Richmond had a population of 115,677 residents in 2021, according to the City of Richmond Community Development Department. The Black or African American community makes up 19.1% of the city’s population. The largest ethnic population in Richmond is Hispanic or Latinos at 44.6%, followed by Whites at 20.1% and Asians at 14.4%.

Between 1940 and 1945, tens of thousands of workers from all over the country moved to Richmond to support shipyard industries during

World War II. Nat Bates told the students he was part of that “great migration westward” as many African Americans from the Deep South states were seeking opportunities.

Many Black Southerners ended up in the Bay Area cities of Oakland, Marin City, San Francisco, Berkeley, San Pablo, Pinole, and Vallejo. Bates’s final destination was Richmond.

“I arrived in California right after the bombing of Pearl Harbor (Dec. 7, 1945) as many of us from the south did,” Bates said. “And we came to California primarily for the job opportunities. It was the shipyards, and we were preparing the fight for the military. There was a

shortage of personnel in the city of Richmond to build ships because most of the young men were inducted into the military.”

As Richmond’s population expanded after World War II, members of the Black community began to get involved with city politics, open businesses such as the Hilltop Mall, and create housing, Bates said.

“The Hilltop shopping center was an undertaking because it created a lot of jobs and created a significant (amount) of revenue,” Bates added.

The City of Richmond has had 21 Black elected officials between 1961 and 2023. The panel encouraged the students

to learn more about Black history, and the background of Richmond, and get involved in government at the city, county, state, and federal levels.

Bates said he has had a relationship with 11 U.S. presidents – Republicans and Democrats – during his time in Richmond politics, which started in 1967.

“It’s not a racial thing. There are a lot of people willing to help you and assist you,” Bates told the students. “So, open your hearts, open the doors, and some of you may well be a U.S. Senator, a governor, a professor, or maybe the President of the United States.”

Whoopi Goldberg Pioneering Change with Blkfam, a Groundbreaking, Black-Focused Streaming Platform

By Stacy M. Brown, NNPA

Newswire Senior Correspondent

@StacyBrownMedia

Television history, marred by a narrow portrayal of non-white characters, witnessed a transformative journey from caricatures and racist depictions to the evolution of influential, Black-centered shows like the influential and groundbreaking “The Cosby Show,” in the 1980s, “A Different World,” “Living Single,” in the 1990s, and later “Black-ish.” The television landscape shifted

as those shows emerged, challenging stereotypes, and showcasing diverse Black experiences.

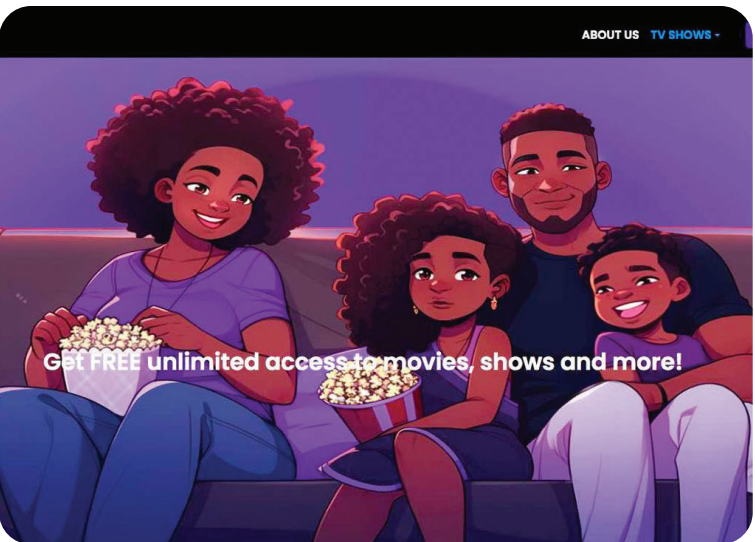
Today, streaming is the biggest game in Hollywood and Academy Award®-winning actress and co-host of “The View,” Whoopi Goldberg, is stepping into this legacy, aiming to redefine the narrative of Black representation in family-friendly streaming by investing in Blkfam. The outlet is already being hailed as the first-ever Black-

owned and Black-focused family streaming platform. Launched on February 26 across multiple platforms, Blkfam could be a significant stride toward addressing the underrepresentation of Black families in the streaming market.

At its inception, Blkfam boasted a content library featuring over 20 syndicated series, encompassing over 1,000 hours of animation titles and dozens of animated characters of color with diverse gender experiences.

The platform also offers hundreds of hours of original music-driven content, signaling a commitment to fostering an authentic and inclusive narrative.

Goldberg, an equity investor in Blkfam, sits at the forefront of the groundbreaking initiative alongside Larry Adams, a digital media veteran and CEO of the platform. Goldberg, known for her roles in iconic films like “The Color Purple” and “Sister Act,” has been a vocal advocate for positive representation. “I



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like the idea of being part of something that will grow,” Goldberg declared. “As I get older, I say, ‘Wow, things will outlast me.’ This is one of the things I hope outlasts

me — I could be the Black woman Walt Disney!”

Blkfam will stream over various platforms, including iOS, Android, and Amazon Prime Video Channels.

VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS JOINS ANNUAL SELMA BRIDGE CROSSING JUBILEE, HONORS LEGACY OF BLOODY SUNDAY

By Stacy M. Brown

To help commemorate the 59th anniversary of Bloody Sunday, Vice President Kamala Harris stood alongside activists and community leaders on the iconic Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, where she used the occasion to mark history and to call for a ceasefire in the Middle East.

“People in Gaza are starving. The conditions are inhumane, and our common humanity compels us to act,” the vice president declared to cheers. “The Israeli government must do more to significantly increase the flow of aid. No excuses.” On the anniversary of Bloody Sunday, Israel pulled out of ceasefire discussions because the nation’s leaders said Hamas would not release the names of living hostages.

“Hamas claims it wants a ceasefire. Well, there is a deal on the table,” Harris asserted. “And as we have said, Hamas needs to agree to that deal. “Let’s get a

ceasefire. Let’s reunite the hostages with their families. And let’s provide immediate relief to the people of Gaza.”

She then turned her attention to the brutal attack on peaceful protesters who were calling for voting rights on March 7, 1965, noting it as a memorable turning point in the Civil Rights Movement. “The challenges we currently face are not unlike the challenges faced by those 600 brave souls 59 years ago,” she said.

Fifty-nine years ago, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and other civil rights leaders led a nonviolent march from Selma to Montgomery to demand equal voting rights for African Americans. However, as the marchers approached the Edmund Pettus Bridge, Alabama state troopers brandishing billy clubs and tear gas violently disrupted their peaceful procession.

Per the National Archives: “With Hosea Williams of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) leading the demonstration and John Lewis, Chairman of the Student Nonviolent

Coordinating Committee (SNCC), at his side, the marchers were stopped as they were leaving Selma, at the end of the Edmund Pettus Bridge, by some 150 Alabama state troopers, sheriff’s deputies, and possemen, who ordered the demonstrators to disperse.

“One minute and five seconds after a two-minute warning was announced, the troops advanced, wielding clubs, bullwhips, and tear gas. John Lewis, who suffered a skull fracture, was one of fifty-eight people treated for injuries at the local hospital. Less than one week later, Lewis recounted the attack on the marchers during a federal hearing at which the demonstrators sought protection for a full-scale march to Montgomery.

The televised brutality shocked the nation and propelled the urgent need for federal intervention. Later that year, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act into law, a significant legislative milestone in the ongoing fight for equal access to the ballot.

The annual Selma Bridge Crossing Jubilee, spanning several days and culminating on Sunday, served as both a remembrance of the sacrifices made on Bloody Sunday and a call to action for contemporary civil rights challenges. Sunday’s anniversary march, a central event in the jubilee, reenacted the steps of those who faced violence in their pursuit of justice and equality.

During a previous visit to Selma, Harris described the Edmund Pettus Bridge as “hallowed ground,” and emphasized the significance of remembering the sacrifices made by those who fought for the fundamental right to vote.

The White House noted that Harris’s speech would honor the civil rights movement’s legacy and address the contemporary challenges in the ongoing quest for justice. Harris said she wanted to encourage Americans to remain steadfast in defending their fundamental freedoms, particularly in the face of current threats to voting rights nationwide.

The Selma Bridge Crossing



Fifty-nine years ago, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and other civil rights leaders led a nonviolent march from Selma to Montgomery to demand equal voting rights for African Americans.

Jubilee also featured a pre-march public conversation, where National Newspaper Publishers Association President and CEO Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr. and the Rev. Mark Thompson shared insights into the historical struggles of the 1960s. Chavis, a member of the Wilmington 10 and a key figure in the civil rights movement, underscored the enduring nature of the fight for justice. “On the bridge over here, we were beaten down. That was 59 years ago, and we’re still being beaten down,” he declared. He expressed urgency and added,

“We have to do something about it. We’re tired of being beat down.”

Chavis reminded those in attendance that, as the nation grapples with contemporary challenges to voting rights and social justice, the Selma Bridge Crossing Jubilee remains a symbolic and substantive annual event, reminding all Americans of the “historical struggles that paved the way for progress while urging continued vigilance in the face of present-day challenges.”

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