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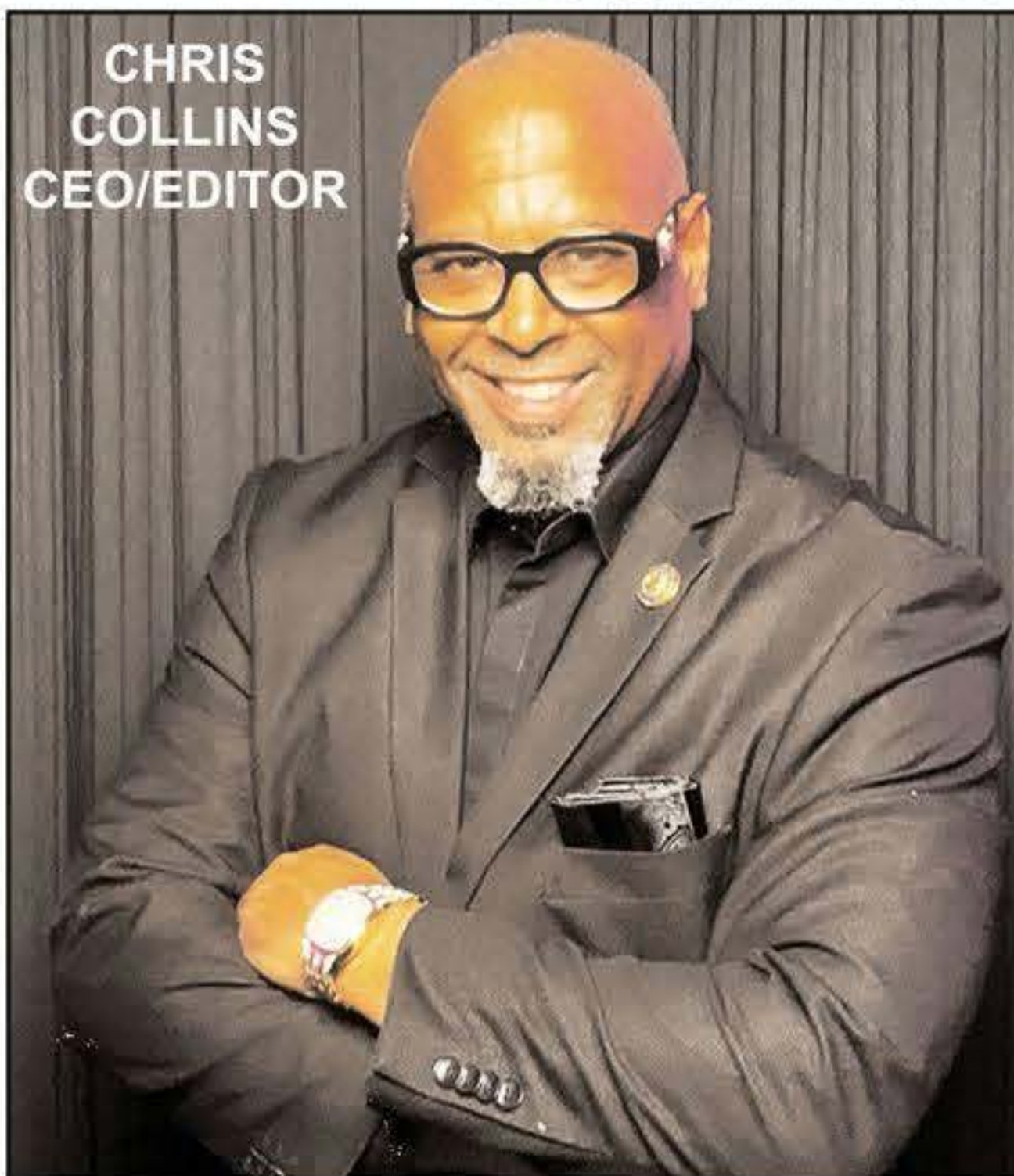
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CHRIS
COLLINS
CEO/EDITOR

A Word from the Editor

Celebrating 32 years of providing quality news to our readers

Dear Readers of the nation's premier faith-based and professional newspaper for winners, Anointed News Journal (ANJ). I am taking this time personally to thank each and every individual that has read the Anointed News Journal. I hope you have been inspired by the many positive people interest stories, and stories that have uplifted and empowered our communities.

I am also taking this time to thank our many advertisers that saw the value in utilizing ANJ to accomplish your marketing goals for your companies and/or purpose. ANJ remains the VOICE of Camden city and the SOURCE for connecting people together. If you are in business and need to advertise, we can help. Based in Camden, NJ, the Anointed News Journal has distribution locally in CAMDEN, BURLINGTON, GLOUCESTER, SALEM, CUMBERLAND, DELAWARE, NEW CASTLE, KENT, and PHILADELPHIA COUNTIES. Since 1995 ANJ has provided stories and distribution to 28 states across the country and 11 nations around the world.

Getting your message in front of more than 180,000 readers bi-weekly in print and much more via the world-wide web is a great way to reach the market you are looking for.

I am also thanking those individuals that have given resources to support our mission of publishing positive press. Your contributions are paramount and my heart continues to be filled with joy from the smallest contribution to the largest, every time I receive a contribution, I cannot hold my smile in. I am forever grateful. For those that have been reading ANJ for many years and have never given a contribution, now is a great time to do so.

ANJ is a free publication that is supported by its advertisers. We offer cost effective advertising giving advertisers the opportunity to get quality exposure at a comfortable price point. We offer RISK-FREE Advertising, which simply means if you are not satisfied, you will receive a complementary ad in an upcoming edition.

About Anointed News Journal

In May 1994 the CEO/Editor-in-Chief, Chris Collins received a vision from the Creator to write a business plan to seek funding for a grass-roots newspaper. For eight months and through Divine intervention, the business plan was rewritten for the ministry of the Anointed News Journal. The Holy Scripture given divinely to Collins was Habakkuk 2:2 (Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry). As a result, and with prayer and seeking God's direction, the name "Anointed" was given.

Knowing that English was not his favorite subject while attending school, and that his career goal had nothing to do with journalism, Collins completely trusted in the Creator while developing this business.

The name "Anointed" comes from the hands that God has anointed to master this work and profession. Collins left a career in law enforcement to pursue the vision he received from the Creator.

Using his hands cutting and pasting stories and artwork is how it all began. Typing, proofreading, and making sure things were camera-ready before the layout was the process before technology was included.

Today, 32 years later, ANJ is recognized as a leader in the newspaper industry. ANJ was awarded Best100 Small Businesses consecutively since 2017. In 2021 Chris Collins was recognized by CIO Magazine as a Top 50 Innovators of the Year.

Although it may seem as if newspapers are becoming obsolete, ANJ continues to thrive. As the daily press struggles due to increase rates that have simply priced them out of the market. Weekly newspapers continue to make their mark serving the community and its advertisers. Although many have embraced the digital divide, people still want their physical newspapers. Because of the types of "Peoples Interest Stories" found in ANJ, most readers save their copies for years. Although mainstream media focus on negative press, ANJ has built its legacy on positive stories. "We have written a lot of stories in the past 32 years, and in 32 years we still have not run out of great stories to write about the great people of Camden and surrounding areas," said Collins. "As we look at the rise of Camden, NJ and the great positive image it has today, I believe we helped to increase that image by sharing the positive stories Camden has to offer, and we've been doing that for 32 years now," said Collins.

My Ask!

This is what I am asking from you today. I am asking every reader of ANJ, those of you who believe in positive press and grass-roots press to make a financial contribution to support our mission. Many have been reading ANJ for 32 years and have never made a contribution but would like to. Now is the perfect time as we have entered into our 32nd season. For those who are unable to financially contribute, we are thankful for your continued prayers.

The Holy Scriptures in Matthew 7:7-8 (KJV) states, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

Luke 6:38 (KJV) states, "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."

I'm believing in the POWER of God. I'm believing in the POWER of God's People coming together. Yes, I'm believing in YOU.

1 John 5:14-15 (KJV) states, "And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask any thing according to His will, He heareth us: And if we know that He heareth us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him."

Please make all contributions payable to: Anointed News Journal, P.O. Box 309, Camden, NJ 08101. You can also visit: www.anointedonline.net click on Donation button. You can also Cash App to \$ANJEDITOR.

May God continue to bless you! May God continue to bless this world! May god continue to bless ANJ!

Yours truly,
Chris Collins, CEO/Editor-in-Chief

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Note: Opinions by columnists do not reflect those of the editor or staff. Feel free to respond.

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Rediscover Africa: Celebrating Excellence and Building Legacy Across the African Diaspora

CAMDEN, NJ - As the world prepares for the 2026 FIFA World Cup, a mother-daughter team from Ghana, currently residing in South Jersey is working to create opportunities that extend far beyond the soccer field. Anita "Annie" Barakat and Hadia Barakat, leaders of Rediscover Africa, are dedicated to strengthening connections between Africa and the global African diaspora through cultural exchange, business development, educational initiatives, and community engagement. Through the African Diaspora Business Summit, the IDEA Gala Night, Culture Rocks by Nini, and ongoing partnerships with leaders in Ghana and the United States, they are helping to build bridges that foster unity, investment, pride, and a greater appreciation for Africa's rich contributions to the world.

In an exclusive interview with the nation's premier faith-based and professional newspaper for winners, Anointed News Journal, Anita and Hadia Barakat share their vision for reconnecting the African diaspora to the motherland while creating new pathways for cultural, educational, and economic empowerment.

Collins:

Who is Anita Barakat?

Anita:

Anita Barakat is a Ghanaian born and raised in Ghana, West Africa. I have lived in America for a little over ten years. Professionally, I trained as a stenographer secretary, and currently I work in healthcare. I am also the Founder and CEO of Culture Rocks by Nini, your one-stop Afrocentric store, and the Founder of the Rediscover Africa Organization.

Collins:

And Hadia, tell us, who is Hadia Barakat?

Hadia:

I am currently the Executive Director of Rediscover Africa. I am a recent graduate of Rowan University, where I studied Molecular and Cellular Biology, Medical Laboratory Science, and minored in Neuroscience. Like my mom, I was also born and raised in Ghana and lived there for about 17 years before coming to the United States as an international student.

I am passionate about African diaspora engagement. I work with organizations such as the African Diaspora Youth Hub. Just this February, I had the honor of joining Rowan University's delegation to the African Union Model Nations. I am excited to be with Rediscover Africa and excited about the initiatives we have coming up.

Collins:

Tell us about Rediscover Africa and why it was important for you to start that organization.

Hadia:

Like my mom said, we started out with a store called Culture Rocks in 2021. We first began with a cart in Cherry Hill and later opened a store space at the outlets in Blackwood. Through interactions with our customers, we had the opportunity to meet an amazing African diaspora community, including African Americans, Afro-Latinos, and many others.

We discovered that it was about much more than fashion and people wanting to wear items from the motherland. Many people had questions about the continent we come from. They wanted to experience it and learn more about it. We realized there was more work to do than simply introducing our fashion to people.

That realization led to the creation of Rediscover Africa. The initiative is designed to help people not only discover their identity, but actually rediscover their identity. We recognized that, over the years, there have been many stereotypes about the continent and about what it means to be African or African American. We wanted to give people the opportunity to rediscover what Africa truly is. That is what inspired Rediscover Africa.

Collins:

It's my understanding that you also organize trips to Africa. As the world prepares for the 2026 FIFA World Cup, we're expecting a large delegation from Ghana. What does that mean to you, having people from your native land come to America? How are you preparing, and what goes through your mind?



Anita:

At Rediscover Africa, our main goal is to help bridge the gap between the continent—the motherland of Africa—and the global African diaspora. The World Cup tournament season presents a tremendous opportunity by bringing soccer fans and delegates from Africa, especially from Ghana. Thank God our motherland, Ghana, qualified to play.

A lot of soccer fans and delegates will be coming from Ghana to America, and that opens the opportunity we have always been looking for. We bridge the gap in several ways, including through student educational programs and business summit conferences. Many businesses from Ghana will also be coming to meet with business partners here in the United States.

In addition, we will be hosting seminars on school exchange programs and discussing our community development initiatives. As many Ghanaians receive the opportunity to visit America for the first time, they will also have access to touring different parts of the country.

In return, we offer similar opportunities to members of the global African diaspora here in America by introducing them to the motherland. We organize trips to Ghana and other West African countries as well.

The World Cup is a major global platform, and having it take place here in the United States is historic.

Hadia:

Having the Ghanaian community here during the World Cup is very significant because, as my mom said, it is part of bridging the gap. There are many ways to accomplish that, and sports is one of them.

It is not just about people coming here for sports. There will also be cultural exchange, business exchange, and educational exchange. One of the things we are doing during that period is hosting our Diaspora Enstoolment Ceremony. We will have a cultural delegation from Ghana, approximately 20 to 25 people, visiting the United States.

Beyond participating in the ceremony, they will also take part in sporting events, business events, and cultural tourism activities. They will have the opportunity to learn about and tour the City of Camden. What many people do not realize is the historical connection that Ghana shares with Camden, and that is something we will be introducing them to.

I also believe this will give the African American diaspora community an opportunity to experience Ghanaian culture firsthand. When it comes to football—which is what we call soccer—football is a major part of life in Africa and in Ghana. I do not think many people in America fully appreciate how deeply rooted it is in our culture.

Ghanaian football fans are passionate in the way they celebrate, dress in traditional attire, sing, and participate in chants and festivities. This presents a wonderful opportunity for people here to learn more about who we are as a country and as a continent.

Collins:

I find it amazing that the two of you do so much, not just here in New Jersey, but also in Ghana. It seems that God has given you favor to connect with the government of Ghana, receive its support, and be granted the opportunity to organize an event of this magnitude. At this time, I'm referring to the summit that you are putting together for everyone coming in for the World Cup. Tell us a little about the summit, when it will take place,

and what opportunities will be available.

Hadia:

Yes. The African Diaspora Business Summit (ADB Summit) will take place on June 18 and 19, Thursday and Friday, from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

The workshop and speaker panel portion of the summit will run from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., while the exhibition and networking sessions will take place from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

This summit is another avenue we are using to bridge the gap between the African continent and the diaspora. We will have a number of businesses and organizations coming from Ghana to showcase what they do, discuss their industries, and highlight various investment opportunities in Ghana.

As I mentioned earlier, there are still many stereotypes about Africa. When people think about business opportunities, they often do not realize the level of growth and innovation taking place across Africa's different industries and sectors. Africa is one of the fastest-growing economies in the world, but many people are unaware of the specific opportunities available and often ask, "How can I invest?" or "What opportunities exist?"

To address those questions, we will have industry experts and speakers sharing insights into various sectors. We are expecting representation from the oil and gas industry, STEM education and innovation, artificial intelligence and technology, cocoa production, agribusiness, sports and recreation, and many other sectors.

This event will also provide an opportunity for these organizations to connect with the diaspora community and explore opportunities within the United States, particularly for companies in Ghana and across Africa that are interested in expanding into the U.S. market.

Ultimately, the summit is about cross-border collaboration, sharing knowledge and insights, and discovering ways we can help each other prosper. We will have a series of speakers and panelists discussing challenges facing both communities and exploring practical solutions. Most importantly, we will focus on how Africans on the continent and members of the diaspora can grow together.

We are honored to have the official support of the Diaspora Affairs Office of the President of Ghana. The Deputy Director from that office will be attending as our keynote speaker. We will also have representatives from several ministries, including the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Tourism, and the Ministry of Trade. They will be present to share valuable insights and help make the event a success.

Two key industries that the diaspora community consistently expresses interest in are real estate and the financial and banking sectors. These industries often provide pathways for people to integrate into Ghanaian society, whether they are visiting, relocating, investing, or conducting business in Africa.

We will also have legal professionals participating as speakers. The legal systems in the United States and Ghana are very different, and people often have questions about topics such as incorporating a business, purchasing property, relocating, or navigating legal requirements in Ghana. Our legal experts will be available to provide guidance and answer those questions for attendees who are interested in pursuing opportunities in Africa.

Continued from page 4

Collins:

For local people here in South Jersey, what opportunities are available to them? Are you looking for vendors, service providers, or organizations to set up information tables? Tell us about that.

Hadia:

Absolutely. This is a convening of the African diaspora community. When we use that term, depending on where someone is from, they may think only of the contemporary diaspora—people who immigrated here directly from the African continent. Others may think of African Americans whose ancestors arrived as a result of slavery. However, we are all part of the African diaspora community, and there have been some gaps and divisions between those groups over time.

What we hope to accomplish through this business summit is bringing that community together. Whether you are African American, from Ghana like my mom and me, from Liberia, Jamaica, the Caribbean islands, or anywhere else, this summit is about creating connections and building relationships across the diaspora.

This event provides a great platform to meet that community. If you own a business and would like to spread awareness about your products or services within the African diaspora community, this is an excellent opportunity to do so. We are also looking for organizations, companies, and institutions that can share resources, educational information, and services that would benefit the diaspora community.

We are open to vendors of all kinds, whether you are a small business owner, a media enterprise, a nonprofit organization, or a larger institution. We have opportunities and space available for everyone.

The event is free for community members to attend. However, there are vendor fees. Nonprofit organizations can participate for \$100, while for-profit businesses can secure vendor space for \$250.

Collins:

For those who are interested in participating, how can they contact you or register?

Hadia:

You can visit our website at www.rediscoverafrica.org. We have an ADB Summit section in the menu where you can find registration information. There is a registration button available for attendees, as well as information for vendors interested in reserving a space.

You can also call us at (856) 493-0296 or email us at info@rediscoverafrica.org.

In addition, you can find us on social media through Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn under Rediscover Africa.

We are also available in person at the Moorestown Mall through Culture Rocks. If you would like to meet with us, ask questions, share ideas, or learn more about our initiatives, we are always open to having those conversations.

Collins:

So what's next for Annie and Hadia?

Anita:

As of today, we are still looking forward to carrying out our mission and successfully executing our upcoming events, including the African Diaspora Business Summit on June 18 and 19.

I would also like to highlight what is happening the following day, June 20. That is the IDEA Gala Night, which stands for the International Diaspora Excellence Awards Gala.

This is a special event that takes place once each year. Throughout the year, we look for individuals within our communities who are making a positive impact in diverse and meaningful ways. Whether they are well-established leaders or individuals who are just beginning to make a difference, we seek out those who are helping others and contributing to their communities.

When we identify those individuals, we shine a spotlight on their work. We celebrate, honor, and recognize their achievements and the positive contributions they are making.

That is what the IDEA Gala Night is all about, and it will take place on June 20. We are eagerly anticipating the event and working hard to ensure its successful execution.

Hadia:

I am very passionate about the Gala Night, not just because it is an evening of celebration and fellowship, but because it is a night when Africa gets to shine.

As I mentioned earlier, there are many stereotypes and misconceptions about Africa. People often do not realize the incredible things Africans are accomplishing or the level of innovation taking place across the continent and throughout the diaspora. On this special night, we have the opportunity to celebrate Africa's achievements, innovation, and the remarkable individuals who are making a difference.

There are so many people doing extraordinary things, yet their stories often go untold. This event allows us to showcase who we are as Africans. We are innovators, changemakers, and people who dream big and accomplish great things. The Gala Night is about celebrating ourselves as a community and recognizing how far we have come.

Collins:

As with all events, sponsorship plays an important role. While you already have sponsors, you are still seeking additional support. We know time is of the essence, but if someone is interested in becoming a sponsor, are sponsorship opportunities still available?

Hadia:

Yes, absolutely.

We offer several sponsorship levels ranging from \$500 to \$10,000, as well as opportunities at various levels in between. We have sponsorship packages available, and anyone interested can contact us by phone or email for more information.

We also offer customized sponsorship opportunities. Some organizations prefer to contribute products or services rather than monetary support, and we welcome those partnerships as well. Sponsors have the opportunity to participate in all three days of activities, including both days of the African Diaspora Business Summit and the IDEA Gala Night. It is an excellent opportunity for businesses to gain visibility, build relationships, and connect with an engaged audience.

Anita:

I would also like to add that we are very privileged, honored, and grateful to have Anointed News Journal as one of our media sponsors. We truly appreciate the partnership and support. Thank you.

Collins:

Now for the big question: Will you be attending the World Cup, and who will you be cheering for?

Anita:

Of course—Ghana! Ghana all the way! The motherland, Ghana!

Hadia:

Since we're talking about Ghana, I'd like to mention that one of Africa's most celebrated World Cup players is from Ghana. His name is Asamoah Gyan, and he is Africa's all-time leading goal scorer in FIFA World Cup competition.

We are honored that he will be attending our African Diaspora Business Summit as a guest of honor. We will also have the privilege of recognizing him during the awards gala.

We are expecting Ghana to make a strong showing at the World Cup. Whether we advance to the next stage or not, Ghanaian supporters will show up in a big way. You will see us proudly wearing our red, gold, and green colors, and the black star. There will be face paint, traditional attire, trumpets, music, and plenty of excitement. We are very excited and looking forward to celebrating Ghana, Africa, and the global African diaspora during this historic occasion.

Collins:

Fantastic. The Anointed News Journal has over 180,000 readers. In conclusion, what would you like to say to the readers of Anointed?

Hadia:

First of all, I would like to thank the readers for supporting Anointed News Journal and staying connected with your brand throughout the years. Building community is extremely important, and publications like this play a valuable role in bringing people together.

I would encourage everyone to keep reading, stay informed, and remain connected. This is one of the ways we stay in touch with our culture, our communities, and the important things happening around us. We do not want to lose that connection.

Anointed News Journal is an important platform, not only here in New Jersey but beyond as well. We encourage readers to stay engaged, stay connected, and continue growing alongside the communities they serve. Thank you.

Anita:

One of the ways we continue bridging the gap between Africa and the diaspora is through partnerships and collaboration. I know that Anointed News Journal has already made its way to Ghana, and we are grateful for that. Through our partnerships with media organizations and news agencies in Ghana, we hope to work together in the near future to help expand the reach of Anointed News Journal and increase its distribution throughout Ghana as well. We look forward to strengthening those connections and helping build greater awareness and understanding between our communities.

Collins:

Thank you. And thank you as well for helping give Ghana a voice here in America.

Conclusion:

As Rediscover Africa continues to expand its impact, Anita and Hadia Barakat remain committed to building meaningful connections between Africa and the global African diaspora through culture, business, education, and community engagement. Through initiatives such as the African Diaspora Business Summit, the IDEA Gala Night, and international partnerships, they are creating opportunities for collaboration, investment, and a deeper understanding of Africa's rich heritage and growing influence. With the 2026 FIFA World Cup providing a historic platform for global engagement, they hope to inspire people on both sides of the Atlantic to strengthen relationships, celebrate excellence, and work together toward a more connected future.

By Chris Collins

Camden Schools Foundation Awards \$100,000 in Scholarships to Camden Students

Camden, NJ – The Camden Schools Foundation (CSF) awarded (30) \$2,500 scholarships to Camden City School District seniors. These scholarships were presented at the Camden Schools Foundation Annual Scholarship Awards Event on Tuesday, June 9, 2026, at Rutgers University Camden Student Campus Center, 326 Penn Street, Camden, NJ 08102, from 4pm to 7pm.

The Camden Schools Foundations has partnered with the William G. Rohrer Charitable Foundation for their renewable scholarship grant opportunities. 30 students from the Class of 2025 that are continuing to further their education have the opportunity to apply for this scholarship. These scholarships will also be presented at the Camden Schools Foundation 2026 Scholarship Awards Event.

Over the past 21 years, the CSF has awarded more than \$2.3M in scholarships and grants to Camden City School Districts seniors.

The Camden Schools Foundation holds two major scholarship events annually. The primary sources of funding are generated through sponsorship of the Annual Golf Tournament, the Hall of Fame Event, grants, and individual donations. These funds are crucial in supporting our scholarship program each year, allowing students the opportunity to further their education and fulfill their dreams. By investing in these scholarships, we aim to empower Camden City School District seniors to achieve academic success and pursue their career aspirations, contributing positively to their communities and beyond. Your support and contributions are invaluable in making these opportunities possible.

The media is invited to attend CSF's scholarship event to recognize the achievements of these distinguished students. We welcome the opportunity to facilitate personal interviews with these outstanding individuals.

Please advise your interest to interview any student prior to the event. Please RSVP your attendance, we look forward to collaborating with you.

For more information about Camden Schools Foundation and upcoming events, please visit www.camdenschoolsfoundation.net

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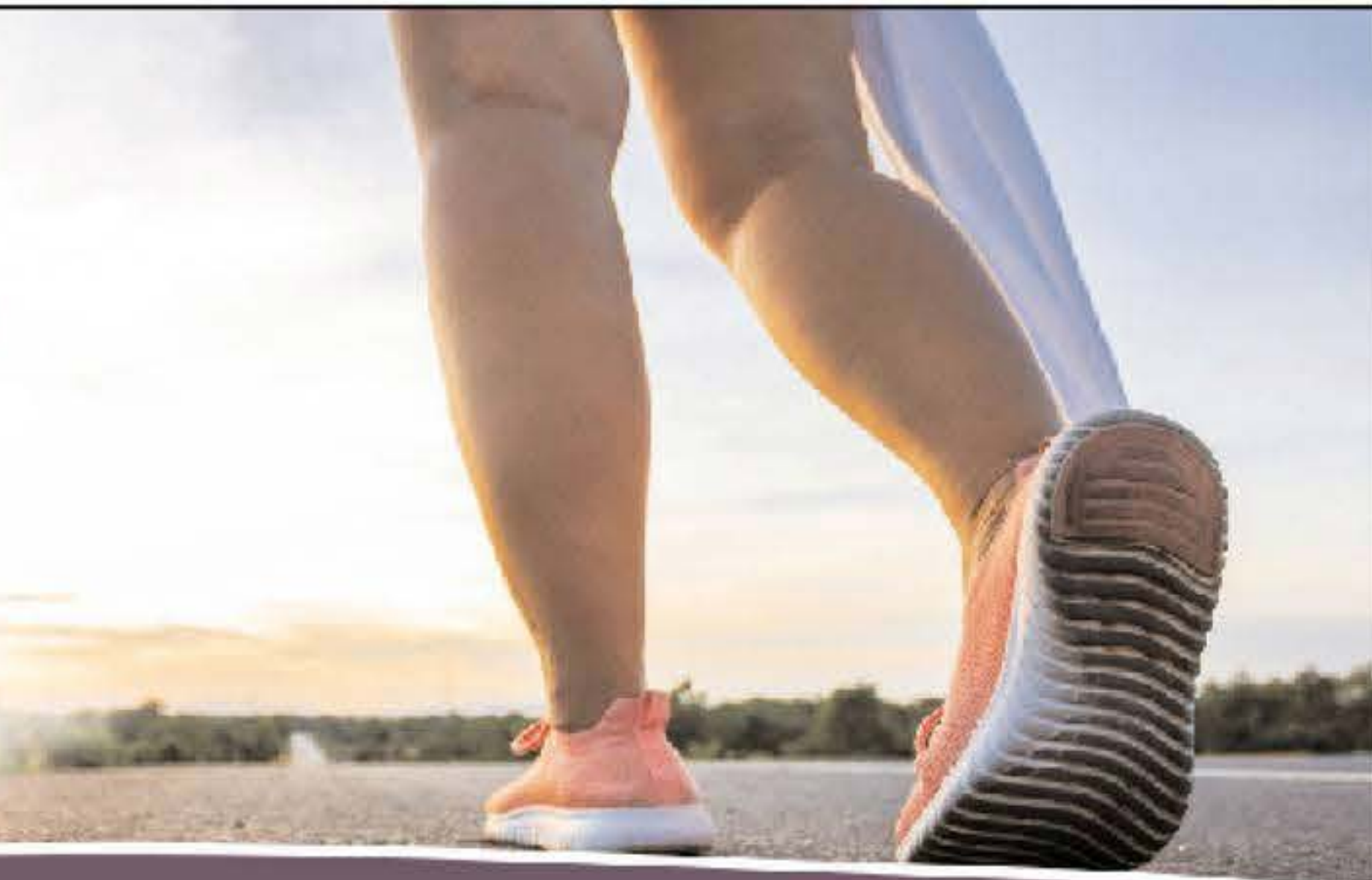
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June 21st Juneteenth Celebrating Family, Culture, History and Community Pride

CAMDEN, N.J. — Residents from across South Jersey are expected to gather in Farnham Park in Camden at noon on Sunday, June 21, 2026, for a day-long Juneteenth Independence Day Festival highlighting African American history, family values, cultural pride, and community unity.

The Camden Juneteenth Festival was founded by the late Robert Dickerson and R. Mangalisa Davis in 2001. This community-based effort included the cultivation of young talent to continue to the celebration. The baton was passed to Namibia El and Kysame Watson June 2025 who are now the coordinators of Juneteenth 2026. The festival which is organized by the City of Camden African American Commission, Inc. and PASHA Arts and community members, is the result of work designed to bring together people of all ages in recognition of both the historic significance of Juneteenth and the enduring contributions of African Americans to the nation's intellectual, cultural and social fabric.

When asked about their passion for this project, Mr. R. Mangalis Davis clearly stated, "Juneteenth is a time to reflect on our history, celebrate our achievements, and strengthen the bonds that connect our families and communities." Ms. Namibia El, driving force of the committee stated, "It is an opportunity to honor the past while inspiring future generations."

Juneteenth traces its origins to June 19, 1865, when Union troops arrived in Galveston, Texas, and informed enslaved African Americans that they were free. The announcement came more than two years after President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation. Since then, Juneteenth has become a symbol of freedom, resilience, and the continuing pursuit of equality and justice for all. We celebrate because of our belief that until everyone is free, none of us are truly free.

The Camden celebration will begin at 12 noon with a processional from Camden High School featuring the Camden High School Marching band and will feature a variety of attractions throughout the day. Live musical performances will showcase the rich influence of African American music and culture, while local vendors will offer food, merchandise, crafts, and community resources. Families can also enjoy games and activities designed specifically for children, creating an atmosphere that encourages learning, fellowship, and fun.

A highlight of this year's event will be a special gift recognizing fathers, grandfathers, mentors, and father figures. Demetrius Robinson shared that this recognition is intended to celebrate the positive impact fathers have on families and communities and to acknowledge their role in shaping future generations.

Inspired by the vision of Mama Joyce Johnson, committee member, attendees will experience historical artifacts from the Lest We Forget Museum, whose exhibits preserve and share important chapters of African American history. This display offers a deeper understanding of the struggles, sacrifices, and accomplishments that helped shape the nation.

Residents are encouraged to bring their families, support local vendors, enjoy the performances, and join in a celebration that honors the past while embracing the future.

Written and submitted by Veronica Boone Jones



PASHA ARTS Celebrates Freedom, Culture, and Community at the 25th Annual Camden Juneteenth Festival

CAMDEN, NJ — PASHA ARTS proudly announces the 25th Annual Camden Juneteenth Festival, a free public celebration honoring the emancipation of enslaved African Americans while uplifting the values of freedom, culture, resilience, and community. This milestone event will bring together residents, families, artists, and community partners for a day of reflection, education, entertainment, and unity.

As one of Camden's longest-running Juneteenth celebrations, the festival serves as both a commemoration of history and a celebration of the vibrant cultural contributions of African Americans. Through the power of music, art, and community engagement, the event creates an inclusive space where attendees of all ages can learn, connect, and celebrate together.

The festival is expected to welcome approximately 1,000 attendees, including youth, families, and seniors, and will feature several local artists and cultural performers. Programming will include live music, dance, spoken word, cultural presentations, educational activities, community resources, and family-friendly experiences designed to engage participants from diverse backgrounds.

"The Camden Juneteenth Festival is more than a celebration—it is an opportunity to honor our history, strengthen our community, and invest in the future," said a PASHA ARTS representative.

"For 25 years, this festival has provided a platform for cultural expression, education, and unity, reminding us of the importance of freedom and collective progress."

Festival Goals and Community Impact

The 25th Annual Camden Juneteenth Festival is designed to:

- Strengthen community connection by bringing together residents in a shared cultural experience that fosters understanding and belonging.
 - Support local creatives by providing paid performance opportunities and increased visibility for Camden-based artists and cultural practitioners.
 - Increase cultural awareness and education, with a goal of at least 75% of attendees reporting a greater understanding of Juneteenth's historical and contemporary significance.
 - Foster equity, pride, and empowerment, particularly among Black residents and youth, by celebrating African American history, resilience, and achievements.
- By activating public outdoor space as a welcoming gathering place, the festival transforms community spaces into hubs of creativity, learning, and civic engagement.

About PASHA ARTS

PASHA ARTS is a nonprofit, community-based organization dedicated to empowering youth and community members through creativity, cultural expression, and personal development.

Operating at the intersection of arts education, cultural preservation, and community engagement, PASHA ARTS serves residents throughout Camden County and surrounding communities.

As cultural custodians, PASHA ARTS believes that preserving and elevating the arts is essential to sustaining the historical and cultural fabric of diverse communities. Through visual, literary, performing, and traditional art forms, the organization works to protect and celebrate the stories, values, and artistic contributions that define our shared heritage.

PASHA ARTS' mission is to cultivate an inclusive environment where young people can explore their creative talents, build confidence, and engage in meaningful learning experiences through a customized arts and development curriculum.

The 25th Annual Camden Juneteenth Festival embodies this mission by using the arts as a vehicle for education, empowerment, cultural preservation, and community transformation.

Event Information

Event: 25th Annual Camden Juneteenth Festival

Host: PASHA ARTS

Location: Farnham Park 1648 Baird Blvd. Camden, New Jersey

Admission: Free and Open to the Public

For additional information, sponsorship opportunities, volunteer participation, or media inquiries, please contact:

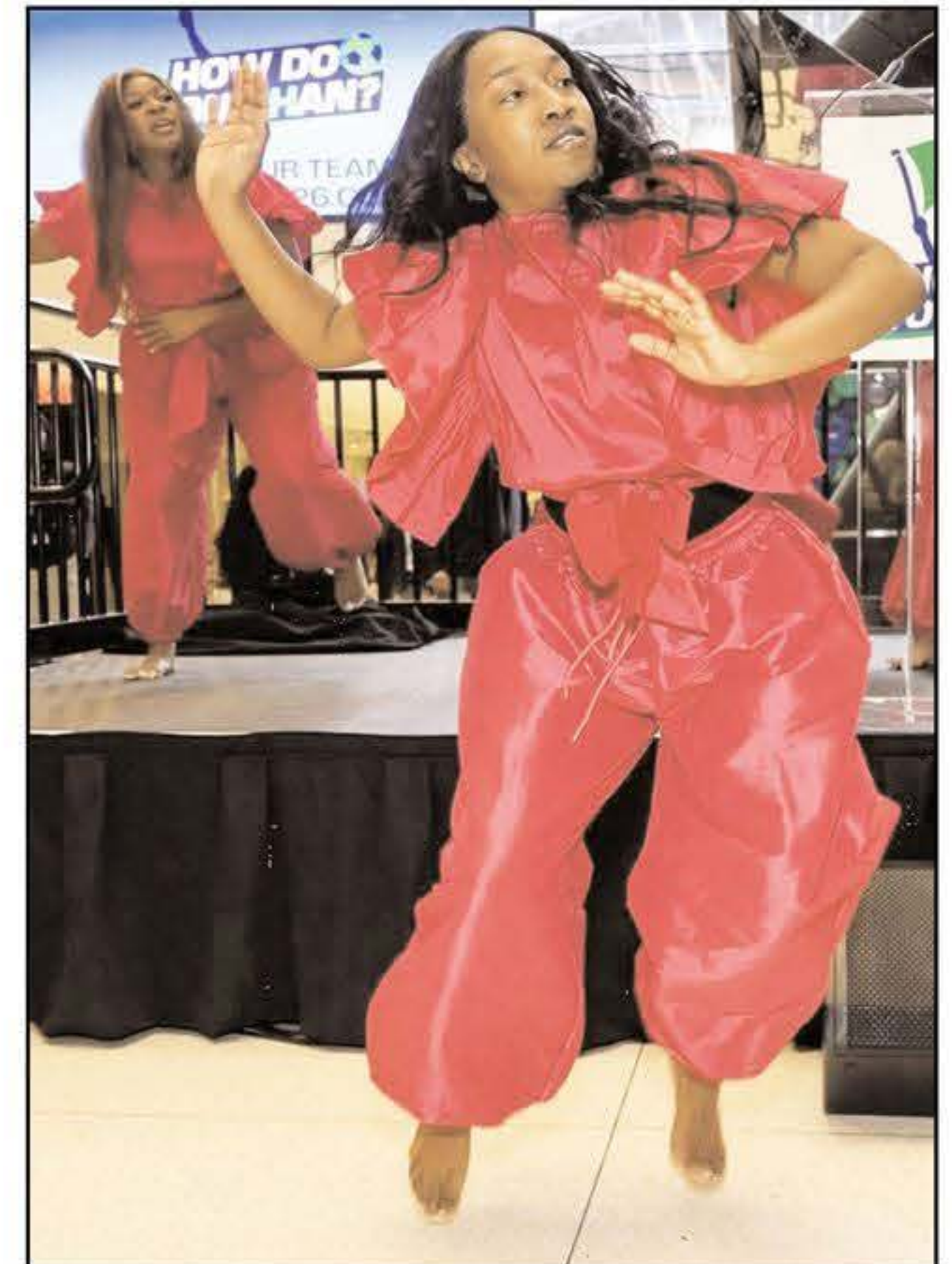
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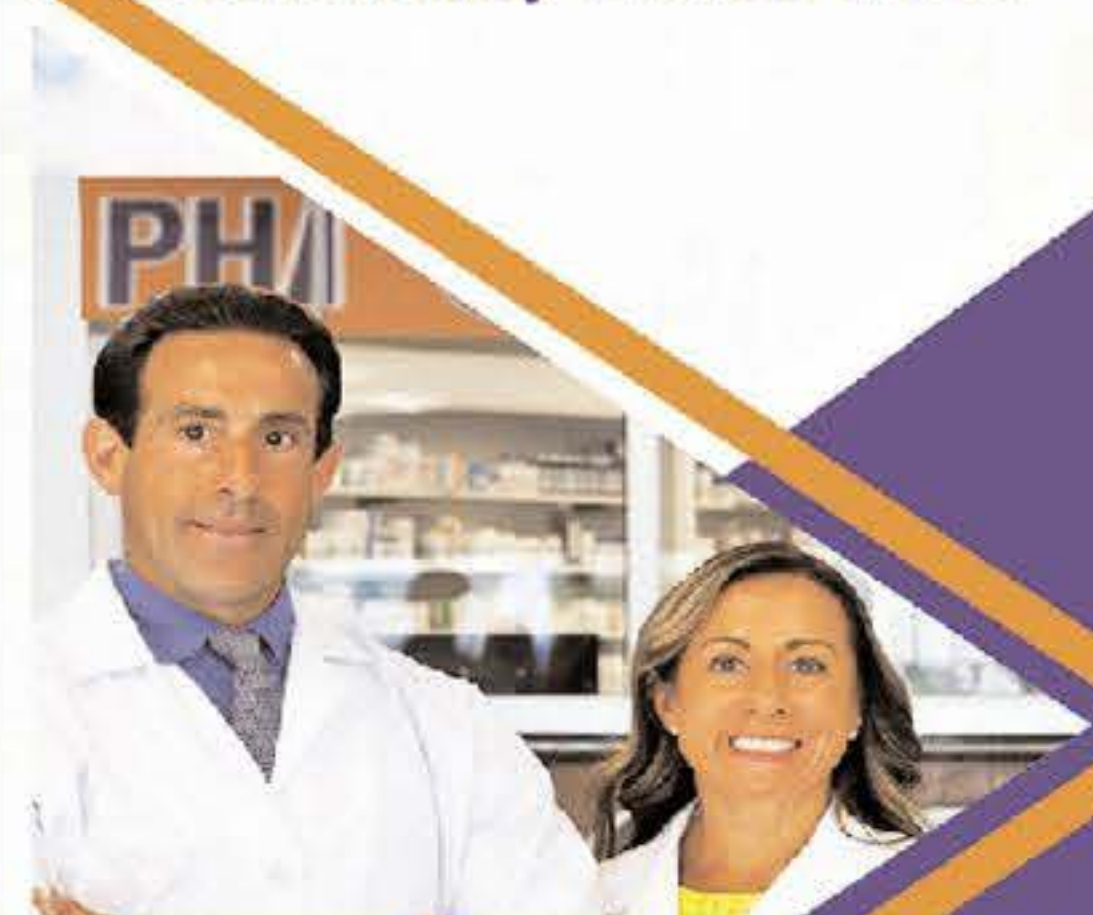


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President, CFO

Anthony V. Minniti, RPh
Vice President, Pharmacist in Charge

Allen R. Morton, RPh
Executive Director in Charge of Long Term Care at Home and Remote Fulfillment Services



Forcinito began his career with New Jersey American Water more than 35 years ago as a project engineer and built his expertise across a range of roles with increasing responsibility, including Operations Superintendent, Maintenance Manager, and Production/Field Operations Manager, before becoming Senior Director of South Operations. He became Vice President of Fleet for American Water in June 2024 and rejoined New Jersey American Water in April.

A lifelong resident of New Jersey, Forcinito holds a Bachelor of Science degree in mechanical engineering from Widener University and a Master of Science degree in water resources and environmental engineering from Villanova University. He is a registered Professional Engineer in the State of New Jersey and holds New Jersey DEP T, W, S, and C operator licenses. He is an active member of the American Water Works Association, the Water Environment Federation, and the American Society of Mechanical Engineers.

About New Jersey American Water

New Jersey American Water, a subsidiary of American Water (NYSE: AWK), is the largest regulated water utility in the state with approximately 875 dedicated employees working to provide safe, clean, reliable and affordable water and wastewater services to approximately 3 million people.

For more information, visit www.newjerseyamwater.com and follow New Jersey American Water on LinkedIn, Facebook, X, and Instagram.

New Jersey American Water Names David Forcinito Vice President of Operations

CAMDEN, N.J. — New Jersey American Water recently announced that David Forcinito has been named Vice President of Operations. Forcinito, who most recently served as Vice President of Fleet for American Water, succeeds Ben Morris, who is joining the American Water team as Vice President of Operations for Strategic Programs.

"Dave's deep roots in New Jersey American Water's operations and his decades of hands-on leadership make him exceptionally well suited for this role," said Mark McDonough, president, New Jersey American Water. "We are proud to welcome him back and look forward to the expertise and continuity he will bring to our operations team."

In his new role, Forcinito will oversee the company's statewide operations including water production, wastewater collection, and field services for 3 million customers across 18 counties.

Retiring That Number Eleven?

Maybe it's time to just resign ourselves, Philly. Everyone has that one number that just isn't that lucky. For the Philadelphia Eagles—it's not 666. It's number 11 (and possibly 666.) But before we hastily retire those digits so that no one can use them again before FIFA Fever hits Lincoln Financial Field—let's explain why this isn't a great historical set of digits—at least for the Eagles.

Sure—AJ Brown leaves the Eagles this week with several team records—including four, consecutive 1,000-yard seasons. His domination on the field as a big receiver was at times nearly unstoppable—and directly contributed to two NFC Championships and a Super Bowl victory (cue the Lombardi Trophy hardware.) But AJ Brown also didn't hide his discontentment

about parts of his time with the Eagles—even admitting that his relationship with quarterback Jalen Hurts was not as great as it once was.

It was at the April 2016 NFL Draft that Carson Wentz joined the Eagles with all the promise of being the next franchise quarterback. Shortly after that selection—Wentz selected to wear #11. After an injury that sidelined Wentz for the 2018 Super Bowl Championship—Carson was never the same. A combination of injuries and increasing displeasure finally led him to be traded to the Colts in 2021.

Former Eagles Head Coach Chip Kelly didn't select many Oregon Ducks in his time with Philadelphia. One that he did draft—was Josh Huff. His game-breaking speed at the wide receiver position was an asset to any offense—and he still holds the record for the longest kickoff return in Eagles history—a 107-yard kickoff return. Unfortunately—#11's time with the Eagles was overshadowed with more missed opportunities and turnovers until he was cut in November of 2016. If he had held on for one more year—Huff would have been a Super Bowl Champion.

Speaking of Chip Kelly—his 2014 Eagles needed a kicker and Cody Parkey proved to be a perfect fit. After edging out Alex Henery as the Eagles' kicker for the 2014 season—Parkey set an NFL rookie record for scoring—previously held going all of the way back to 1985. Parkey was placed on IR after a September 2015 injury and was released in September 2016.

Maybe it's not all that bad. The picks that the Eagles got in return for Carson Wentz led to the acquisition of such players Jalen Carter, DeVonta Smith, AJ Brown, and Cooper DeJean. As a Chicago Bear—Cody Parkey would deliver the iconic double-dunk field goal miss that sent the Eagles to the NFC Divisional Round in the 2019 NFL Playoffs. And of course—who can forget Jrue Holiday, John Kruk, Darren Daulton, and Jimmy Rollins. We even had Manute Bol for a bit wearing number eleven. We even had a 2015 NFL pre-season and OTA's with Tim Tebow—wearing #11 of course.

All the same—let's place a hold on giving out that number 11. At least for the near future. And what about recently traded AJ Brown? He'll wear #1 in New England. So take that—Jalen Hurts.

Michael Thomas Leibrandt lives and works in Abington Township, PA.

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Each year, the City of Camden flushes its water distribution (pipeline) system to help ensure that our customers continue to receive high-quality water service.



FLUSHING SCHEDULE

American Water, the City's contracted water service provider, will be conducting fire hydrant flushing for approximately 10 weeks beginning the week of April 6, 2026 during the hours of 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

WHY WE FLUSH

Flushing helps us to clean out any build up of mineral deposits and sediment inside the pipes. These harmless deposits can occur when water service demands are reduced during the winter months. It also allows us to use the hydrants to make sure they are operational and to check fire flows.

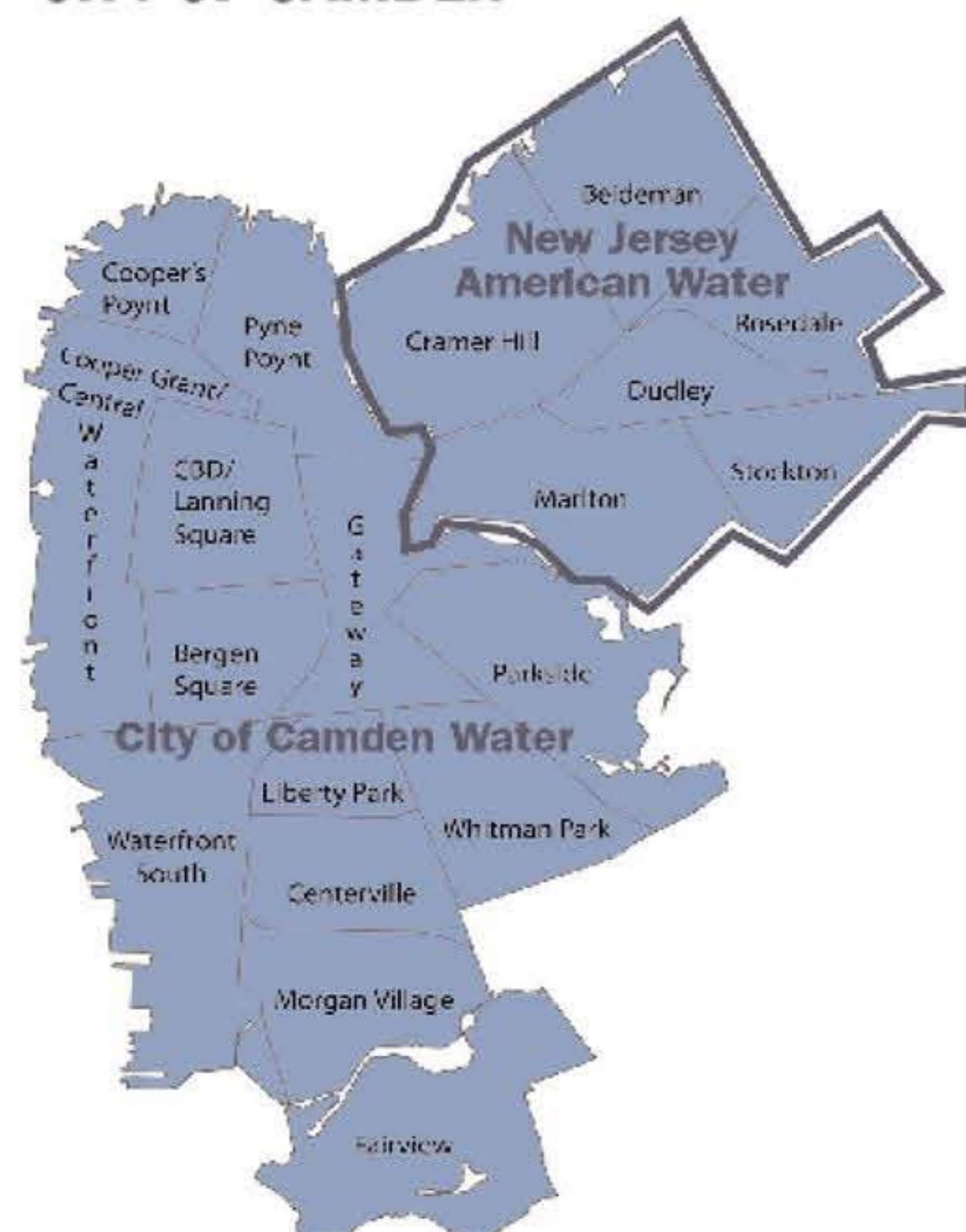
WHAT TO EXPECT

When crews are in the area, you may experience a drop in water pressure or discolored water. If discolored water occurs, let the cold water run until it is clear.

HOW TO PREPARE

- Draw water for cooking ahead of time.
- Store a large bottle of water in the refrigerator for drinking.
- Check for discolored water before using the washing machine or dishwasher.

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Governor Sherrill Announces 300,000 New REAL IDs Issued in First Four Months in Office, Other Common-Sense MVC Reforms

TRENTON, NJ — Governor Sherrill today visited the Trenton Motor Vehicle Commission (MVC) to highlight new initiatives that are making it easier, faster, and more convenient for New Jerseyans to access services. In only four months, the number of New Jersey residents holding a REAL ID has increased by more than 300,000, growing from approximately 2.2 million to more than 2.5 million residents. That represents a 12.5% increase since the start of the administration, demonstrating significant momentum and an accelerated adoption rate. The Governor also highlighted a new policy allowing customers to present eligible digital documents as proof of address, modernizing the customer experience as part of her ongoing commitment to delivering more accessible, efficient government services.

These changes were achieved through operational improvements, not a new spending initiative, highlighting Governor Sherrill's commitment to making better use of existing resources while remaining fiscally responsible.

"Government should be focused on making life easier for people, and that starts with delivering services efficiently," said Governor Mikie Sherrill. "We expanded REAL ID availability and made it easier for residents to verify their address, helping more New Jerseyans get the services they need. These are common-sense improvements that make a real difference for families across our state, and they show what is possible when government focuses on results."

"The best way to build trust in government is to deliver results people can see and feel. Under Governor Sherrill's leadership, we're building a culture across state agencies that is focused on execution, accountability, and continuous improvement," said Chief Operating Officer Kellie Doucette. "The progress at MVC shows what can happen when leaders are empowered to identify challenges, use data to drive decisions, and stay relentlessly focused on the resident experience. These changes are saving people time, reducing frustration, and making services easier to access — exactly the kind of practical, measurable results New Jerseyans deserve."

"At the MVC, we're continually enhancing our services and operations," said Acting MVC Chief Administrator Rosalie Johnson. "By expanding REAL ID services to four additional agencies and making smart operational changes, like accepting digital proofs of address, we've significantly increased appointment availability and reduced wait times statewide in just a few months. These changes mean faster transactions, more efficient service, and fewer return visits — ultimately saving New Jerseyans time and money, while delivering an improved MVC experience for all."

"Making government services more accessible starts with reducing unnecessary barriers for residents," said Assemblywoman Verlina Reynolds-Jackson (D-Hunterdon, Mercer). "The improvements at MVC are helping more people obtain their REAL ID efficiently while opening additional appointment opportunities for others who need service. These changes

are saving New Jerseyans time and making the customer experience more convenient."

The Sherrill Administration has overseen significant progress in expanding access to REAL IDs across New Jersey. As demand for REAL ID continues to grow, the MVC expanded service by adding four additional agencies that issue REAL IDs, which creates more REAL ID appointments while reducing wait time for customers. The percentage of licensed drivers and identification card holders with a REAL ID has increased from approximately 24% at the beginning of the year to nearly 28% today. The MVC issued more than 73,000 REAL IDs in April and more than 100,000 in May, as demand for REAL ID continued to increase.

In April, the MVC also began allowing customers to provide proof of residence electronically as part of the REAL ID process. Since that change was implemented, the percentage of customers required to return for a second appointment, a common complaint amongst New Jerseyans, has fallen from an average of 15 percent to 8 percent. That translates to approximately 279 people per day, or 6,700 fewer transactions each month, allowing thousands more New Jerseyans to complete their transactions without having to make an additional trip to the MVC.

These operational changes reflect Governor Sherrill's commitment to making government services more efficient, accessible, and responsive to the needs of New Jersey residents.

Governor Sherrill, FIFA World Cup 2026™ New York New Jersey Host Committee Chief Executive Officer Alex Lasry Announce Over 750 Free Tickets for New Jerseyans for FIFA World Cup Matches

Governor Sherrill, in partnership with the NYNJ Host Committee, and with support from Uber, will provide 500 free tickets to New Jersey Communities

Governor Sherrill, in partnership with the NYNJ Host Committee, will provide 200 free tickets to New Jersey nurses and pediatric patients, with support from Hackensack Meridian Health, the Official Hometown Hospital of the NYNJ Host Committee

Governor Sherrill and Host Committee to Provide 70 Free Tickets for New Jerseyans Through the Welcome World Reward Program, Supporting Local Small Businesses and World Cup Grant Initiative Community Events

HACKENSACK, NJ — Governor Sherrill and FIFA World Cup 2026™ New York New Jersey Host Committee Chief Executive Officer Alex Lasry today announced more than 750 free tickets will be made available for New Jersey communities to matches at the FIFA World Cup 2026™ at New York New Jersey Stadium.

The announcement was made at Hackensack University Medical Center, the Official Hometown Hospital of the NYNJ Host Committee. Governor Sherrill, U.S. Men's National Team legend and New Jersey native Tony Meola, NYNJ Host Committee CEO Alex Lasry, Hackensack Meridian Health CEO Robert C. Garrett, Choose New Jersey CEO Amy Herbold, and representatives from Uber also unveiled a large-scale FIFA World Cup 2026™ mural commemorating the eight matches taking place in the New York New Jersey region, including the Final. The mural, displayed across from Hackensack University Medical Center's Helena Theurer Pavilion, was created by Richard Tu, artist of the official New York New Jersey FIFA World Cup 2026™ Host City Poster.

"We are excited to welcome the world to the Garden State for the World Cup starting this week and to be at the very center of the festivities, but we want the experience, first and foremost, to be accessible and affordable for as many New Jerseyans as possible," said New Jersey Governor Mikie Sherrill. "I'd like to thank the Host Committee, Uber, and Hackensack Meridian Health for providing over 750 free tickets to New Jerseyans who deserve a once-in-a-lifetime chance to attend these matches. I will always fight to ensure that no New Jerseyans are left behind."

"Hackensack Meridian Health is proud to support Governor Sherrill, New Jersey and the NYNJ Host Committee in bringing the excitement of the World Cup to fans, including some of our patients and team members," said Robert C. Garrett, FACHE, CEO of Hackensack Meridian Health. "As the closest Level 1 trauma center to the stadium, our team members have been actively preparing to support the complex medical and safety operations for an event of this magnitude. Their expertise is the foundation of our medical readiness, and their compassion will ensure our communities and visitors are safe and cared for. We are proud to celebrate their commitment by providing them with an opportunity to enjoy the World Cup in person."

"Our doors are open, and our teams are ready," said Lisa Tank, M.D., President and Chief Hospital Executive of Hackensack University Medical Center. "As an ACS verified Level 1 trauma center and one of the nation's busiest emergency departments, the teams are always response and emergency preparedness ready. On an ongoing basis the team is running drills, and looking at staffing and available interpreter services — to ensure that every World Cup visitor receives the high-level expertise focused on safety, quality and compassionate care that all are communities receive. It is a privilege to share the joy of the World Cup with our patients and team members." Today's announcement reflects a collaborative effort over the past few weeks between the Governor's Office, the FIFA World Cup 2026™ New York New Jersey Host Committee, Uber, Hackensack Meridian Health, and Choose New Jersey to ensure that New Jerseyans have access to the matches — at no cost to taxpayers. The announcement follows \$3.6 million in funding that the Host Committee is providing the Sherrill Administration to support transportation costs associated with the World Cup.

The 770 tickets announced today will be distributed across five Group Stage matches and two Knockout Round matches hosted at New York New Jersey Stadium, ensuring that the benefits of the FIFA World Cup 2026™ reach communities across New Jersey. The tickets were secured by the Host Committee and will be distributed to community groups via Choose New Jersey.

As New Jersey prepares to welcome the world, this initiative helps ensure that the people who serve our communities, inspire our future generations, and represent the very best of the state have the opportunity to experience the FIFA World Cup 2026™ firsthand.

Supporting New Jersey Families and Communities

Through a collaboration between the Governor's Office, the NYNJ Host Committee, Uber, and Choose New Jersey, 500 tickets will be distributed to New Jersey residents, including:

- New Jersey Youth Soccer players from underserved communities across the state;
- Families of New Jersey National Guard service members currently deployed overseas;
- Hackensack Meridian Health patients currently in the Make-A-Wish program; and
- Bergen County first responders helping support World Cup operations
- Recognizing Health Care Heroes and Inspiring Young Patients

Through a collaboration between the Governor's Office, the NYNJ Host Committee, and Hackensack Meridian Health, 200 tickets will be provided to:

Frontline nurses and health care team members who serve New Jersey communities every day; and Pediatric patients, including children facing serious illnesses and their families.

Creating Opportunity Through Local Small Businesses and Community Events

The NYNJ Host Committee will also provide 70 additional opportunities for New Jerseyans to attend matches through the Welcome World Rewards program. Participants can become eligible by supporting participating small businesses, visiting local establishments, and attending New Jersey World Cup Community Initiative events.

Together, these efforts reflect a shared commitment by Governor Sherrill, the NYNJ Host Committee, and private-sector partners to ensure that the excitement and opportunity created by the FIFA World Cup 2026™ are accessible to communities across New Jersey.

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MARVIN SAMSON

Beam-Signing Event Marks Major Construction Milestone at Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital

A crane lifted the last steel beam and placed it atop the seven-story addition to the Camden, N.J., hospital.

CAMDEN, N.J. - Virtua Health celebrated a key construction milestone on June 9 at Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital in Camden. The not-for-profit health system held a topping-off ceremony to mark the placement of the final steel beam atop the hospital's new patient tower. The Marvin Samson Pavilion is part of a \$500 million renovation and expansion at the Haddon Avenue institution, which marked its 75th anniversary last year.

The nearly 200,000-square-foot addition is slated for completion in the spring of 2028. It will increase the hospital's size by 35%, and will serve as the hospital's main entrance. The seven-story pavilion will have six floors for patient care.

The building is named for businessman and philanthropist Marvin Samson, who has pledged \$5 million – the largest gift in Virtua's history – in support of the health system's education and workforce development programs.

Samson, a Virtua board member and longtime supporter, is also the namesake of the Virtua Samson Cancer Center in Moorestown, N.J.

"The Marvin Samson Pavilion demonstrates our commitment to the future of care in Camden and beyond," said Virtua President and CEO Dennis W. Pullin, FACHE. "We look forward to welcoming every patient with compassion and supporting our staff and clinicians with a space that reflects their exceptional work."



An Uplifting Moment – Literally!

More than 100 guests attended the topping-off event, which featured remarks from elected officials and Virtua leaders. In a nod to the hospital's history and Catholic identity, Rev. Jon Peter Thomas, vicar general for the Diocese of Camden, blessed the 20-foot, 700-pound beam before it was raised. A printed copy of his prayer, along with a medallion of St. Francis, will be incorporated into the roof of the new building when complete, echoing a similar act when the hospital first opened. (The Franciscan Sisters of Allegany, N.Y., led the hospital during its early years, hence the connection to St. Francis.)



VIRTUA PRESIDENT & CEO DENNIS W. PULLIN, FACHE

The Hospital's New 'Heart'

Attached to the existing hospital at Haddon and Euclid avenues, the new building will support the complex services that Virtua has centralized within Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, drawing patients from across New Jersey and other states. These specialties include advanced cardiovascular care, organ transplantation, and a neurosciences program in partnership with Penn Medicine.

"This beautiful, state-of-the-art pavilion will be the new heart of our hospital," said Lisa Ferraro, senior vice president of Virtua Health and president of Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital. "It will provide a private room for every patient, advanced surgical facilities, dedicated spaces for specialized care, and areas for reflection and remembrance. As the hospital's new front door, it will include an uplifting and welcoming lobby."

The addition will include:

- 78 private patient rooms
- 10 operating rooms, including 2 dynamic, hybrid operating suites
- 4 cardiac catheterization labs
- 3 electrophysiology labs (for treatment of heart rhythm problems)
- 2 GI (gastrointestinal) endoscopy rooms
- 40 surgical prep and recovery rooms
- a neuro-surgical stroke intervention suite
- a centralized post-anesthesia care unit (PACU) that includes 40 private, adaptable patient bays

Additionally, renovations and updates of the hospital's existing facilities are underway. In the past year, Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes opened its first Neurosciences Intensive Care Unit. The hospital also renovated its Mother-Baby Unit and several patient rooms within the Acute Care Rehab Unit.

The Samson Pavilion is part of Virtua Health's organization-wide strategy to enhance the region's well-being, called Advancing Well into the Future.

For more information, visit Virtua.org or call 1-888-VIRTUA-3.

About Virtua Health:

Marlton, N.J.-based Virtua Health is an academic health system committed to helping the people of South Jersey be well, get well, and stay well by providing the complete spectrum of advanced, accessible, and trusted healthcare services. Virtua's 15,000 colleagues provide tertiary care, including renowned cardiology and transplant programs, complemented by a community-based care portfolio. In addition to five hospitals, two satellite emergency departments, 42 ambulatory surgery centers, and more than 400 other locations, Virtua brings health services directly into communities through Hospital at Home, physical therapy and rehabilitation, mobile screenings, and its paramedic program.

Virtua has 3,000 affiliated doctors and other clinicians, and its specialties include cardiovascular and gastrointestinal health, orthopedics, advanced surgery, and maternity. Virtua is academically affiliated with Rowan University, leading research, innovation, and immersive education at the Virtua Health College of Medicine & Life Sciences of Rowan University. Virtua is also affiliated with Penn Medicine for cancer care and neurosciences, and the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia for pediatrics.

As a not-for-profit health system, Virtua is committed to the well-being of the community and provides innovative outreach programs that address social challenges affecting health, most notably the "Eat Well" food access initiative, which includes the unparalleled Eat Well Mobile Grocery Store. Discover more at virtua.org.



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Two Local Liver-Transplant Patients will Compete at Bi-annual Transplant Games in Denver, June 18 - 23

Mike Logue and Meredith Borrelli Received Transplants a Week Apart at Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital in Camden last year. At the Games, they will spread awareness of the benefits of liver transplants and express their gratitude for their donors and health care providers.

CAMDEN, N.J. - Mike Logue and Meredith Borrelli's lives were saved last year when they received liver transplants at Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital in Camden. Now, as the friends continue to regain their health, they will compete in the Transplant Games of America—a bi-annual event that celebrates organ donors and recipients, and highlights the need for organ donation.

The Games will take place June 18 – 23 in Denver. The event draws more than 3,000 transplant recipients from across the country. It will include over 20 competitions for recipients and living donors, along with 60-plus special events—from donor tributes to social events to lectures and workshops.



"I feel like I have a new lease on life since my transplant," said Meredith, 54, of South Orange. "The gratitude you feel for someone who chose to be an organ donor is so huge. People like me wouldn't be here today without people like her."

Indeed, more than 100,000 people are waiting for an organ in this country, including 9,000 who need a liver. A total of 13 people die each day while waiting, according to organdonor.gov.

Mike, 57, credits Virtua's staff with helping him cope with the uncertainty of waiting for a new liver and keeping him as healthy as possible, despite his grave condition.

"I owe a debt of gratitude to Virtua that I could never repay," said the Mount Laurel attorney, who now volunteers for transplant-related causes. Helping others is "part of my pledge to my donor's family."

Meredith and Mike are on Team Liberty, a 60-member group representing New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut. The team is a program of the Sharing Network Foundation, which supports the work of NJ Sharing Network, a nonprofit organization responsible for the recovery of donated organs and tissue. The two pals will compete in bowling, corn hole, and trivia contests.

Meredith and Mike received their transplants in May 2025, both performed by Dr. Ely Sebastian, a transplant surgeon at Virtua Advanced Transplant & Organ Health. In January, the two connected through a Facebook group for liver transplant patients and supporters. They quickly became buddies.



Overcoming Alcohol Dependence

Liver failure has many causes, including hepatitis and other viruses, obesity and related conditions (such as fatty liver disease, diabetes, and high blood pressure), and various toxins. In Mike and Meredith's cases, excessive alcohol use harmed their livers. Fortunately, both were able to stop drinking—a requirement for a liver transplant.

"Drinking is a very common cause of liver disease, sadly," said Dr. Hisham ElGenaidi, Meredith's transplant hepatologist (liver doctor).

Virtua's staff works to remove the stigma associated with liver problems, noted Dr. Simona Rossi, Mike's transplant hepatologist. "Our goal is to make sure our patients know this isn't something they did to themselves," she said. "Alcoholism, drug addiction, and obesity are diseases."

Mike drank heavily for 10 years. Lingering injuries from a car accident combined with work-related stress and pandemic isolation fueled his alcohol use.

Last year, he became critically ill with liver disease and was put on the transplant list. "I was bed-bound and ready to give up," he recalled. "Dr. ElGenaidi and other staff convinced me to hold on." Mike also credits transplant hepatologist Dr. Nyan Latt with keeping him alive while he waited.



DR. ELY SEBASTIAN

'Everything Fell into Place'

For Meredith, a chain of traumatic events led to a reliance on alcohol, including her father's death and the destruction of her mother's home by a tornado. One day, she noticed the whites of her eyes looked yellow or "jaundiced." Meredith then developed pain in her abdomen, and her doctor told her to go to the emergency room.

There, at a North Jersey hospital, Meredith learned she had end-stage liver disease. "I was told I had about two months to live," she recalled. "I had stopped drinking the day I noticed the jaundice. But that wasn't long enough to qualify for that hospital's transplant program." Those doctors suggested she go to Virtua, which would be better equipped to help her.

Two days later, Meredith transferred to Virtua Our Lady of Lourdes—one of just two hospitals in New Jersey performing liver transplants.

"That was the best thing that could have possibly happened to me," she said. "The care I got at Virtua was phenomenal. It felt like everything fell into place."

Just 32 days later, Meredith received a new liver.

Healing & Giving Back

Today, Mike and Meredith are doing well. Both received physical therapy to help them regain their strength and abilities to do daily tasks. They also receive ongoing medical and emotional support from Virtua's transplant team.

"We're here for our patients for the rest of their lives," said Dr. Rossi. "They continue to see every member of the transplant team. We monitor their lab work and how they're doing." Mike now enjoys hiking and being active. He volunteers for several organizations, including NJ Sharing Network and the New Jersey Air Victory Museum in Lumberton.

A Priceless Treasure

For Meredith and Mike, the Transplant Games offers a chance to share their appreciation and spread awareness of the importance of organ donation.

"I'm not an athletic person. I'm horrible at all sports!" Meredith joked. "The Games are about building community and honoring the people who gave you a second chance at life."

This spring, she met her donor's parents for the first time. "It was incredibly emotional," Meredith recalled tearfully. "We're like family now. They said, 'You carry around a piece of our daughter.'"

Meredith wants more people to realize "how extraordinary a gift you can give by simply taking a few minutes to register as an organ donor."

"My donor saved five people's lives," she shared.

For more information, visit [Virtua.org/AdvancedTransplant & Organ Health](http://Virtua.org/AdvancedTransplant&OrganHealth) or call 1-888-VIRTUA-3. To learn about organ donation, visit Virtua.org/OrganDonor.

LEGAL NOTICE

Take notice that in accordance with N.J.S.A 39:10-16*

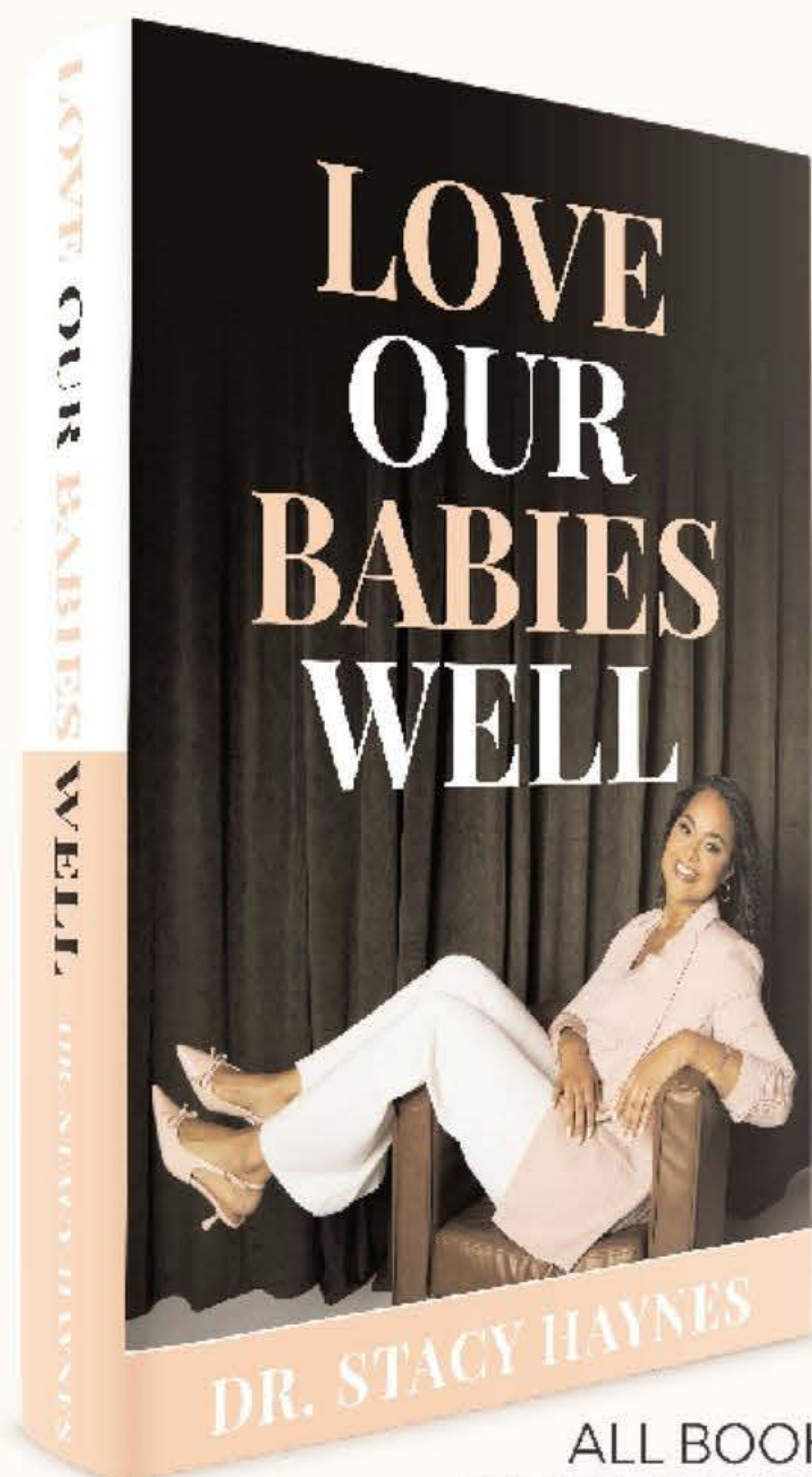
APPLICATION HAS BEEN MADE TO the Chief Administrator of Motor Vehicle Commission, Trenton, New Jersey, to receive Title papers authorizing and the issuance of a New Jersey Certificate of Ownership for 2018 Honda, MLHJC7551J5002351.

Objections, if any, should be made in writing, immediately in writing to the Chief Administrator of the Motor Vehicle Commission, Special Title Unit P.O. Box 017, Trenton, New Jersey 08666-017.

Plaintiff, Julianna Padilla

Publication dates:

June 15, 22 & 29, 2026

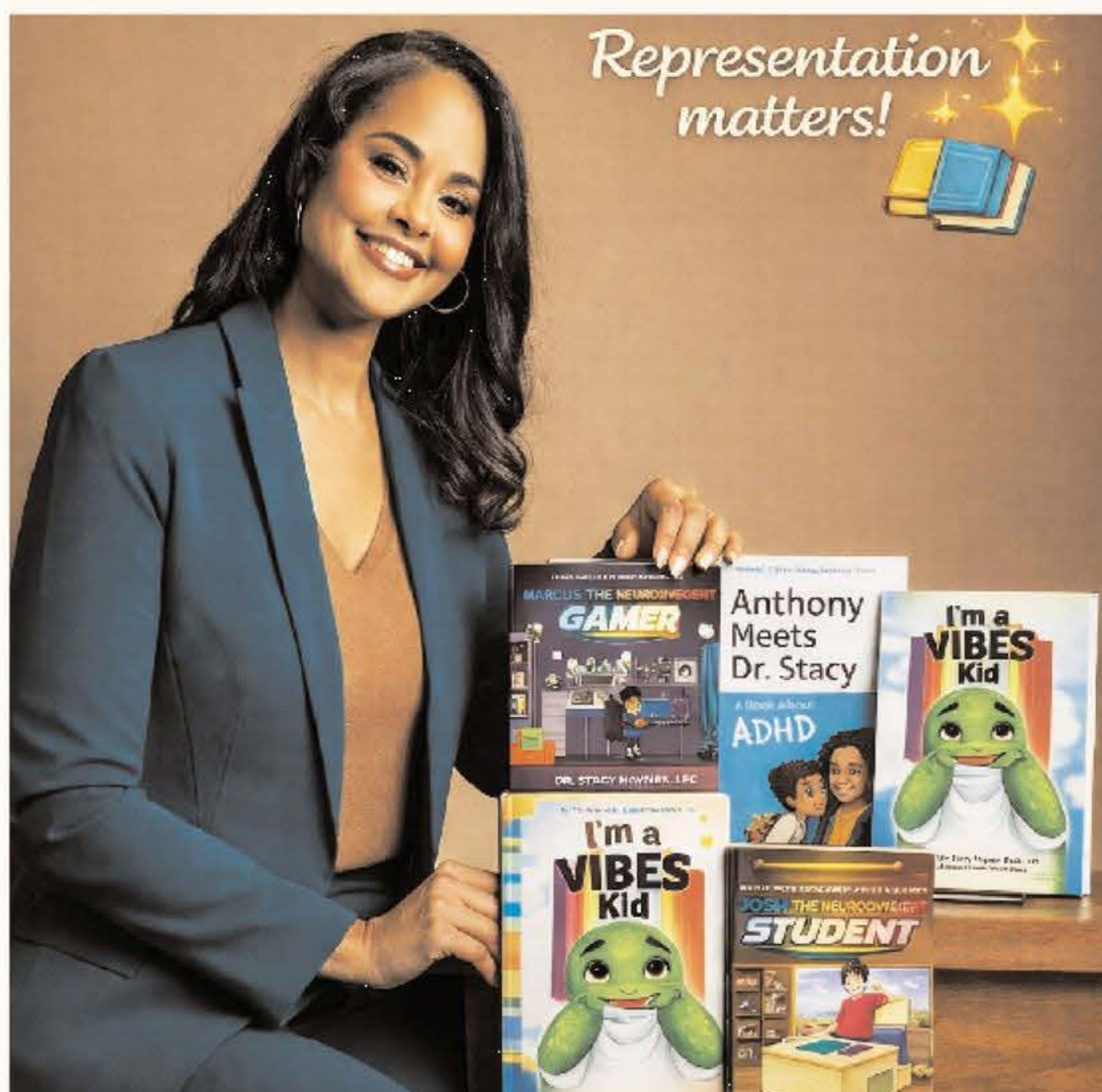


Dr. Stacy author, speaker, conference leader, Children's Pastor, podcast host, mom.

Topics Include:
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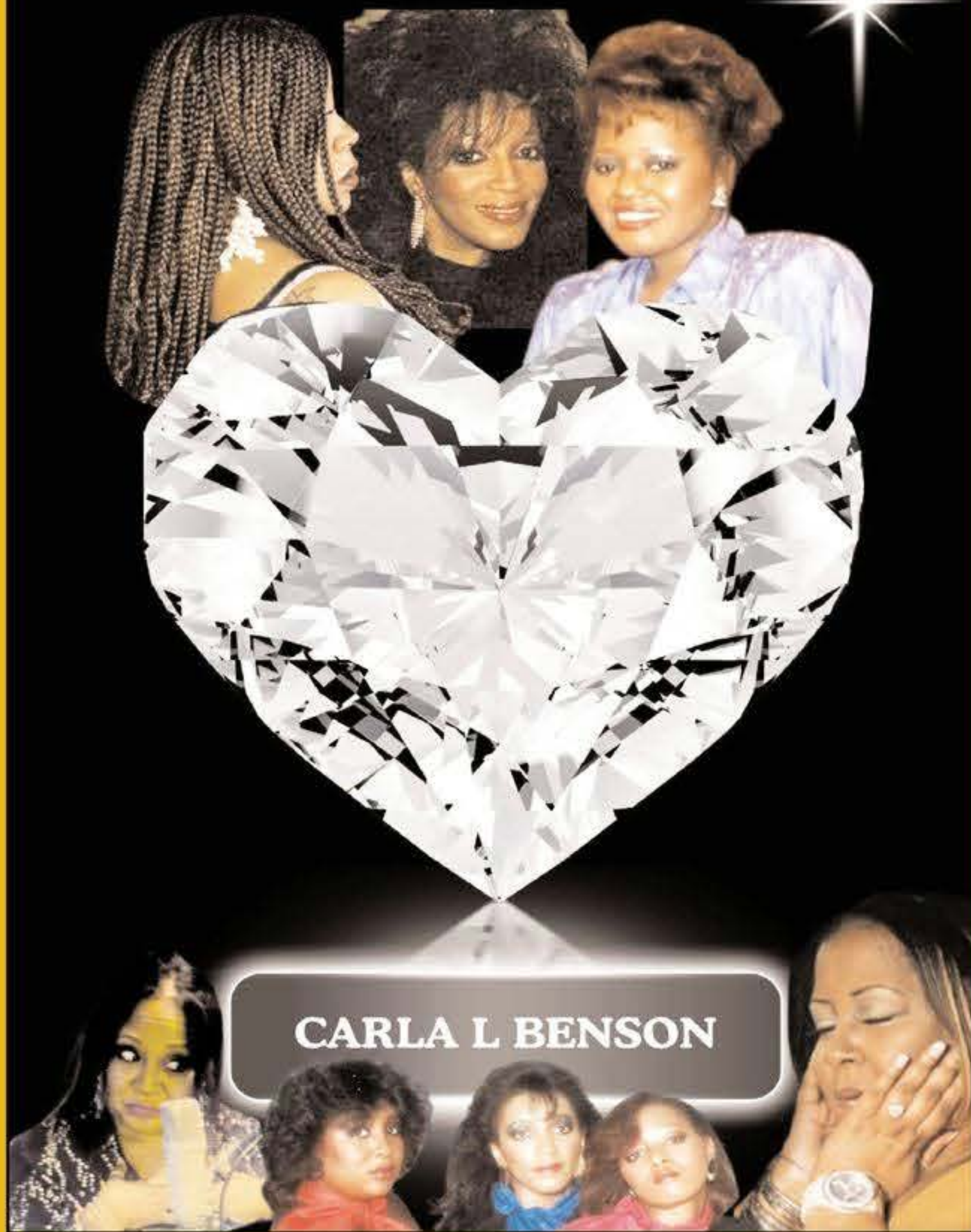
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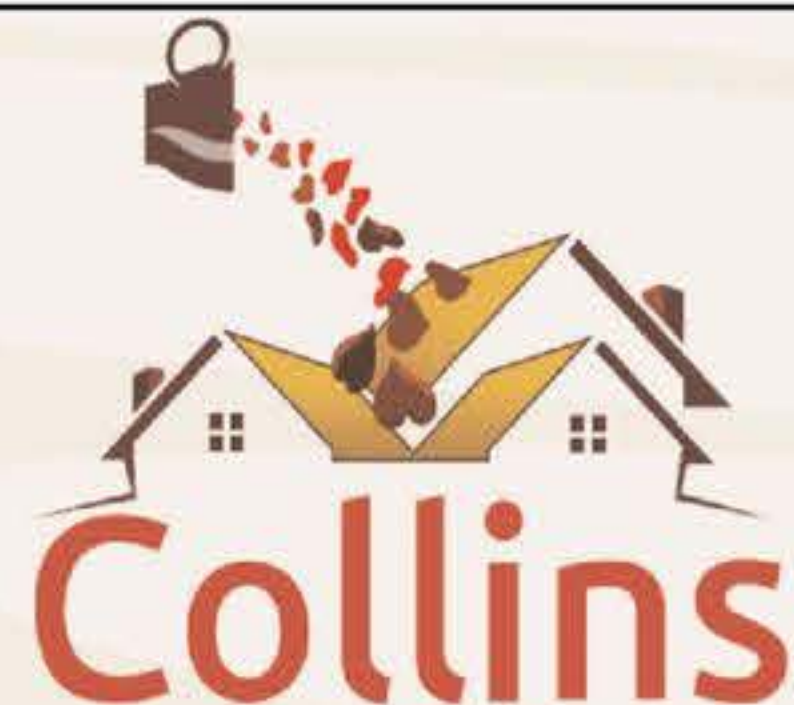
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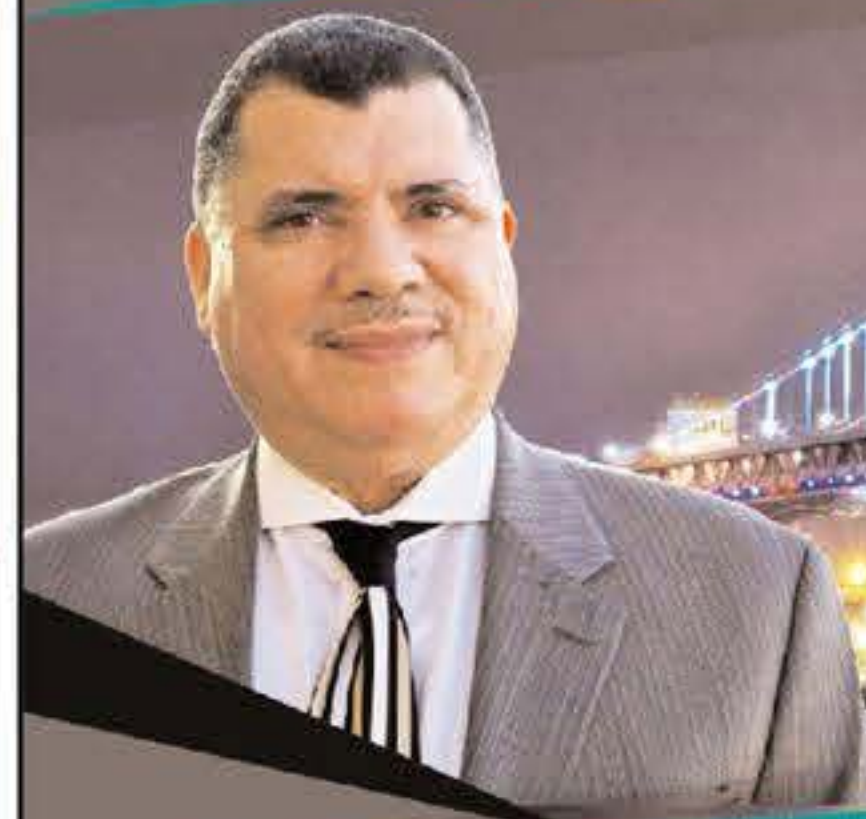
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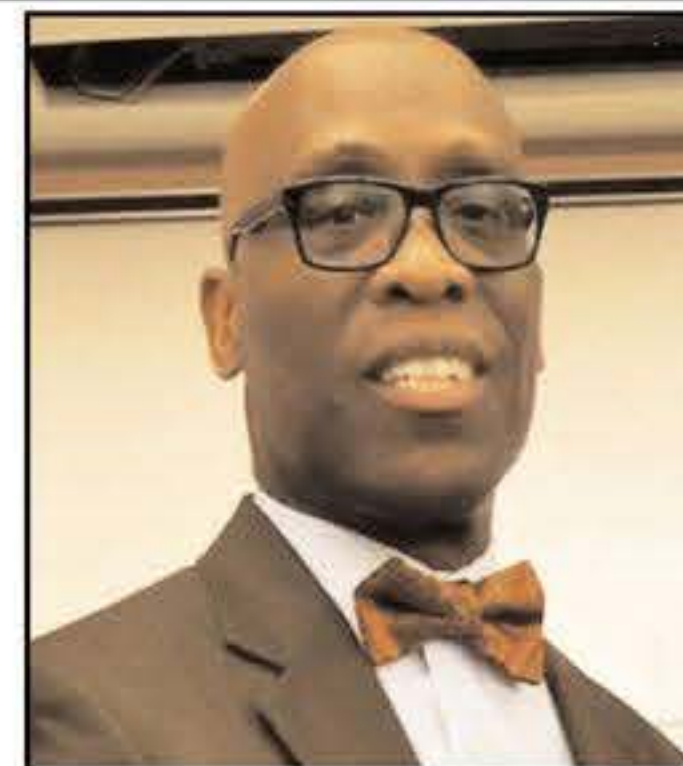
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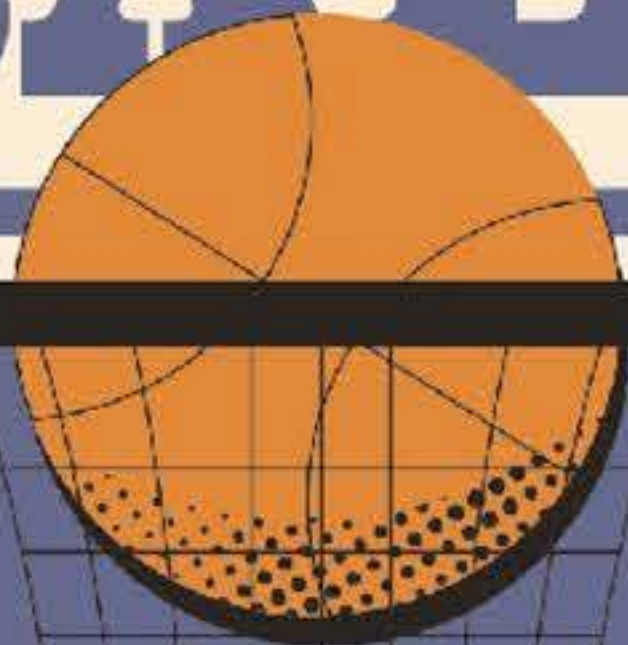
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