

# THE GRAMBLING★CONNECTION

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## TARGET CONTINUES TO FACE LEGAL AND CONSUMER BACKLASH OVER DEI ROLLBACK



By Lena Claybon

Target is under fire from all sides after scaling back its diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives. The retailer’s retreat from its previous commitments—particularly its decision to reduce Pride Month merchandise—has triggered lawsuits from conservative groups while also sparking boycotts and economic pushback from civil rights organizations.

One of the most prominent calls for action comes from Rev. Jamal Bryant, pastor of New Birth Missionary Baptist Church in Atlanta, who launched a 40-day “economic fast” against Target. The boycott, which kicked off on March 5, 2025, aligns with Lent and aims to hold the company accountable for what Bryant calls “broken promises” to Black communities. “Black people spend \$12 million a day at Target,” Bryant said on *Let It Be Known*, urging consumers to shift their dollars elsewhere. The campaign’s website, TargetFast.org, has already amassed over 100,000 participants.

The impact of the movement is already evident. Forbes reports that a one-day economic blackout on February 28 resulted in an 11% drop in Target’s in-store foot traffic and a 9% decline in online visits.

### Target’s DEI Reversal and the Trump Effect

Target had long positioned itself as a leader in corporate diversity. However, that changed after Donald Trump returned to the White House on January 22, 2025. Just two days into his presidency, he signed an executive order banning DEI programs across federal agencies. In response, major corporations—including Target—began scaling back their DEI policies.

The retailer’s shift has put it in a difficult position, drawing fire from both the left and the

right. While civil rights advocates argue that abandoning DEI is a betrayal of progress, conservative groups have taken legal action, claiming Target misled investors about the financial risks associated with its diversity initiatives.

One such lawsuit comes from Florida Attorney General James Uthmeier and America First Legal, the legal organization founded by Trump adviser Stephen Miller. The suit alleges that Target failed to properly disclose potential economic risks tied to its DEI efforts and Pride Month collection.

### Civil Rights Groups Fight Back

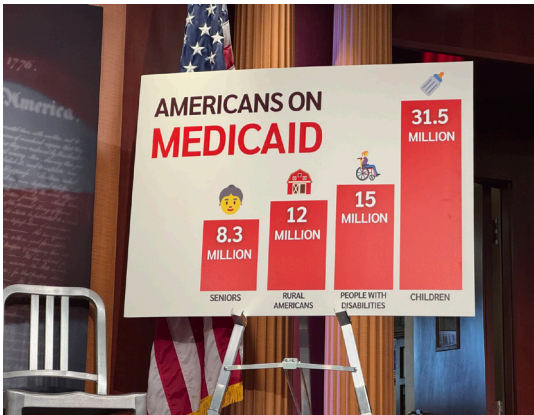
Meanwhile, the backlash from civil rights leaders, progressive activists, and even Target’s own stakeholders continues to grow. Some descendants of Target’s founders have publicly criticized the company’s move, arguing that embracing diversity is not only ethical but also good business.

In Minneapolis, where Target is headquartered, attorney Nekima Levy Armstrong urged consumers to walk away from the retailer. “We thought Target would stand firm in its values,” she said. “Instead, they caved to political pressure.”

Jaylani Hussein, director of Minnesota’s chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), echoed that sentiment. “If George Floyd’s murder moved you to demand justice, then it’s time to boycott Target,” he told PBS.

The movement has taken on a nationwide scope, with Black Lives Matter chapters staging protests where activists cut up their Target credit cards. Organizers are directing consumers to spend their money at Black-owned businesses or companies that have reaffirmed their commitment to DEI, such as Costco.

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Medicaid sign at U.S. Senate Democrats’ press conference on Feb. 19, 2025. (Photo by Shauneen Miranda/States Newsroom)

## Report by Democrats projects millions of people could lose Medicaid coverage

### 530,000 in Louisiana could be without government-provided health insurance

By Jennifer Shutt  
Louisiana Illuminator

WASHINGTON — A report released Thursday by Democrats details how many people in each state would lose access to Medicaid if Republicans in Congress were to cut the program by one-third — a scenario some GOP lawmakers have floated as an option to help pay for tax cuts, though one so sweeping it would struggle to get the votes needed to become law.

The Joint Economic Committee — Minority report, shared first with States Newsroom, projects that 25 million people throughout the country would lose access to Medicaid if Republicans were to enact a law cutting funding to the health care program for lower income Americans by one-third.

Among them, 3 million would be rural residents and 10 million would be children. Additionally, 1 in 5 seniors could lose Medicaid coverage of their nursing home care, according to the report.

The state-by-state breakdown in the JEC report shows that California, Florida, Illinois, New York and Texas would have the highest numbers of residents harmed by the potential cuts. Each of those states could have more than 1 million residents potentially kicked off the program.

The Joint Economic Committee includes members of both chambers of Congress and both political parties. It’s designed “to review economic conditions and to recommend improvements in economic policy,” according to its website.

New Hampshire Democratic Sen. Maggie Hassan, ranking member on the Joint Economic Committee, said in a statement that House Republicans’ plans “could take health care away from up to 25 million Americans.”

“This new Joint Economic Committee analysis sheds light on the number of people who could lose health care coverage because of President Trump and Congressional Republicans — and the devastating impacts that their budget could have specifically on the ability of children, seniors, and people living in rural areas across the country to access health care,” Hassan said.

### \$880 billion in spending cuts

Republicans in Congress are trying to figure out how to pass several of their core policy goals, including extending the 2017 tax law, through the budget reconciliation process.

The House approved a budget resolution in late February that would clear the way for lawmakers to increase the deficit by as much as \$4.5 trillion to accomplish their tax goals. But that budget resolution also proposes several committees find savings, including the Energy and Commerce Committee.

That panel, tasked with finding at least \$880 billion in spending cuts, oversees several federal programs, including Medicare and Medicaid.

Republicans and President Donald Trump

See **MEDICAID**, page 2

## Legislative Update with Representative Rashid Young: A Closer Look at Upcoming Ballot Amendments

By Lena Claybon

Grambling, LA—The Grambling Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, in partnership with the Arcadia-Bienville Branch of the NAACP and the Lincoln Community Volunteer Group, hosted a virtual legislative update featuring Louisiana State Representative Rashid Young. The event aimed to educate voters on the four proposed constitutional amendments appearing on the March 29th ballot.

### A Community Committed to Voter Education

The evening began with opening remarks from representatives of the hosting organizations, emphasizing the importance of civic engagement and voter participation. Sarah Dennis, speaking on behalf of the Lin-



State Rep. Rashid Young

coln Community Volunteer Group, highlighted their mission to ensure that local citizens are registered, informed, and provided transportation to the polls. Additionally, Dennis announced upcoming voter education events at Grambling State University, including a March 18th lecture by Monroe City Councilwoman Juanita Woods and a March 25th discussion featuring Haynesville Mayor Roderick Hampton.

### Introducing Representative Rashid Young

Dr. Liz White provided an introduction of Representative Rashid Young, lauding his dedication to

public service. A former educator and current attorney, Young has been instrumental in advancing education, economic growth, and community outreach in District 11, which covers Bienville, Claiborne, and Lincoln Parishes.

### Breakdown of the Constitutional Amendments

Representative Young provided an in-depth analysis of the four proposed amendments, each with significant implications for the state:

#### Amendment 1: Supreme Court Jurisdiction Over Attorneys

This amendment would grant the Louisiana Supreme

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Opinion

You are the pilot of your time

By Rusty Potter

Time is one of the most valuable resources we have, and too often, it feels like it slips through our fingers. We wake up, get to work, handle responsibilities, and before we know it, the day is over. The week-ends fly by even faster. It's easy to feel like time is flying past us, but here's the good news: You are the pilot. You are in control of how you navigate your time. Think about a pilot of a plane. Before taking off, they have a flight plan. They know where they're going, how long the journey will take, and what adjustments might be needed along the way. A successful flight doesn't hap-



Rusty Potter

pen by accident; it's planned. The same applies to our lives. If you don't take control of your time, distractions and unnecessary detours will determine your path. The first step to being the pilot of your time is recognizing your priorities. What matters to you? Your responsibilities and goals should be at the forefront of your schedule. Too often, we let distractions take control. Social media, television, and unproductive habits can steal hours from our day. A pilot wouldn't

let a random gust of wind dictate their direction, why should you let distractions dictate yours? Next, understand that small, consistent actions create big results. A pilot doesn't reach their destination in one giant leap. They get there mile by mile. The same is true for success. If you want to write a book, start with one page a day. If you want to improve your health, begin with small choices - walking to the mailbox, drinking more water, and eating better. Over time, these small actions add up. Another key to time management is learning to say no. Not every opportunity, event, or request deserves a slot in your schedule. A pilot can't land at ev-

ery airport along the way and still expect to reach his final destination on time. Protect your time by choosing commitments that align with your goals. Finally, take time to reflect and adjust. Pilots check their instruments and adjust their flight path when necessary. You should do the same with your schedule. At the end of each day, ask yourself: Did I use my time wisely? What could I have done better? Make adjustments and move forward. You are not a passenger in your life. You are the pilot, your time is precious, and every minute is an opportunity to move closer to your goals. The bad news is that time flies. The good news? You are in control of your journey.

News

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Court exclusive jurisdiction to discipline attorneys. While Young acknowledged that the court already has disciplinary authority, he expressed concerns that the amendment could be used to target Black district attorneys and judges unfairly. He firmly recommended voting **no** on this amendment.

Amendment 2: Tax Policy and Constitutional Revisions

One of the most contentious amendments, this proposal seeks to rewrite Article 7 of the state's constitution, potentially altering tax structures and removing property tax exemptions for churches and nonprofits. A lawsuit challenging the amendment is currently pending in Baton Rouge. While some aspects, such as funding teacher pay raises, might be beneficial, Young warned that the amendment's broad scope could lead to unintended consequences. He encouraged voters to stay informed and follow the legal developments.

IMPORTANT VOTER INFORMATION

Early voting is March 15-22 (excluding Sunday, March 16) from 8:30 a.m.-6 p.m. Voters should bring an ID with them to vote (Louisiana driver's license, Louisiana Special ID card, a generally recognized picture identification card with name and signature such as a passport, or a digital license via LA Wallet). The deadline to request an absentee ballot is March 25 by 4:30 p.m (other than military and overseas voters). You can request an absentee ballot online through the Louisiana Secretary of State's Voter Portal or in writing through your Registrar of Voters Office. The deadline for a registrar of voters to receive a voted absentee ballot is March 28 by 4:30 p.m. (other than military and overseas voters). On election day (Saturday, March 29), the polls are open from 7 a.m.-8 p.m.

Amendment 3: Charging Juveniles as Adults

This amendment would allow the legislature to determine which felonies warrant juveniles being prosecuted as adults. Young opposed this measure, arguing that it would disproportionately affect minority youth and expand the juvenile prison system. He urged voters to reject this amendment, stating,

"There is no reason for us to give all of that power to the legislature."

Amendment 4: Judicial Vacancy Elections

While seemingly administrative, this amendment would accelerate the timeline for filling judicial vacancies. Young raised concerns that it could be used in conjunction with Amendment 1 to

remove Black judges from the bench more swiftly. Citing potential political motivations behind the amendment, he recommended voting **no** on this measure.

Engaging the Community

Following his analysis, Young participated in a Q&A session, addressing community concerns and emphasizing the importance of informed voting. "Anytime we get a chance to go to the polls and exercise our right to vote, that's an important time for us," he stated. With the March 29th election approaching, local organizations continue their efforts to ensure that residents of District 11 are equipped with the knowledge necessary to make informed decisions at the ballot box. For more information on voter registration, polling locations, and transportation services, community members are encouraged to reach out to the Lincoln Community Volunteer Group or visit official state election resources.



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Economic Consequences and Consumer Power

Target is already feeling the pressure. Since announcing its DEI pullback, the company has seen an 8.7% drop in stock value. Data from Placer.ai reveals that foot traffic to Target stores declined 4% after Trump's executive order, with an additional 9% dip the following week. By comparison, Walmart saw a decrease of less than 3% in the same period. Civil rights organizations, including the NAACP and the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), have launched awareness campaigns to educate Black consumers about corporations backing away from DEI. NNPA President Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr. pointed to the \$2 trillion in annual spending power of Black Americans. "We have to rethink where we spend our money," he said. NNPA Chairman Bobby R. Henry Sr. added, "We won't stay silent while corporations roll back progress that directly affects Black communities." With economic boycotts gaining momentum and legal battles piling up, Target is now at a crossroads—caught in the storm of a cultural and political battle that shows no signs of slowing down.

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have been clear they will not be touching the Medicare program, which provides health insurance for retired Americans and some people with disabilities. But GOP lawmakers are debating how exactly to find savings in the Medicaid program, though they could face intense blowback given how many of their own voters rely on the program for health care. Medicaid is a joint federal-state program that helps cover medical costs for some people with limited incomes. Republicans in Congress cannot actually advance a reconciliation bill until after the House and Senate agree to adopt the same budget resolution, which has yet to happen.

Senate two-bill plan

The Senate voted in mid-February to approve its own budget resolution that proposes a two-bill strategy for enacting Republican campaign promises. Under the Senate budget resolution, which House leaders have vowed not to take up, Congress would first pass a bill to boost defense and border security spending by hundreds of billions of dollars as well as remaking the country's energy policy. The Senate strategy would then have Congress adopt a second budget resolution later this year, setting up a pathway for Republicans to extend the 2017 tax law. The Senate is expected to take up the House's budget resolution at some point and make changes to the document, though when exactly they'll do that is an open-ended question. The budget resolution would then have to go back to the House for final approval.

CBO report


The Joint Economic Committee – Minority report made public last Thursday came out just one day after the nonpartisan Congressional Budget

Louisiana findings

From Louisiana Illuminator Louisiana Medicaid covers more than 1.6 million people in Louisiana, more than 30% of the people in the state. If the Republican budget cuts a third of federal Medicaid funding across all populations and geographies, Louisiana could see: 83,000 rural residents lose their health coverage 190,000 children lose their health insurance More than 530,000 people total cut off from their health insurance Nearly 1 in 4 seniors lose their nursing home care Source: Joint Economic Committee – Minority report, Author: Jennifer Shutt Jennifer covers the nation's capital as a senior reporter for States Newsroom. Her coverage areas include congressional policy, politics and legal challenges with a focus on health care, unemployment, housing and aid to families. Louisiana Illuminator is part of States Newsroom, the nation's largest state-focused nonprofit news organization.

Office released a letter detailing how much federal funding the House Energy and Commerce Committee oversees. CBO Director Phillip L. Swagel wrote that the letter was in response to a request from House Budget Committee ranking member Brendan F. Boyle, D-Pa., and Energy and Commerce Committee ranking member Frank Pallone, D-N.J. The Energy and Commerce Committee, Swagel wrote, oversees \$8.8 trillion in spending over the 10-year budget window when Medicare spending is excluded, which is what Boyle and Pallone requested. Of that total, \$8.2 trillion, or 93%, goes toward Medicaid, Swagel wrote. The Energy and Commerce Committee, which House Republicans expect to find at least \$880 billion in spending cuts, oversees just \$381 billion over the 10-year budget window that doesn't go toward Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program, or CHIP. Those CBO numbers would indicate that if Republicans stick to the goals

in the House budget resolution, which very well could change in the Senate, they would likely have to cut hundreds of billions of dollars from Medicaid.




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Community

Their lights are still shining bright

By Joice M. Dunn

The Grambling area has several members who continue to contribute to the upliftment of the community. Many senior citizens as they move up in age share their wisdom to encourage those that follow after them and their light leaves a path for others to follow.

Mildred K. Shyne

Mildred K. Shyne, the daughter of the late Reverend Charles H. Shyne, Sr. and Lucille Harris Shyne was born April 15, 1927, in Claiborne parish. Her parents moved to Grambling when Mildred was in elementary school.

Shyne graduated from Grambling College in 1949, with a degree in education. Her teaching career began in South Louisiana. After marrying her college sweetheart, she taught in north Louisiana schools for 30 years, primarily in Lincoln parish.

She is the mother of two children, Melba and Clifford Bennett, who are both retired federal government employees.

Shyne is the grandmother of seven and has 18 great grandchildren. She enjoys “dipping in their business” so she’s affectionately called the master dipper.

Mildred enjoys spending her days talking with her church members of Lewis Temple C.M.E, as well as friends, discussing world events and listening to their concerns.

Attributing her long life to her dedication to God, Shyne said the desire to help others has played a major role in her life.



Mildred Shyne surrounded by her children, Clifford (l) and Melba.



R. Billups

lups enjoys watching her favorite shows on MeTV, listening to Big Band Music from the 1950s, talking on the phone to friends, GSU alumni and spending time with family.

When offering advice to young people, she lets them know to let God direct their path, give and serve others, as well as always give nothing less than their best.

“I attribute my longevity genes to my mother, Ms. Susie Johnson. I thank God for His goodness and grace for allowing me to be 94 years old,” explained Billups.

Ethel Harris Palmore

Ethel Harris Palmore is the tenth



E. Palmore



W. Giles

child and youngest daughter of the late Reverend Elias and Mrs. Della Butler Harris. She was born in Lincoln Parish and attended Spring Hill Elementary School.

She graduated from Lincoln High School where she played basketball and sang in the school choir. Palmore was a gifted soprano soloist and often represented Lincoln High in various regional and state musical competitions. She continued her formal education at Grambling College. She also obtained her cosmetology license.

Palmore was baptized at the Spring Hill Baptist Church, where she attended Sunday School and sang in the choir. She was a member of the Harris Gospel Singers along with her siblings, Omegia, Mae D., Hazel, Felix, as well

as some cousins. The group traveled throughout the Southern region performing at churches and other venues. Palmore participated in various community choirs. Her family was active in the North Louisiana Missionary Baptist Association. She was involved in the Youth Department as a teen, but as an adult, she was a leader in the department. Many of her former youth keep in contact with her and thank her for her leadership and guidance. She was also active in the Association’s Missionary Department. She was often a soloist for the Association’s Old Ship of Zion Program.

Palmore worked as a seamstress with her brother, the late Melvin Harris at his business, Harris Laundromat and Dry Cleaners of Ruston. She was employed as a counselor at Grambling College for many years and worked at Louisiana Tech in the Housing Department.

Although Palmore’s only child died at birth, she has been a wonderful support to her nieces and nephews. As the 10th of 11 siblings, she also provided assistance to her parents and older brothers and sisters.

She enjoys attending Love Chapel Baptist Church, where Rev. Elliott Abney is pastor.

Willie Melvin Giles

Willie Melvin Giles, 91, has lived in Grambling all his life. He attended all levels of the Grambling school system.

Due to life’s struggles, Giles worked at the ammunition plant in Minden, Louisiana and later retired from the Glass Plant in Simsboro. Giles married Betty L. Brown on October 3, 1953 and together reared two children, Belinda Joyce and Willie Marie.

Giles enjoys helping others and sharing his life’s knowledge with his children as well as his grands. He loves watching sports and commenting on the various players’ actions during the games.

Giles would often say to young people, if they keep their eyes on the prize, they will never lose their way. He would tell them that he is known all over the world because of his longevity. He traveled around different parts of the country, gathering many life experiences.

Giles credits staying positive, keep moving, no stress, resting and eating healthy as his reasons for longevity.

Ruby Lee Weekly Billups

Ruby Lee Weekly Billups is a native of Vidalia, Louisiana, and graduated valedictorian of her high school class – (then) Concordia Parish Training School. She arrived on the campus of Grambling College on September 10, 1947, and her employment in the Registrar's Office began her freshman year.

Billups graduated magna cum laude with a B. S. degree in elementary education in 1951. She worked in the Registrar's Office for 35 years, serving as Assistant Registrar from 1951-1964 and Registrar from 1964-1986. She was named Registrar Emeritus in 1989, but her dedication to students is still remembered and echoed in the voices of Grambling alumni.

During her days of retirement Bil-

Announcements

Representative to enlighten CCC members

District 11 State Representative Rashid Young will speak at the Community Coordinating Council (CCC) Meeting on Tuesday, March 18, at 1 p.m., New Rocky Valley B.C. The Representative will inform the group concerning the four Amendments on the Election Ballot scheduled Saturday, March 29.

Early Voting for the election starts Saturday, March 15 through Saturday, March 22 from 8:30 a.m. until 6 p.m., not including Sundays.

For additional election information, contact the Lincoln Parish Registrar of Voters, located at 100 W. Texas Ave., Ruston, or call (318) 251-5110.

‘No Limit’ accepting registration for 2025-2026

The No Limit Soldiers Program is accepting registration and sign-ups. All area youth are encouraged to come out and participate. For additional information please contact Howard Kirkpatrick, 318-497-2978, Montez Moss, 318-243-7451 or Kelli Granger at 318-664-5435.

NAACP youth council announces raffle winner

The Youth Councils of District "G" of the LA State NAACP sponsored a raffle on a chance to win a 63" Television. Congratulations go out to Tammy Jones of Arcadia, winner of the drawing.

The raffle was an effort to raise funds to visit the Civil Rights Museum in Washington D.C in July or August 2025.

For information, contact Grace Tatem, 318-680-7679.

NAMI Family support group holds meeting

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) will hold a support group meeting Thursday, March 20, at 2 p.m. in the Lincoln Parish Library, George Byrnside Conference Room, 910 North Trenton St., Ruston. The meetings will continue each third Thursday of each month until December.

Dr. Jeannetta Stephens-Jones, Ed. D and Dr. Shirley Burch, Ph.D., will be present as well as NAMI Certified Peer Facilitators. Other group meetings will be held April 17 and May 15. The meetings will continue to be held June 19, July 17 and August 21. The next set of meetings will be held September 18, October 16, November 20 and December 18.

Anyone at least 18 years old may RSVP to jjones79aka@yahoo.com or call 93180 614-1961 or SJBurch57@gmail.com or call (318) 350-1612. The meetings are free to the public and all are invited to attend.

Exodus Family Farms to hold Third Egg Hunt

Exodus Family Farms will hold its third annual Egg Hunt event Saturday, April 19, from 4 to 7 p.m. The Farm is located

at 343 Heard Road Ruston, 71270.

Activities for the event will include free food, an Egg Painting & Dyeing Station, Face Painting Station, Craft / Arts, Relay Races, Photo Booth with the Easter Bunny Petting Zoo & Mini Farm Tour Open Fishing Jumpers, Glow Bubbles, Play Zone and Glow-in-the-Dark Easter Egg Hunt.

“Our objective for this event is to unite families for a memorable Easter experience, highlighting the sense of community that is inherent to this sacred holiday. We would be grateful for any form of support be it monetary contributions, your attendance or volunteer work,” said Deidra D. Scott, farm owner.

For additional information please contact Scott at 318-514-8855.

NAACP meetings are set for third Thursday

The Grambling Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) hosts its regular monthly meeting on teleconference every third Thursday at 6 p.m. The meeting will also include the installation of new officers.

Meetings are on teleconference -717-908-1834; Access Code 621055# and annual dues are due for the year. Make checks payable to Grambling Branch NAACP (6094) and mail them to P.O. Box 521, Grambling, LA 71245.

Membership is available to the public, either as an adult or as a youth (ages 7 to 17). Memberships for adults are \$30 a year and presently, the \$10.00 dues for children have been waived.

For additional information, please call or text 318-680-7679, Grace Tatem.

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Thank you!



Community

Exodus Farm owner combines passions

By Joice M. Dunn

Deidra D. Scott, born and reared in Hammond, Indiana, relocated to Ferriday, Louisiana because of family relations. She earned a bachelor's degree in early childhood education in May 2009 and a master's in special education in May of 2018 from Grambling State University. "My passion lies in working with children and farming, and it was only fitting to combine the two," Scott admitted. "It is my ambition to retire from the teaching profession and devote myself to agriculture full-time. I aim to supply my community with nutritious foodstuffs," Scott said.

In 2013, Scott was a co-owner of LD3 Cattle Company, which was dissolved in 2021 and in 2023 Exodus Family Farm was established, owned and managed by Scott. After moving her parents to Grambling in 2017, they became involved in the company. "My parents' involvement has been a great help to me and they enjoy it," said Deidra. Scott's primary objective of



Deidra Scott spends time with a calf.

Exodus Family Farm is to supply the community with nutritious food options. "My goal is to educate children regarding local agriculture, with the hope that they develop an appreciation for it. Perhaps, this education will even inspire them to become farmers in the future," she said. Exodus Farm, a modest yet diversified establishment, specializes in the cultivation of vegetables, fruits, and livestock. A suite of vegetables and

herbs are grown on the farm, such as specialty greens, a variety of hot and sweet peppers, Onions, broccoli, carrots, asparagus, lavender, mint, basil, celery, aloe, beans and tomatoes. The farm also consists of cows, horses (including quarter), ponies (including miniature), a donkey, chickens, ducks and a turkey. "The goal is to build a loyal customer base and a recognizable name in the local market. The largest market streams will be CSA and the local farmer's

market," explained Scott. "We sell chicken and duck eggs. Duck egg sales were a big part of our profit in 2023. Ducks have higher vitamin and mineral content per gram of egg, although this largely depends on what goes into their diet. By feeding our ducks vegetables and herbs grown on the farm, we keep them happy with a variety of bugs, grubs, and plants. It also helps us save on their feeding bill," she said. "We will open our pre-cattle sale for beef produce on April 19, at our third annual Easter egg hunt. With this annual event, we are providing a family-oriented, seasonal on-farm activity that promotes a deeper comprehension of agriculture and sustainability," said Scott. "Our focus is on enhancing the health and weight of our calves, with the objective of reducing their time on the farm to maximize their time on grass pasture. Our aim is to utilize leased pasture and implement an enhanced nutritional program," she explained. The farm has a 1/4-acre pond that was stocked in March of 2020 with corn fed Bream and Catfish. "Our goal is that the farm-

raised fish will provide an alternative source of high-quality fresh fish for local communities. This small-scale operation will be possible as I work to develop a market and sell fish directly to the consumer," she said. Exodus Farms has grown a variety of fruits since 2019. The farm has a small 15-tree vineyard, as well as a 10-fruit tree orchard. "Although fruit production has not been as plentiful for us, we continue to strive to learn new strategies on fruit production and disease prevention," Scott said. From the perspective of a Louisiana Certified Teacher, there are countless lessons to be learned from a farm. It is essential that farms are not merely an abstract concept, but a tangible experience. The opportunity to physically touch, smell, and taste various elements of farm life will significantly enhance children's understanding and retention of information. Even the most basic tasks, such as planting and harvesting, are appreciated by children. When children understand that their tasks are authentic and purposeful, rather than futile activities, they develop a deeper appreciation for farming and its significance.



Kids Visit Eddie Robinson Museum

Mt Harmony Kids 2 Christ Ministry Visits GSU Landmarks



Kids visit Library

Mount Harmony Baptist Church Kids 2 Christ Ministry experienced the Eddie G. Robinson Museum and Grambling State University Digital Library, the first of any

HBCU and first in the state of Louisiana. Participants received an interactive tour hosted by Dean Adrienne Webber and Jessie Mayfield.

In Remembrance...

Remembering Theodis...



Theodis Roosevelt Jones, Sr. transitioned on Monday, February 24, in Houston, Texas, after a lengthy illness. Jones was born on March 15, 1944, in Simsboro, Louisiana, he was the third of six children born to the late George Jones and Jessie Mae Street Jones. At an early age, he accepted Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior and joined the Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church in the Fellowship community. As he matured in his faith, he became an active and dedicated member of New Rocky Valley Baptist Church in Grambling. Over the years, he served with distinction in various ministries, including the Usher Board, Trustee Board, Brotherhood, Male Chorus and ultimately, as an ordained deacon, all of which allowed him to demonstrate his steadfast commitment to God and service as a member of the Body of Christ.

Theodis graduated from Grambling High School and later enrolled at Grambling State University from which he earned a bachelor's degree in art in July 1978. After twenty-five years of dedicated service, he retired from GSU. His commitment to education and the arts never wavered. Post-retirement, he continued to inspire young minds as an art education instructor at New Vision Learning Academy in Monroe, Louisiana, thereby passing down his passion for creativity to future generations. Theodis was also an enterprising entrepreneur who left an indelible mark on the culinary and hospitality scene in and around Grambling. As the owner and operator of Tiger Inn, Train Station Barbecue, and RJ's Café, and co-owner of Alice's Café alongside his father, he created gathering spaces filled with warmth, flavor, and community spirit. His establishments were more than just businesses—they were places where friendships were nurtured, stories were shared, and legacies were built. He and his father owned the Jones Bus Company, which provided transportation for then Grambling College athletics and Grambling High School. In 2008, he married Dr. Angelia Young Weaver Jones and that same year, they moved to Langston, Oklahoma. While there, he joined the New Hope Missionary Baptist Church, under the leadership of Pastor Everett E. Mack, Sr., where he faithfully served as a deacon. He also became Langston University Police Department's first chief of surveillance. The couple moved to Houston, Texas, in 2012, and. It was there that his

health began to fail. He was preceded in death by parents, his infant son, his brother Sammie Jones and Sisters: Alexa Jones, Callie Jones Matthews, and Laura Dean Jones Solomon. Left to cherish his memory and continue his legacy are wife - Dr. Angelia Young Weaver Jones, Houston, Texas;

Children-Dena Margaret Jones Smith (Jarell), Las Vegas, Nevada and Theodis R. Jones, Jr., Killeen, Texas; Grandson - Jarell T. Smith II; Sister-Alice Jones Pruitt, Grambling; Brother - Geovondie Lewis, Homer, Louisiana; Aunt - Hazel Jones, Kansas, City, Missouri; and a host of other relatives and friends.

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- 23' Nissan Altima S 42k stock #P3970 \$20,599
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- 22' Ford Edge 59k stock #P3949 \$24,488
- 22' Ford Escape 42k stock #P3955 \$19,999
- 22' Ford Escape S #P3955 \$19,999
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# Church News

The Word

## Spring is a Season of Hope

By Rev. Rita Jefferson

Winter brings leafless trees and clear views of bare landscapes. The trees look lifeless; we know they’re not dead, in spite of their appearance. Then, new green begins to edge out from those gray, lifeless limbs. As the days lengthen, so do the trees. Flowering plants begin sprouting buds and those buds burst forth toward the sun with the life-filled colors of spring. I especially love daffodils and camellias. The daffodils, invisible in winter, pop up magically. Camellias, even if a frost comes after they blossom, will show their hardness by leaving and blossoming out.

Nature’s awakening reminds us that no matter how deep the darkness or how onerous the hardship, growth and renewal remain possible. Life has too much vitality to be easily stunted. Just as



Rev. Rita Jefferson

the earth recovers and flourishes, we too can bloom again after a winter of despair and privation. You may only feel the desire for renewal and lack the hope and incentive to take steps in that direction. But even

the desire for newness shows that the soul still lives beneath that gray, leafless feeling of dryness and inertia. Butterflies symbolize transformation and new life. Someone had this sign on their refrigerator. "Just when the caterpillar thought the world was over, it became a butterfly." You may think your world is over. But that may mean that your chrysalis is about to crack open and you are about to flutter forth into the sunlight of spring and new birth.

Imagine that you feel the energy of a new beginning. What would be the first step you would take if you had hope? Can you identify it? What will it take for you to get to the place where you can take that step? Who could undergird and support you in taking it? Could you write a note to yourself describing how that would feel—to take that first small step? Let me shift images for a moment. Spanish poet Antonio Machado in one of his short poems wrote: I thought my fire was out and stirred the ashes. . . . I burnt my fingers. + We may assume that the ashes of our inner life have no live coals left. But, like a fireplace or wood heater can surprise us when we plunder the ashes with a poker, our inner life may well have some simmering coals that only require some air and kindling to blaze forth. In Mark 9, a desperate father pleaded

with Jesus to heal his son. Jesus responded that all things were possible in response to faith. The father retorted, “I believe. Help my unbelief.” You and I can say that we feel like a mixture of hope and hopelessness, of faith and doubt. Perhaps like the pained father, we can say, “I believe. Help my unbelief.” In so praying we may well be blowing on the hidden coals within. We may well find our chrysalis crumbling and wings emerging. We might well be scratching our souls’ itching, a signal that new green is trying to sprout. +Antonio Machado, “Forty Poems” from *Times Alone: Selected Poems of Antonio Machado*. Translated by Robert Bly. (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan UP, 1983), pp. 143-153. Reverend Rita Jefferson, is the Vicar at St. Luke’s Episcopal Chapel in Grambling, Louisiana

# Church Announcements

**A musical extravaganza set for Saturday**  
A Musical extravaganza will be held at the New Hopewell Baptist Church in Bernice, Louisiana Saturday, March 15, at 6 p.m. The church is pastored by Reverend Gregory Williams and located on 113 Plum St.  
The theme for the event will be: “Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to Him with song of praise,” Psalms 95:2. The program is sponsored by the Pastor’s Aid.  
**Saint Luke’s to hold Absalom Jones service/lecture**  
The St. Luke’s Episcopal Chapel will host its annual Absalom Jones service and lecture Sunday, March 16, at 5 p.m. The guest speaker will be Reverend

Thomas Nsubuga and Ricky Davis will be the guest musician.  
The public is invited to share in the service. For additional information, please call or text (318) 680-7679. The church is located at 538 Main Street, Grambling.  
**Springhill B.C. holds fourth appreciation for pastor**  
The Springhill Baptist Church will honor Pastor Eric Caldwell and wife for four years of service Sunday, March 16. The church is located at 727 Dicks Store Rd, Ruston, LA.  
Minister Roby Dyes of the St. Matthew Baptist Church of Athens will serve as guest during the 10 a.m. service and Reverend Damian Wilson of China Grove Baptist Church of Ruston will serve as guest during the 2:30 p.m. service.

**Local church to hold an annual Scholarship Gala**  
The Mt. Olive Baptist Church will hold its Annual Scholarship Gala Saturday, March 29, at 6 p.m. This year’s theme is “Giddy Up at Molta Bella” so grab your date and wear your best western attire! A table of eight is \$480 and tickets are \$60 each.  
The Scholarship Gala Fundraiser is held to provide Academic Scholarships for graduating high school seniors and other youth ministry activities. This year the church members hope to expand the scholarships for other graduating seniors in the community.  
The church is located at 571 Mt. Olive Rd. Grambling and Rev. Donald Young is the pastor.

**Church of Christ in Grambling Extends invitation**  
We invite you to worship with the Church of Christ in Grambling. We look forward to seeing you on Sunday for Bible Study at 10 a.m. and morning worship at 11 a.m.  
Listeners may join online services by tuning into the YouTube channel, 146 King St. Church of Christ. Wednesday night Bible study begins at 7 p.m. The Zoom ID is 9744743562 and the church may be contact at Churchof-ChristatGrambling@gmail.com or 318-596-1038. The Church is located at 146 King St.  
*Editor’s Note: If you have a church announcement, please email the information to the gramblingconnection@gmail.com*

# Area Church Directory

**ASSEMBLY OF GOD**  
**Cathedral of Praise Worship Center** - 2877 Highway 33, Ruston  
**First Assembly** of God - 1400 Woodward Ave., Ruston  
**BAPTIST**  
**Alabama**, 16061 Hwy. 151, Arcadia  
**Barnett Springs**, 1601 S. Barnett Springs Rd., Ruston  
**China Grove Missionary**, 406 Vernon St., Ruston  
**Christ Temple**, 7349 Hwy 80. Ruston  
**Church of Restoration**, 285 Main St., Grambling  
**Cook**, 2000 Cooktown Rd, Ruston  
**Corinth**, 4327 Hw 545, Dubach  
**Countyline**, 7426 Hwy. 146, Ruston  
**Dayspring Baptist Ministries**, 3191 South Vienna St, Ruston  
**Emmanuel**, 1200 Farmerville Hwy., Ruston  
**Fellowship**, 6476 Hwy 151, Dubach  
**Fellowship**, 1572 Highway 507 South, Simsboro  
**First**, 117 Oak St., - One block south of Hwy. 80 in Choudrant  
**First**, Hico St., Dubach  
**First**, 200 S. Trenton St., Ruston  
**First**, Simsboro  
**Friendship**, 143 West Sixth Street, Bernice  
**Grace**, 2808 Trenton Ave. , Ruston  
**Grace Bible**, 216 Rough Edge Rd., Ruston  
**Greater Pleasant Grove**, 1270 Golf Course Rd., Unionville  
**Greater St. Luke**, 163 St. Luke Church Rd, Arcadia  
**Gumspring**, 3117 Hwy 151, Farmerville  
**Hebron, Love Chapel**, 1525 Sikes St, Ruston  
**Hico**, 653 Hwy. 152, Dubach  
**Hopewell**, 7657 Fellowship Rd., Hwy 151, Dubach  
**Lane Chapel**, 1016 McAllister, Ruston  
**Lanes Chapel**, Hwy. 151 Downsville  
**Liberty Hill**, Simsboro  
**Longstraw**, 1799 Styles, Ranch Rd.,  
**Love Chapel**, 1525 Sikes St, Ruston  
**Macedonia, No.1**, Rt. 2, Dubach  
**Macedonia, No. 2**, 489 E. Sibley Rd., Choudrant  
**Mineral Springs**, 4599 Hwy 822, Dubach  
**Mount Harmony**, 210 Mt. Harmony Church Rd, Ruston  
**Mount Calm**, 566 Mount Calm Rd., Simsboro

**Mount Olive**, Grambling  
**Mount Olive Outreach**, 2817 S. Service Road W., Ruston  
**Mount Pisgah**, Hwy. 3061, Ruston  
**Mount Sinai**, 2269 Hwy. 145, Choudrant  
**Mount Vernon**, 1356 Hwy. 167 N., Dubach  
**Mount Zion**, 2586 Hwy 150., Grambling  
**Mount Zion No. 2**, 113 California Plant Road, Dubach  
**New Hope**, Choudrant  
**New Hope**, 302 W. Vaughn, Ruston  
**New Liberty Hill**, Hwy. 544, Simsboro  
**New Living Word Ministries**, 1900 W. Barnett Springs, Ruston  
**New Pilgrim Rest, Inc.**, 2697 Elm St., Arcadia  
**New Prospect**, 3438 Hwy. 167 N., Dubach  
**New Prosperity**, 1378 Prosperity Church, Clay  
**New Rocky Valley**, 2155 Martin Luther King Ave., Grambling  
**Northview Missionary**, Highway 33, Ruston  
**Olive Grove**, 3138 Olive Grove Rd, Choudrant  
**Pilgrim Rest**, 622 W. Line Ave., Ruston  
**Pine Grove**, 470 Chandler Rd., Ruston  
**Pleasant Grove**, 1366 Pleasant Grove Road, Choudrant  
**Pleasant Grove**, “The Oasis in the Woods”, 446 Bowden Rd., Ruston  
**Pleasant Hill**, 1127 Mondy Rd, Simsboro  
**Rock Corner & Garden of Prayer**, 824 Rock Corner Rd, Dubach, off Hwy.33, 14 miles north of Ruston  
**Rocky Valley**, Simsboro  
**Solid Rock**, 1511 West California Hwy 80, Ruston  
**Southside**, 3191 South Vienna St., Ruston  
**Springhill**, 727 Dicks Store Rd., Ruston  
**St. David**, Vienna.  
**St. John**, Old Grambling Rd., Ruston.  
**St. Mary**, 1114 Larson St., Ruston.  
**St. Peter**, 404 Longstraw Rd., Ruston  
**St. Rest**, 09 Walker Rd., Choudrant  
**St. Rest**, Hwy. 146 West, Dubach  
**Temple**, 1515 S. Service Rd. W. Ruston  
**True Believers**, 184 CCC Road, Ruston  
**The Springs**, (A ministry of Temple Baptist Church) 1601 S. Barnett Springs Ave., Ruston  
**The Springs.life The Word**, 504 S. Main St., Grambling University - 2856 W. California, Ruston

**Vernon**, 190 Vernon-Eros Road, Ruston  
**Woods Chapel**, 326 Hwy 454, Ruston  
**Zion Hill**, 505 Lee St., Ruston  
**Zion Traveler**, 1201 Martin Luther King Dr, Ruston  
**CATHOLIC**  
**St. Benedict**, 471 Main St., Grambling  
**St. Thomas Aquinas**, 810 Carey Avenue, Ruston  
**CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
**Church of Christ**, 2902 Hwy. 80 West, Ruston  
**Church of Christ**, 146 King St., Grambling  
**Northside**, 1804 N. Trenton St., Ruston  
**Orleans Cir. Church of Christ**, 2103 Orleans Cir., Ruston  
**Ruston**, 2300 W. Woodward Ave., Ruston, www.rustonchurchofchrist.org  
**EPISCOPAL**  
**Church of the Redeemer**, 504 Tech Dr., Ruston  
**St. Luke’s**, 538 Main St., Grambling  
**METHODIST**  
**Ansley Union**, 328 Ansley Rd, Ruston, located 10 miles south of Ruston off Hwy 167  
**Antioch UMC**, Simsboro  
**Arcadia First UMC**, Arcadia  
**Choudrant UMC**, 125 Pecan St., Choudrant  
**Dubach UMC**, Dubach  
**First UMC**, Arcadia  
**Grace**, 3401 N. Trenton St., Ruston  
**Lewis Temple**, Main St., Grambling  
**Mays Chapel CME**, 615 W. Line Ave., Ruston  
**Memorial UMC**, 9325 Hwy 80, Simsboro.  
**Mt. Mariah UMC** - Salem UMC - 11793 Hwy. 151, Dubach  
**St. Peter AME**, 1104 Arlington St., Ruston.  
**Trinity Methodist**, 1000 Woodward Ave., Ruston  
**Wesley Chapel**, 4330 Hwy. 818, Ruston  
**PENTECOSTAL**  
**Anchor Tabernacle**, Exit 93 from I-20 then South 1/2 mile, Choudrant  
**First Pentecostal**, Corner of Kentucky and Goodwin Ruston  
**King’s Court UPC**, 2401 S. Service Rd. West, Ruston  
**LifePoint Church**, 1018 S. Vienna St., Ruston. lifepointruston.com

**The Pentecostals**, 2851 Hwy 33 North, Ruston  
**Powerhouse Temple of Christ Apostolic**, 101 Main St., Grambling  
**United Pentecostal**, Dubach  
**Zion Temple Apostolic Faith Deliverance** – Eastern Hills, off Beacon Light Rd., Ruston  
**Voice of Revival Ministry** - 304 W. California St., Ruston  
**PRESBYTERIAN**  
**Alabama (USA)**, 2091 Hwy 145, Choudrant  
**Covenant Reformed**, 2106 Cooktown Rd., Ruston  
**Greenwood**, Lincoln Parish Rd. 181, between Mitcham’s & Hwy. 146, Ruston  
**Ruston (USA)**, 212 N. Bonner St.  
**OTHERS**  
**Abundant Grace Tabernacle**, 3092 Hwy 556, Choudrant  
**Campus Community Worship Center**, 1000 Saratoga St., Ruston  
**Christian L.I.F.E. Church**, 107 Love Ave., Ruston  
**Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints**, 205 Woodhaven Rd., Ruston  
**Church of the Living God**, 1438 Hwy. 167 W., Dubach  
**Church of the Nazarene**, 1101 Center St., Ruston  
**Douglas Church**, 1642 Hwy 821, Ruston  
**Church of God in Christ**, 256 Voss Street, Dubach  
**Faith Church**, 1507 Goodwin Road, Ruston  
**Focus Christian Ministries**, Martin Luther King Community Center, 901 Martin Luther King Dr., Ruston  
**Fountain of Praise United Worship Center**, 1394 Hazel St., Arcadia  
**The Gospel**, 108 Sanctuary Rd, Ruston  
**Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church**, 2508 Kavanaugh Road, Ruston  
**Impact Worship Center**, Greenwood Recreation Center, 1306 Cornell Ave, Ruston  
**Ruston Housing Authority Building** 901 Martin Luther King Dr. Ruston.  
*EDITOR’S NOTE: If you would like your church information listed, please email the Grambling Connection at grambliniteconnection@gmail.com.*



# Health & Wellness

## Charming's Corner

# Discover the Healing Power of Tuning Fork Therapy

By Charnesia “Charming” Davis

In today’s fast-paced world, stress, anxiety, and physical discomfort have become common struggles for many people. But what if there was a simple, noninvasive way to restore balance, ease pain, and promote overall well-being? At Naturally Charming Universe Holistic Wellness Center, we offer a powerful healing experience using tuning forks—an easy and effective method of energy healing that anyone can benefit from, no prior knowledge required.

### What is Tuning Fork Therapy?



Charming Davis

Tuning fork therapy is a form of sound healing that uses precision-calibrated metal forks to produce vibrations that interact with the body’s energy field. When these forks are struck and placed near or on the body, they send gentle sound waves that help clear energy blockages, improve circulation, and promote deep relaxation.

This practice is based on the idea that everything in the universe vibrates at a specific frequency, including our bodies. When stress, trauma, or illness disrupts these natural frequencies, tuning forks help realign and restore balance. It’s a gentle yet powerful way to reduce pain, enhance mental clarity, and encourage emotional healing.

### The Benefits of Tuning Fork Healing

Many people are amazed at how quickly and effectively tuning forks can bring relief. Here are some of the benefits you can experience: - Stress and Anxiety Relief - The soothing vibra-



Tuning Fork

tions promote deep relaxation, calming the nervous system and reducing anxiety.

- Pain Management– Tuning forks help release tension and blockages, making them great for headaches, muscle pain, and joint discomfort.
- Mental Clarity– By balancing the brain’s hemispheres, sound healing enhances focus, memory, and decision-making skills.
- Improved Sleep– Many clients report better sleep patterns after a session, as tuning forks help reset the body’s natural rhythms.
- Emotional Healing–Vibrational therapy can assist in releasing stored emotions, providing a sense of peace and balance.

### How Easy Is It to Experience a Session?

At Naturally Charming Universe Holistic Wellness Center, we make it easy for you to experience the benefits of tuning fork healing firsthand.

Whether you’re new to energy healing or just looking for a simple way to improve your well-being, we welcome you to visit us at:

- 311 Main Street, Grambling, LA  
Business Hours:
- Tuesday – Friday: 8:30 AM – 1:30 PM
  - Saturday: 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM
  - Closed Sunday & Monday

Sessions are available during business hours and can also be booked online at [naturallycharminguniverse.com](https://naturallycharminguniverse.com).

### Exclusive Discounts & Weekly Giveaway!

To make healing even more accessible, we offer multiple discounts throughout the week. Whether you’re a first-time visitor, a returning client, or booking a group session, we have special offers to help you experience holistic wellness at an affordable price.

Additionally, when you purchase any item in-store, you’ll automatically be entered into a weekly giveaway for

a FREE one-hour healing session of your choice!

It’s our way of showing appreciation and encouraging more people to explore the benefits of energy healing.

### Start Your Healing Journey Today

If you’ve never experienced tuning fork therapy, now is the perfect time to try. The process is gentle, relaxing, and completely natural—no needles, no medications, just pure vibrational healing. Whether you’re looking for stress relief, pain management, or an overall energy boost, this simple yet powerful practice can make a difference in your life.

Visit Naturally Charming Universe Holistic Wellness Center today and discover how sound healing can help you feel more balanced, clear, and at peace.

For more information or to book a session, visit [naturallycharminguniverse.com](https://naturallycharminguniverse.com) or stop by our location. We can’t wait to help you on your journey to wellness!

# The Importance of Being Your Own Health Advocate: Stories of Determination and Survival

By Lena Claybon

In today’s fast-paced healthcare system, it is more important than ever to take an active role in your own well-being. Being your own health advocate means researching your condition, questioning doctors, seeking second opinions, and making informed decisions about your treatment. Throughout history, there have been countless examples of individuals who, when faced with life-threatening diagnoses, refused to accept grim prognoses and took matters into their own hands. Their stories serve as powerful reminders of the importance of self-education and persistence in the face of adversity.

### James Fabian: Reversing Severe Kidney Disease

After being diagnosed with chronic kidney disease and given just 45 days to live, James Fabin took control of his health through extensive research, dietary changes, and a collaborative medical team. Determined to improve his condition without dialysis or a transplant, he embraced a holistic approach, addressing diet, stress, blood sugar, and blood pressure management. Despite complications like severe anemia, he persevered and significantly improved his health. Inspired by his journey, Fabin founded Dadvice TV, a YouTube community providing kidney disease education and support. Now thriving, he encourages others to be proactive, seek reliable medical guidance, and make lifestyle changes to improve their quality of life.

### Kris Carr: Thriving with Cancer

In 2003, wellness advocate Kris Carr was diagnosed with a rare and incurable stage IV cancer called epithelioid hemangioendothelioma. Instead of resigning herself to the prognosis, she chose to overhaul her lifestyle completely. Carr adopted a plant-based diet, embraced holistic healing, and took charge of her mental and emotional well-being. Her journey led her to become a New York Times bestselling author, wellness coach, and filmmaker, inspiring thousands of others to prioritize nutrition

and self-care as a means of managing chronic illness.

### Dr. Terry Wahls: Overcoming Multiple Sclerosis

Dr. Terry Wahls, a physician and researcher, was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS) in 2000. Her condition rapidly deteriorated, leaving her confined to a wheelchair. Frustrated with the limitations of conventional medicine, she began studying functional medicine and nutrition. Through a structured diet emphasizing nutrient-dense foods, specifically the Wahls Protocol, she was able to regain mobility and dramatically improve her quality of life. Today, Dr. Wahls shares her knowledge through books, lectures, and medical research, empowering others to use nutrition as a tool for healing.

### Joe Cross: Beating Autoimmune Disease and Obesity

Australian filmmaker Joe Cross found himself battling obesity, an autoimmune disease, and a laundry list of medications. Rather than continuing down this path, he embarked on a 60-day juice fast, documenting his journey in the film *Fat, Sick & Nearly Dead*. His dramatic weight loss and improvement in health led him to become a global advocate for plant-based nutrition and juicing, helping countless others take control of their health through diet and lifestyle changes.

### The Key Takeaway: You Have the Power to Change Your Health

These stories highlight the power of self-advocacy, resilience, and determination when facing serious health conditions. While not every disease can be cured, many can be managed or even reversed through lifestyle changes, alternative therapies, and a proactive approach to healthcare. Here are some ways you can become your own health advocate:

Do Your Research: Read medical literature, explore holistic approaches, and learn about alternative treatment options.

Ask Questions: Don’t hesitate to question your doctor’s recommenda-



tions and seek second opinions.

Adopt a Proactive Lifestyle: Prioritize nutrition, exercise, stress management, and sleep to optimize your overall health.

Listen to Your Body: Pay attention to symptoms and changes in your body, and take action when something feels off.

Taking control of your health can be daunting, but as these individuals have shown, it can also be life-changing. By becoming an informed and active participant in your healthcare, you can empower yourself to live a longer, healthier life.



**nami**  
National Alliance on Mental Illness

**Ruston**

Invites you to our

**Annual Women's Health Symposium**  
“Transformation: Renewing the Mind, Body, and Spirit”

**Saturday, March 22, 2025 | 10:00 am - 12:00 pm**  
**Rocky Valley Missionary Baptist Church**  
**Simsboro, Louisiana**

Free to the public.

**RSVP (318) 247-3982 or (318) 614-2623.**

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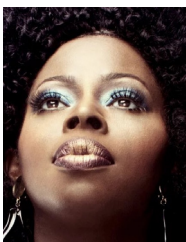




# Tribute to Angie Stone

By Lena Claybon

She was a voice of a generation. The music world and fans are still grieving the loss of Angie Stone, the celebrated soul singer and hip-hop pioneer, who passed away unexpectedly at the age of 63. Stone died early Saturday morning, March 1, in a car accident in Montgomery, Alabama. Stone’s musical career spanned decades, leaving an indelible mark on R&B and hip-hop. She first gained recognition in the late 1970s as a member of The Sequence, one of the first all-female rap groups. Their 1979 hit, "Funk You Up," was groundbreaking, cementing their place in hip-hop history. She later became known for her smooth vocals in the R&B group Vertical Hold in the early 1990s. As the neo-soul movement gained momentum in the late 1990s and early 2000s, Stone’s music resonated with a new wave of listeners. Songs like "No More Rain" and "Wish I Didn't Miss You" became anthems of the era, placing her among the genre’s most influential artists, alongside Erykah Badu and Musiq Soulchild. Her two children, Diamond Stone and Michael Archer, released a heartfelt statement following her passing. "Never in a million years did we expect to receive this horrible news. Our mom is and will always be our everything," they said.



Angie Stone

Archer is Stone’s son with singer-songwriter D'Angelo. Born in Columbia, South Carolina, Stone’s musical roots began in gospel music, inspired by the performances her father took her to see. She honed her songwriting skills as a child, saving money from odd jobs to record demos. Her passion led her to success with Vertical Hold, whose track "Seems You're Much Too Busy" became an R&B hit in 1993. Stone launched her solo career with the release of "Black Diamond" in 1999 under Arista Records, earning gold certification and two Soul Train Lady of Soul Awards. Her follow-up album, "Mahogany Soul" (2001), also achieved gold status. Over the years, she received three Grammy nominations, along with widespread recognition for her work in music, film, and television. Fans may also remember her for her role in the 2003 movie "The Fighting Temptations" and for performing the theme song of the sitcom "Girlfriends." According to her record label, SRG/ILS, Stone was on her way back to Atlanta after performing in Mobile, Alabama, when the crash occurred. Authorities report that the Mercedes-Benz Sprinter van she was in overturned on Interstate

65 before being struck by a semi-truck. Stone was the only fatality among the nine passengers, with the others sustaining injuries. The cause of the crash remains under investigation. Her longtime manager, Walter Millsap III, expressed deep sorrow over the tragic loss. "We are truly devastated. There are simply no words to express how we feel," he said. Claude Villani, CEO of SRG/ILS, echoed the sentiment, stating, "I could not believe it when I received the call that the most beautiful soul is now gone. I am completely heartbroken." Stone was scheduled to perform at a college basketball championship halftime show in Baltimore just hours after the crash. Instead, the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) honored her with a moment of silence. CIAA Commissioner Jacqie McWilliams-Parker praised Stone’s legacy, calling her "an award-winning singer, community activist, and role model whose soulful artistry and spirit made an indelible mark on her community, our nation, and the world." Just days before her passing, Stone took to Instagram to share her excitement about upcoming projects, hinting at new music, television, and film ventures. "A lot of stuff is going on that I don't want to let out the bag just yet," she said in a video posted on Feb. 17. "But you can see there's a big grin on my face." Her voice, spirit, and contributions to music and culture will not be forgotten.

# Broadway’s Youngest Black Director to Visit GSU

Zhailon Levingston, Broadway’s youngest Black director and a Shreveport native, will visit Grambling State University for a two-day event hosted by the Department of Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA). Please mark your calendars for March 17-18. The event is open to all creatives—whether you’re a writer, actor, musician, visual artist, or simply someone looking to take the next step in your creative journey. It’s an incredible opportunity to hear from an accomplished storyteller, director, and activist. Event details include a keynote address by Levingston, "Redefining

Success: Overcome the Fear of Failure and Take the Next Steps", on Monday from 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., which includes a question-and-answer session, in the Floyd L. Sandle Theatre, Conrad Hutchinson Performing Arts Center. There will be an Interactive Workshop: "From Vision to Reality: Tools for Advancing Your Creative Projects", on Tuesday from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. in Room 122 of the Conrad Hutchinson Performing Arts Center. To RSVP, please use the following Link: <https://forms.office.com/r/Ufktfs0ump> or call (318) 274-2201.

GSU DEPARTMENT OF VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS



**KEYNOTE**  
March 17, 2025  
11:00 AM-12:30 PM

**WORKSHOP**  
March 18, 2025  
11:00 AM-1:00 PM

**LOCATION**  
Conrad Hutchinson  
Performing Arts  
Center

**Zhailon Levingston**  
Broadway Director

**REDEFINING  
SUCCESS**

Overcome the fear of failure and take the next steps in your creative journey with strategies from Broadway's youngest Black director.

**RSVP**



**MORE INFORMATION**  
+ 1 (318) 274-2201

Zhailon Levingston

# Black Teen From New Jersey Scores Perfect 1600 on SAT

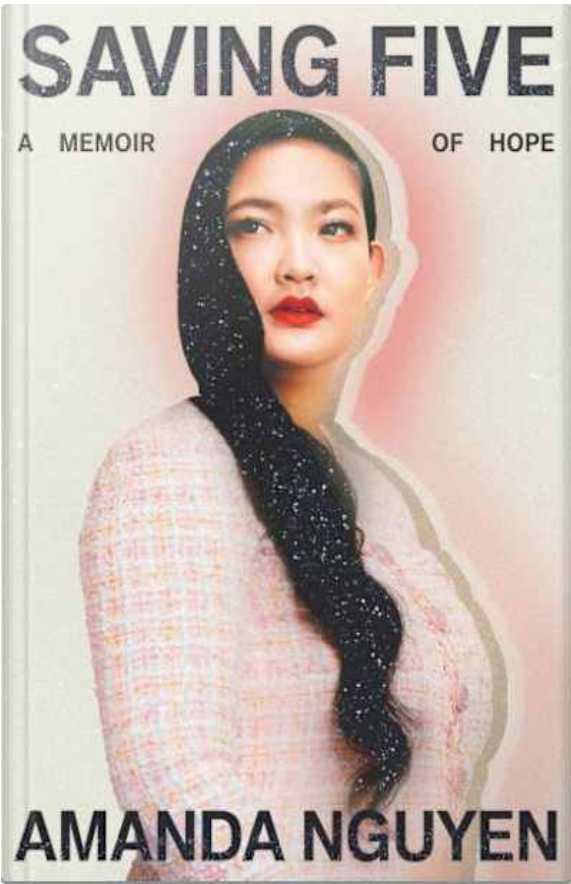
(Source: BlackNews.com)

**NATIONWIDE** — Sahli Negassi, a 17-year-old African American student from West Orange, New Jersey, has earned a perfect 1600 on the SAT. This rare achievement places him among less than 1% of test-takers nationwide. Born in Manhattan, New York, and raised in West Orange, Sahli’s academic journey started at Mount Pleasant and St. Cloud elementary schools. He never attended preschool but credits his older siblings’ textbooks for building his early knowledge. Seeing his perfect score was a surreal moment for him. “I walked out of [my] first period [class] and immediately called my mom,” he told WOBOE. “I showed it to a classmate, but then I got nervous and joked that it was Photoshopped. Even now, it still doesn’t feel real. But more than anything, I was relieved — I had finally proven to myself that it was possible.” Sahli says that he prepared for the SAT mostly on his own, using free resources like Khan Academy and YouTube. His rigorous AP coursework, particularly in Language, U.S. History, and Calculus, also played a key role. Balancing SAT prep with AP exams and track competitions was tough, but he made time whenever he could. “Really, the hardest part of studying was finding time. I had to make it whenever I could — at meals, during slow class periods, on bus rides. Taking it one question at a time was good enough,” he said. Outside of academics, Sahli is an active member of the cross-country and track teams. He also leads several organizations, serving as president of the math team and the school’s National Honor Society chapter. Additionally, he is a varsity chess team member and plays in the Royal Strings ensemble.

West Orange High School Principal Oscar Guerrero praised Sahli for his academic and extracurricular success, saying, “Sahli represents the best of West Orange High School. His achievement on the SAT is incredible, but what’s just as impressive is how he manages to excel across so many different activities.” Looking ahead, Sahli hopes to attend Harvard and pursue a career in law. He said, “Give me 10 years and I’ll be out in the world doing something more important than a standardized test.” His advice to other students is simple: “Be intentional. Know what you want for yourself, and throw your whole body at it.”



Sahli Negassi



# Saving Five: Book Review

A read worthy true story

The book, entitled *Saving Five* by Amanda Nguyen is a great reflection. What would you say to your five-year-old self? In this imaginative and moving memoir, a Nobel Peace Prize nominee reflects on her pursuit of justice after a devastating sexual assault. The book, “Shows us how to reclaim the full spectrum of our lives, replete with pain, fury, creativity, and recovered dreams” (Chanel Miller, author of *Know My Name*). From an activist recently selected for Blue Origin’s historic all-female spaceflight launching this spring. The book is one of *TIME* and *Oprah Daily’s* Most Anticipated Books of 2025. Natalie Portman’s Book Club Pick for March. “Amanda’s story--innovatively told by versions of herself at different ages--underscores the lasting power of speaking your truth, building a movement, and never losing sight

of your dreams.” --Melinda French Gates “In *Saving Five*, Amanda Nguyen shows us how to reclaim the full spectrum of our lives, replete with pain, fury, creativity, and recovered dreams.” --Chanel Miller, author of *Know My Name* A brave and imaginative memoir by the Nobel Peace Prize nominee Amanda Nguyen, detailing her healing journey and groundbreaking activism in the aftermath of her rape at Harvard. In 2013, the trajectory of Amanda Nguyen’s life was changed forever when she was raped at Harvard. Determined to not let her assault derail her goal of joining NASA after graduation, Nguyen opted for her rape kit to be filed under “Jane Doe.” But she was shocked to learn her choice to stay anonymous gave her only six months to take action before the state destroyed her kit, rendering any future legal action impossible.

Nguyen knew then that she had two options: surrender to a law that effectively denied her justice, or fight for a change--not only for herself but for survivors everywhere. A heart-wrenching memoir of survival and hope, *Saving Five* boldly braids the story of Nguyen’s activism--which resulted in Congress’s unanimous passage of the Sexual Assault Survivors’ Rights Act in 2016--with a second, beautifully imagined adventure, of Nguyen’s younger selves as they--at ages five, fifteen, twenty-two, and thirty--navigate through dramatic incarnations of the emotional stages of her path toward healing, not only from her rape but from the violent turmoil of her childhood. The result is a groundbreaking work that seamlessly blends memoir with a moving journey toward acceptance and hope, forging a path ahead that is as inspiring as it is instructive. From one of the most influential activists (and now astronauts) of her time, *Saving Five* is at once a tribute to resilience, a celebration of healing through action, and a resounding cry to change the world.



Sports

# Farewell to GSU Football Legend, Robert Parham

A Grave side memorial service for GSU Football Legend and Hall of Famer, Robert Parham, will be held Saturday, March 29, at 10:30 a.m., Rest Haven Garden Cemetery, 2284 Candler Rd., Decatur Ga. 30032.

**Editor’s Note:** As a tribute, the following article is a reprint from May, 2018 (*The Gramblinite*)

## 40-Year Road to Graduation, “Never, Never, Never Give Up”

By Joice M. Dunn

Standing among this Spring’s candidates for graduation, Robert Parham Jr. will deliver on a promise he made to himself and his mother more than 40 years ago.

For Parham, Grambling State University on Friday, May 11 is more than just a walk across the stage. The Kinesiology major will enter the Frederick C. Hobdy Center to fulfill a decades-old dream.

“I promised my mother years ago that I would finish my degree at GSU and it feels good that I was able to keep my promise,” Parham said. “I was inspired to push forward by my son who has a bachelor’s and master’s degree in mathematics and has been working for the last eight years.”

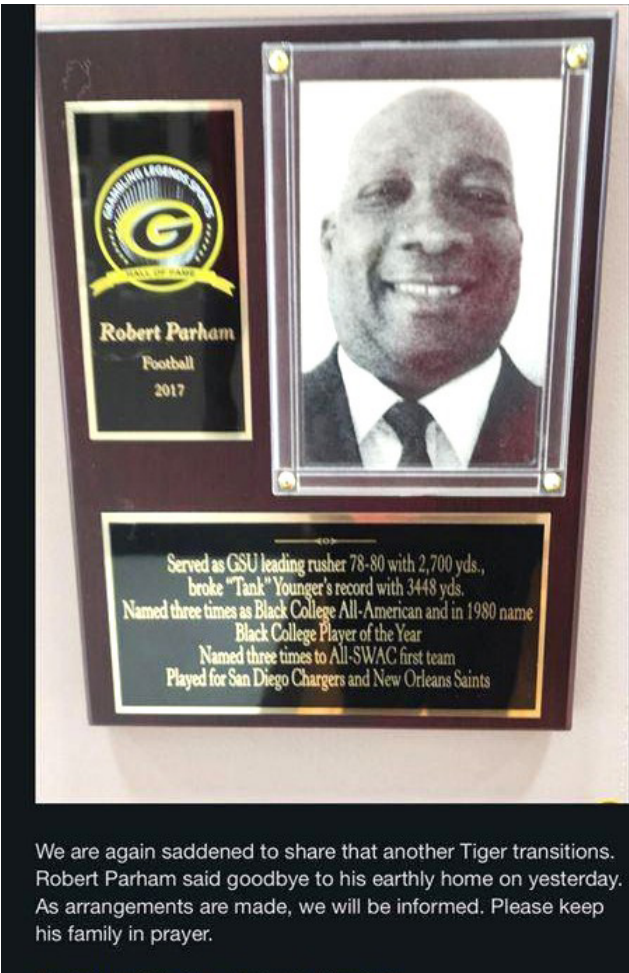
A native of Atlanta, Georgia, Parham is best known to most for his three decades of football achievement. In 1981 he was selected by and played for the San Diego Chargers of The National Football League for two years and was a free agent with the New Orleans Saints in 1983 -1984.

As Grambling State University’s leading rusher from 1978-80, he amassed 2,700 yards over that span as GSU won three consecutive SWAC titles. He was three times named Black College All-American, three times named to the All-SWAC first team and in 1980; he was named Black College Player of the Year. He was also awarded the Jake Gaither Award and broke the rushing record of Paul “Tank” Younger having gained 3,448 yards.

While an unconventional path, these achievements paved the way for Parham to become a GSU Legend, which helped him ultimately fulfill his graduation dream.

“Being inducted into The Grambling Legends Hall of Fame in 2017 inspired and encouraged me along the way. I was also fortunate to have in my corner great coaches, mentors, an extraordinary department chair advisor, excellent professors, along with family and friends.”

Those mentors and coaches include The Legend-



R. Parham

ary Coach Eddie G. Robinson and Coach Melvin Lee, both from Grambling State. Parham, a first-time All-Conference running back in each of the three seasons he played for Grambling. He graduated from Gordon High School in Decatur, Georgia where he was also a two-time All-State and a three-time All-DeKalb County first-team fullback and linebacker.

“I am very excited to award Robert Parham his degree. As a young man growing up here in Grambling, I remember Mr. Parham being an outstanding football player for Coach Eddie Robinson,” explained Grambling State president Richard Gallot. “I truly admire his desire to complete his coursework and earn his degree. I hope his story of never giving up and finishing something he started, serves as motivation to others that it’s never too late to get your degree.”

The currently retired and inductee from the 1976-



Local All-star and NFL player Robert Parham Achieves Graduation Dream after 40-years

1980 era said his advice to anyone returning to school would be, “to never, never, never, give up.”

Parham has spent most of his adult life helping his community, family, and friends advance by providing. Known to most as a “gentle giant” he has broken records on and off the field using his love for sports as a tool to help build his career as a man whose word is his bond.

“From the moment that Robert reached out to the Department of Kinesiology, Sport & Leisure Studies (KSLS), it was apparent in his tone of voice of how important completing his undergraduate degree was to him. He has been persistent in communicating with the KSLS advisors on a degree completion plan based on his prior academic work,” said Dr. Obadiah Simmons Jr., department head.

During the past 20 years, Parham has worked in law enforcement as a Deputy Sheriff of the Fulton County Sheriff’s Department; The Fulton County Police Department Jail Division; and as a Police Officer with the State of Georgia Building Authority Police Department, Atlanta, Georgia. Earlier in his career, Parham also served as an Off-Shore Drill Serviceman with the Shell Oil Company in New Iberia, Louisiana.

He is the proud father of one son, Kellen Parham (Ashley) of San Antonio, Texas and two granddaughters Kennedy and Kailen.

Congratulations Robert Parham on fulfilling your graduation dream.

# Flippin Scores 19 in GSU Regular Season Finale, Tigers Fall 59-47

## Grambling Athletics

GRAMBLING, La. | The Grambling State University men's basketball team fell to Alabama State 59-47 on Saturday afternoon in its regular season finale on Wilis Reed Court at the Fredrick C. Hobdy Assembly Center.

GSU's James Flippin continued his hot streak, notching his fourth straight game reaching double figure scoring. The junior forward scored a game-high 19 points on 7-of-13 shooting and with four rebounds. He was the lone Tigers to score in double digits.

Neither team shot the ball particularly well with both squads shooting just under 35 percent from the field. GSU shot 32.7 percent (16-of-49) while ASU connected on 34.9 percent of its attempts (22-of-63).

Grambling State led for nearly the entirety of the first half, eventually carrying a 24-22 lead into the locker room.

The turning point of the game came with GSU holding a 29-24 lead with 17:52 remining in the game. Alabama State used a 22-4 run over the next 10:14 to grab a 46-33 lead.

A jumper by Louis Hutchinson with 1:26 to play got the Tigers within eight points at 55-47, but that was the last bucket GSU managed.

TJ Madlock led Alabama State with a 16-point, 10-rebound double-double. He also had two steals and an assist.



James Flippin

# Lady Tigers Close Regular Season with Convincing 69-53 Win Over Alabama State



Lady Tigers - GSU Women's Basketball Team. Photo credit: T. Valentino

## Grambling Athletics

GRAMBLING, La. | Grambling State closed out its regular season with a commanding 69-53 victory over Alabama State on Saturday afternoon at the Fredrick C. Hobdy Assembly Center. The Tigers took control in the second half, using a strong defensive effort and balanced scoring to secure the win.

With the win, the Tigers notched back-to-back winning seasons for the first time since 2018.

Grambling State (15-14 overall, 12-6 in SWAC) outscored Alabama State 36-20 in the second half, turning a close contest into a comfortable victory.

The Tigers held the Hornets to just 20 percent shooting in the fourth quarter while converting at a 53.3 percent clip themselves.

Kahia Warmasley led Grambling

State with 16 points, knocking down two three-pointers. Sharonica Hartsfield added 13 points, six rebounds, and four assists, while Shaniah Nunn contributed 10 points and five rebounds.

Lydia Freeman continued to dominate inside, scoring nine points and grabbing seven rebounds.

The Tigers dominance in the paint proved to be a key factor, outscoring Alabama State (6-24 overall, 4-14 in SWAC) 36-26 down low and out-rebounding them 44-41. Grambling State also capitalized on turnovers, scoring 20 points off Alabama State's 17 miscues.

Despite a strong effort from Alabama State's Cordasia Harris, who led all scorers with 17 points, Grambling State's defensive presence and depth kept the Hornets from making a late push.