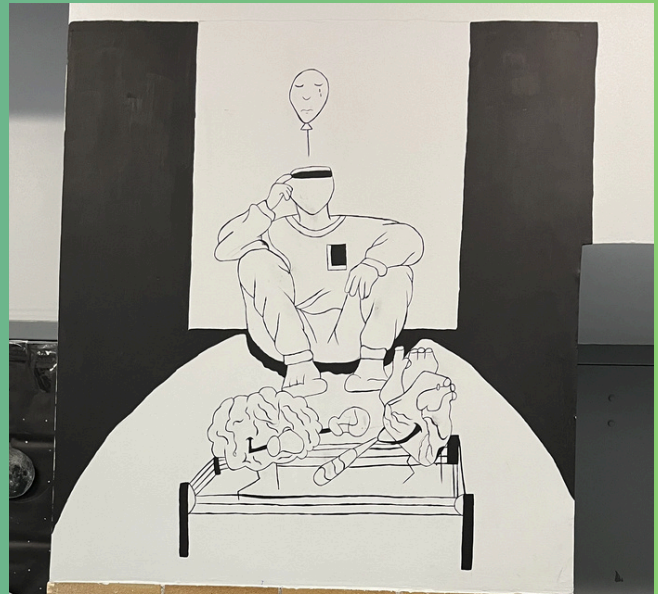


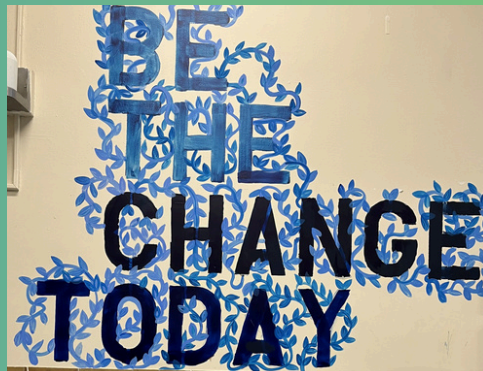
GATOR GAZETTE

2025-2026



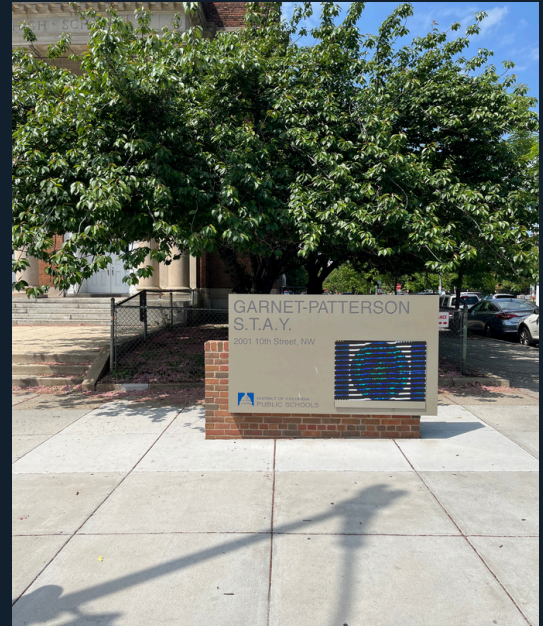
Garnet-Patterson
STAY





What is this?

A magazine celebrating the news writing accomplishments of the students in Garnet-Patterson STAY Journalism.



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Poutcheu Noubibou

Clarissa Rivas w/ Yanileth Rivas

Shirlene Mason w/ Briahna Tyree

Ms. Kim w/ Bruke Berhe

Destiny w/ Lorenzo Madrid

Ms. Singh w/ Jermari Evans

Ms. Mickens w/ Daniel Gonzalez

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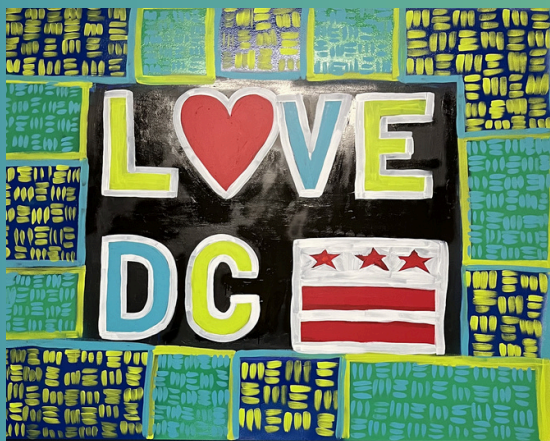
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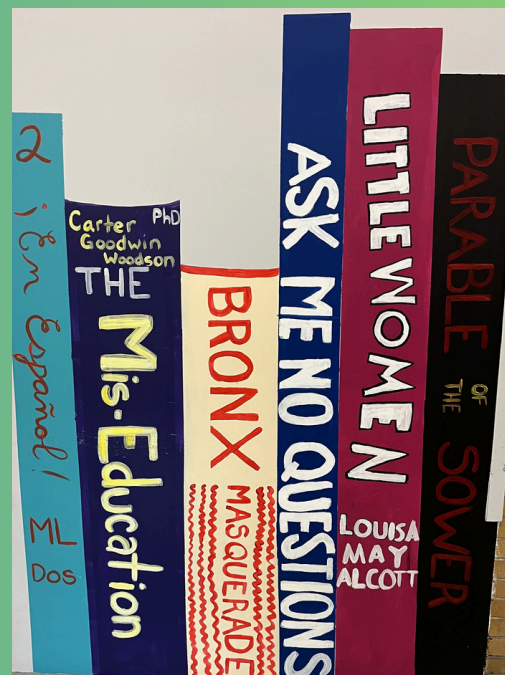
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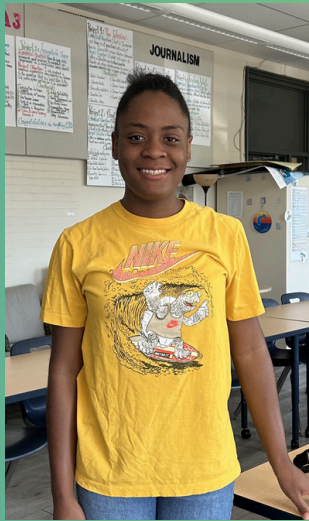
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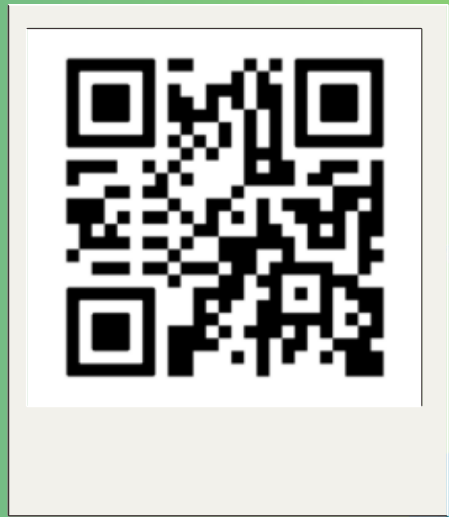
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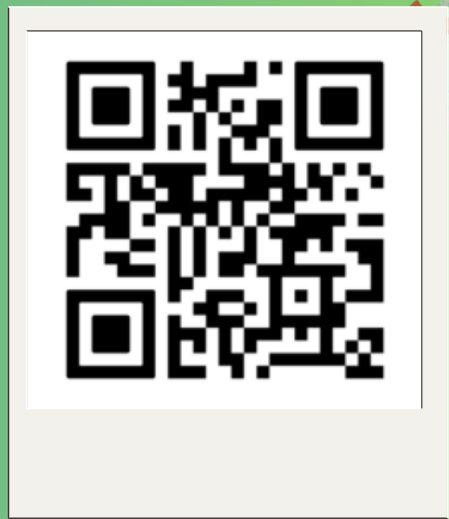
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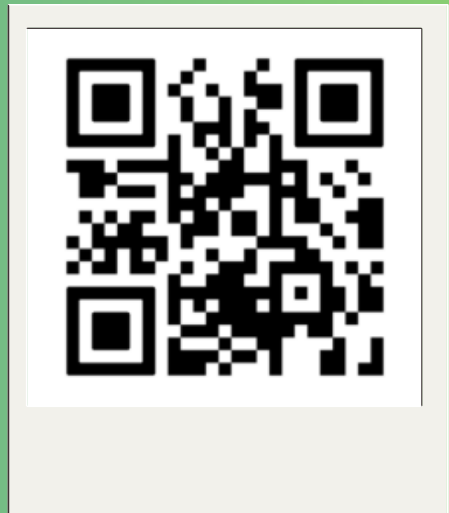
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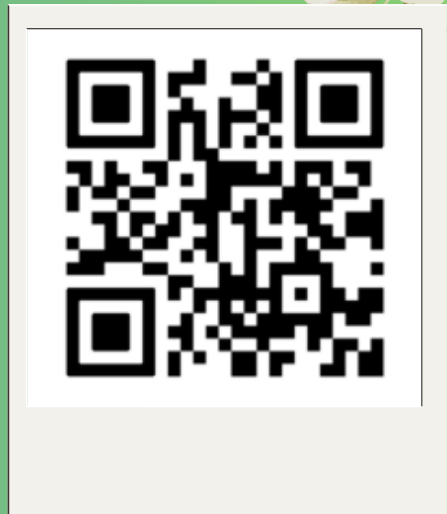
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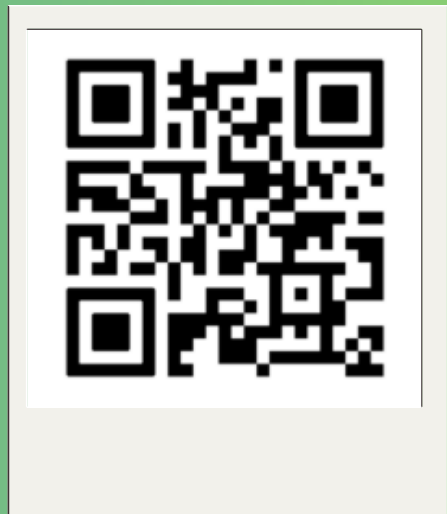
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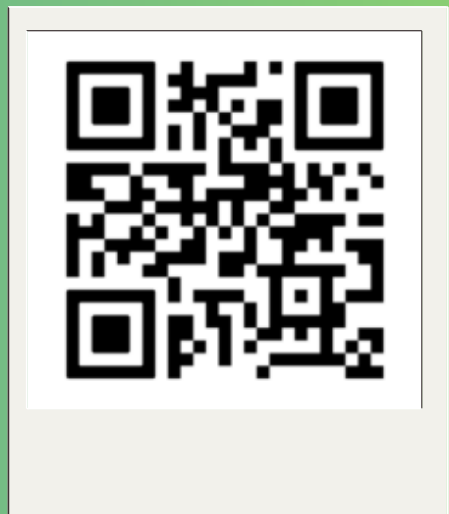
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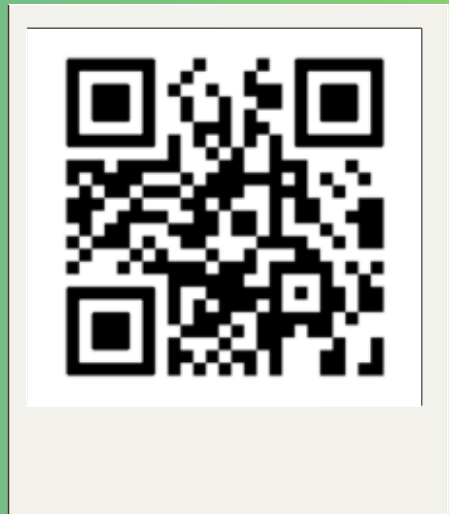
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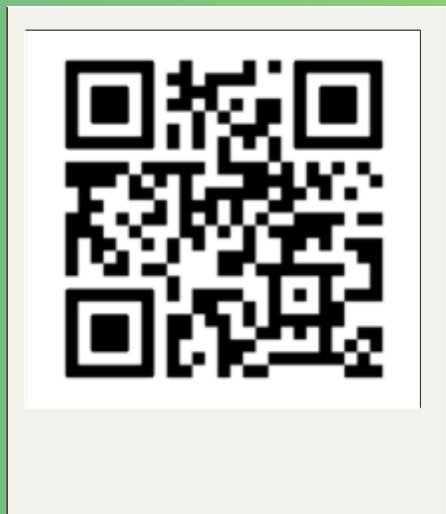
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WHY THE MOON COOLED DOWN AND DIED SO QUICKLY

we find that she keeps the sa towards us. Indeed, we have

The moon, however, is very tiny, and never can see, more t the whole face of it, which y moon's surface, or only about tr half. The reason

NEWS ARTICLES

buzzing with life

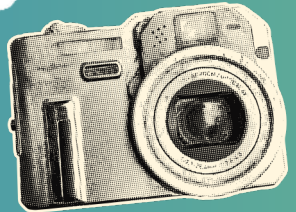
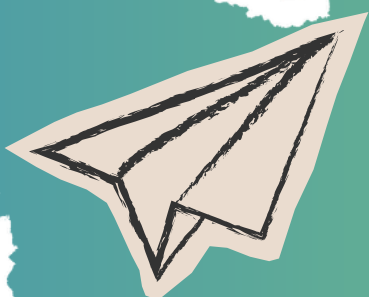
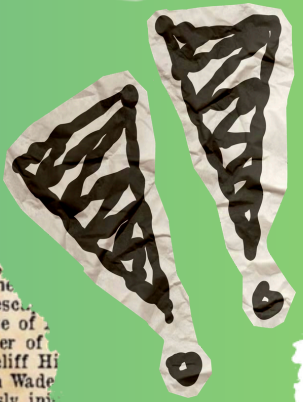
We are cred...eam Engine now preparing to run...elding that may be produced at the new Oc...Newmarket; the wagers at present are stated to be 1,000/1; the engine is the favourite.

The extraordinary effects of mechani...been applied to by several distin...public, prior to its bel...ket; we have not he...determination ver...be 20 miles li...rate will

was one...atches whose yens presently make the roof resound.

I was glad to learn that this was Regan; there was such an expression of terror in his villainous face. A brawny-shouldered, well-nurtured ruffian, with a broad head, and a chin broader than

co-pipe, and I would wager to produce that dreadful scourge's exact counterpart. The hardie was about two feet high, and the



The moon lo...shows that...earth varies very little, and that is so, well, but we see at once what



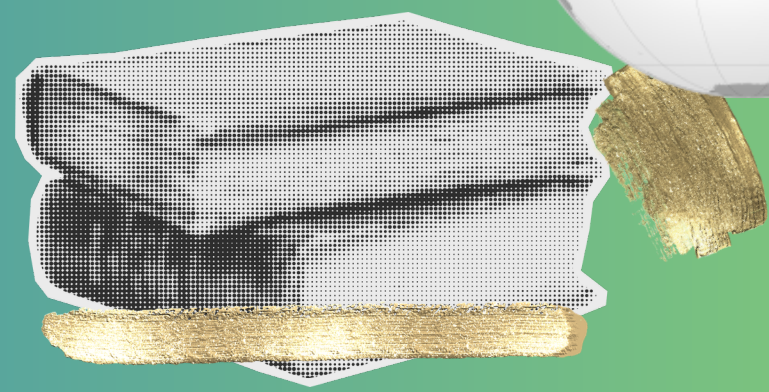
Ethiopian Government Breaks Peace Agreement by Bruke Berhe

The Ethiopian Government broke the peace agreement with the Tigray region. On January 31, 2026, the Ethiopians attacked Tigray with drone strikes that killed one person and injured another. The strikes happened in the Tigray region near Enticho. The Ethiopians claim that Tigray fighters were crossing the border illegally. However, Tigray officials deny the claim and say the Ethiopians were trying to start the war again.

The Tigray conflict started on November 3, 2020; the Ethiopian government was threatening the Tigray People’s Liberation Party (TPLF) because the TPLF wanted to hold the 2020 election, but the Ethiopian government was saying that the election could not be held because of the Covid19 pandemic. The Ethiopian government and the Tigray people entered a violent conflict over this power struggle.

The Ethiopian-Tigray peace agreement was hope for almost all people involved. The agreement was established on November 2, 2022. Many Tigray fighters did not want to break the peace agreement; however, the Tigray fighters believe the Ethiopian Government is trying to make the Tigray fighters break the peace agreement first, giving them a reason to restart the conflict.

One DC resident, Root Berhe, who is originally from Tigray, stated about the situation, “I cannot even imagine that peace agreement ended, and I don’t even like watching the news because it makes me anxious.”



courage

President Trump's Tariffs on April 2, 2025 by Sakia Curry

Trump's tariffs are impacting the U.S economy because he wants to restrict imports and protect domestic producers from foreign competition.

Tariffs are fees on goods from another country, also known as a trade barrier. This raises prices on foreign goods and can incentivize companies to produce in the U.S. and consumers to purchase U.S. products. Trump enacted most of his tariffs on the date of April 2, 2025. Some experts believe that Trump overstepped his authority.

One DC resident, Ms. Doty, stated, "I don't really know too much about his tariffs but from what I heard is that my friend said she doesn't like them as well because when she tried to order something it was too high so she decided not to purchase it."

A Virginia resident, Ms. Coble, states, "I hate the tariffs because it makes my bundles more expensive."

Some countries are reacting to the U.S. tariffs. For example, China has responded with a 10% tax on U.S. imports. Also as of April 4, 2025, China, Canada, and the European Union had imposed retaliatory tariffs. Canada withdrew most of its retaliatory tariffs on September 1, leaving tariffs in place on US steel, aluminum, and automobiles.



Donald Trump Pardons Juan Hernandez by Rodil Mackpal Pasta

Juan Orlando Hernandez is the ex-president of Honduras from 2014 to 2022. He was arrested for moving drugs into the United States. Juan was arrested and sentenced for 45 years in prison.

President Donald Trump pardoned Hernandez on December 1st 2025 because he said he is a victim of politics. Some people think Hernandez is a bad man. Experts think Trump pardoned him because he likes people from his political party.

One DC resident from Honduras, Cesar, said of Hernandez's pardon, "it was something that many Hondurans like me liked since he was a much better president than the current ones."

Another DC resident from Honduras, Juan, said of Hernandez's arrest, "I say that it was wrong because he was giving money to the people most in need."

During his presidency, Donald Trump has also pardoned Henry and Imelda Cuellar, Michele Fiore, Devon Archer and many others.



Sports Gambling Rocks the NBA by CJ Williams

The NBA gambling scandal is an ongoing scandal for illegal betting between numerous NBA coaches between February 9th, 2023, to March 20th, 2024. The scandal caused shockwaves through the league, and there is still an ongoing investigation.

According to the indictment, there are five main conspirators, but there is a total of over 30 individuals connected to the case. Some known conspirators are NBA star Terry Rozier of the Miami Heat and champion Chauncy Billups, as well as retired player Damon Jones.

The accusations are money laundering and two counts of fraud through games of poker. The accused were using insider information as leverage to win high stakes bets. The bets amounted to over a quarter of a million. Currently, everyone has been suspended from their teams. One of the defendants, Timothy McCormack, was already sentenced to two years in federal prison. Terry Rozier awaits trial, and Chauncy Billups is out on a 6-million-dollar bond.



One DC resident, Tolbert Strong, stated, “Betting is fine for outsiders, but as far as league officials and players, it shouldn't be tolerated and it's becoming a big problem for the major sports world.”

Another DC resident, Peter Neady, stated, “Sports betting is over commercialized to the point where athletes and coaches are gambling, which undermines the validity of the competition. It is no longer fair or fun from a fan or a gamblers perspective.”

This is not the first time the NBA has been involved in gambling scandals. Tim Donaghy, a referee for the NBA for 13 years, was also involved in a betting scandal. FBI revealed that Donaghy had been betting on NBA games, including those that he officiated during the 2005-2007 seasons. He admitted to placing bets on games and providing insider information to gamblers, including information about injuries and referee assignments. Donaghy was eventually sentenced to 15 months in federal prison for his involvement with the gambling.



The 2025 Government Shutdown by Rasheen Woods

On October 1 2025, the United States government shut down due to Congress not reaching an agreement on the budget. The entire country was affected by the shutdown. Not having the government running meant that many federal workers were not getting paid on time and the President threatened to withhold SNAP payments from citizens. The government reopened on November 12, 2025, after the 43-day shutdown was the longest in U.S. history. In Washington DC, the government shutdown had particular impacts.

One way this impacted the DC area was that federal workers were not getting paid on time or at all. According to 51st News, “Due to Congress’ inability to agree on an annual budget or any temporary fix, funding for the government’s agencies and employees dried up as of midnight.” DC has a large number of federal workers that were impacted by this loss of income.

Also, according to 51st News, “contractors experience permanent economic harm because they don’t get back pay.” This shows that the people who are contracted with the federal government also do not get paid during a shutdown, not just direct employees of the federal government.

The shutdown will also impact the taxes the DC government is able to collect. According to WAMU, “The 2018-2019 shutdown, which lasted 35 days, cost D.C. \$47.4 million in lost revenue.” This highlights how the longer the federal government is shutdown, the larger the impact is on the local DC government.

The government being shut down affect’s families, concerning many local residents. One DC resident, Pamale, believes, having the government shutdown put many people in a bad place.”

Another DC resident, Izzac, believes that the government shutdown will force Congress to get things in order. Izzac stated, “We needed the government to be shut down for a while.” He felt like the government was unstable and not cooperating.

The first government shut down happened in 1976. The United States has had 22 shutdowns in the past 49 years. Again, the 2025 shutdown has been the longest. The second longest shutdown was in 2018-2019, which lasted 34 days. In 1995-1996 the United States had the 3rd longest shutdown which lasted 21 days.



Mayor Bowser Not Running for Mayor in 2026 by Sincere Brown

DC Mayor, Muriel Bowser, will not be running for mayor of Washington DC in 2026. Bowser, who has led D.C. over 11 years for three terms, stated she will not seek reelection in 2026 as she feels her time as mayor is complete. On Nov 25, 2025, Bowser said that she will not run for a fourth term at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in downtown DC. She told the crowd that her administration has laid the groundwork for others to build.

Mayor Bowser stated, “For ten years, you and I have worked together on an ambitious agenda to restore faith in our government and ensure that every D.C. resident gets the fair shot they deserve.”

As of writing this article, at least five candidates have already filed to run, including Ward 4 Councilmember Janeese Lewis George. Lewis George told The Informer, “It’s not the ribbon cuttings and the big major deals with billionaires. That’s what people are tired of. People want leadership that actually is going to be on the ground, who is going to listen and who wants to solve problems.”



Kenyan McDuffie has also entered the race for mayor. McDuffie is a former Ward 5 Councilmember and was an At-Large Councilmember before resigning to run for mayor.

“My entire service has been about fighting for people who can’t fight for themselves, and delivering on the promise of our city,” McDuffie told WTOP.

One DC resident, Marsha, stated, “I really agree with her [Bowser] that she did enough for us and she made a good building ground for the next mayor.”

Another DC resident, Cornell, stated, “She has done a lot of thinking for the city, even for the youth. I think it wouldn’t be wrong for her to move on.”

With the most recent mayoral election, Mayor Bowser became the longest serving mayor of DC. Before Bowser, the longest serving mayor was Marion Barry. Barry was the mayor of DC from 1979 to 1991 and again from 1995 to 1999.



The 2025 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP30) by Thomar'i King

From November 10th, 2025 to November 22nd, 2025, the United Nations hosted the International Climate Change Conference, also referred to as the COP30. Many of the world's leaders, including leaders from countries such as China, Nigeria, Indonesia, Democratic republic of Congo, France, Chad, Australia, Tanzania and Japan were flown into Belem, Brazil to discuss the current climate crisis and its possible solutions. The stated goal of the conference was transitioning from negotiating pledges to accelerating tangible, inclusive climate action. According to the United Nations, "COP30 will bring together world leaders and negotiators from the member states (or Parties) of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to further global progress, with business leaders, young people, climate scientists, Indigenous Peoples, and civil society sharing insights and best practices to strengthen global, collective and inclusive climate action."

Major events include a pledge to triple adaptation finance and the adoption of the Global Mutirão Agreement, an extension of the previous Paris Agreement, to set new emission targets and make the shifting economy fair for working class citizens and business owners

. The UK pledged to go green entirely by 2030, and other parties in attendance began making plans to realistically support their economies post energy swap.

Despite the generally good outcomes achieved by the conference, public perception is quite negative; many people view the affair as disappointing. One DC resident, Dirira Augustine, believes, "the COP 30 was productive but didn't really give results. Hopefully this will be the steppingstone for actual change"

Another DC resident, Romen Mouring, stated, "Honestly it felt more like a waste of time than anything due to the lack of real answers."

In 1995, Berlin, Germany hosted the world's first COP. In 2026, climate change has caused a significant shift in the season's usual patterns, as well as amplifying how frequently natural disasters like tornadoes, typhoons, and tropical storms occur.

The United States did not send delegates to COP30, though California did. On January 27th, 2026, President Donald trump officially withdrew the U.S. from the Paris Agreement. Since the withdraw, the United States has captured Venezuelan President Maduro and began influencing the oil production of the country.

The No Kings Protest in DC by Zoe Paul

The No Kings protest first happened on June 14th, 2025, Donald Trump's Birthday, with 5 million people attending, according to the organizers. The most recent No Kings protest happened on October 18th with 7 million people attending throughout America, which includes U.S. territories, DC, and all 50 states. President Trump and Vice President JD Vance shared their opinions about it, especially on Truth Social, calling the protests anti-American.

According to the No Kings website, the goal of the No Kings organizers was to tell the world that America does not belong to any kings, dictators, or tyrants. They wanted to show that America belongs to 'We the People' that care about it. According to Washingtonian, there were more than 200,000 people that attended the No Kings protest in Washington, DC; there was also a very diverse crowd from very different races, faiths, and statuses.

On Truth Social, Trump has posted an AI video of him flying a plane while pooping on the protestors. One protestor at the DC No Kings protest, Naomi, believe that Trump was childish. She states, "I think that Trump was incredibly childish with his reaction to the protest."

Another protester, Bea, stated, "I think the protests brought more awareness because of the sheer amount of people participating all over the country, in every state." She also stated, "Trump responds to nearly everything immaturely and ignorantly, I'd say."

For comparison, the first Earth Day protest in 1970 had 20 million people participating across the country in some form. The March on Washington in 1963 had 250,000 people in attendance in DC. The No Kings protests are set to break many participation records, with 7 million people actively protesting across the country.



The Monetary Gain of the President during his Second Term by Briahna Tyree

Since the start of Donald Trump's second term, his monetary gain has substantially increased by ways of crypto companies, gifts, business deals, and investments. The American public has mixed feelings about this money and where it is coming from.

According to an article by Forbes, Donald Trump's net worth has increased by about 4 billion dollars in just one year in office. Donald Trump has multiple business ventures that bring him in money. According to Reuters, "Trump reported more than \$600 million in income from cryptocurrencies, golf properties, licensing and other ventures. It also showed Trump's push into crypto had added substantially to his wealth." Trump has also received multiple gifts from foreign leaders, such as a Boeing 747-8 from Qatar worth 400 million dollars.

A government contractor, who requested to be anonymous, stated, "there a lot of questions around the president's relationships with various companies that have made monetary gains within this current term, a lot related to crypto currency."

He continues, "I think if you go into public service in federal government, especially president, the most powerful position in the country and perhaps the world, that you should divest your interest in anything that the government is involved in or have it be overseen by some objective trust or some trustee."

Another DC resident, Damien White, believes, "this current administration often undermines morality for the sake of personal gain, whether that's monetary or whether it's influence or power. And I feel like as long as we have someone in command who is willing to swap out the American principles for his own selfless gain, this country is in a really, really dangerous and volatile space."

According to Forbes, Donald Trump's Presidential Cabinet is the richest in U.S. History. His cabinet's net worth, excluding Trump's personal wealth, is worth 7.5 billion dollars which is around 68 times Joe Biden's 2021 Cabinet worth 110 million Dollars.

Student Mental Health Concerns Rise Across Communities

by Yanileth Rivas

Students and parents shared growing, common concerns about student's mental health and well-being during interviews conducted on April 2, 2026, speaking out about increasing stress, anxiety, and emotional pressure affecting students both at school and at home.

Interviews were conducted with Concepcion Benitez, a mother and community member; Clarissa Rivas, a college student at Trinity University; and Julie, a student and community member. These interviews revealed that many students today are struggling more with stress than in past years. Parents mentioned and described noticeable changes in students, in their attitude, daily life, and well-being. They also discussed how families and school can better support their students facing academic pressure, social stress, and mental health challenges by finding new resources, paths to connect to their students, and allowing them to feel comfortable enough to reach out for help when in need.

During interviews on April 2, 2026, several community members shared their observations about rising stress levels among students. Many noted that academic pressure, social expectations, and emotional struggles are affecting students more than before.

Concepcion Benitez, a parent interviewed for this story, explained that students today appear more overwhelmed than in previous generations and experiences. "Students today, such as my daughter, seem overwhelmed and more worried than when I was younger. My daughter is constantly worried, busy, and doesn't take time for herself as she used to as much. I am concerned about her and the students because they are all forgetting they are still young," Benitez said. "Parents should reach out and notice their children more. We need to make sure that our children know they aren't alone and can confide in us to speak about anything that may be troubling them."

Clarissa Rivas, college student at Trinity University, discussed how mental health struggles such as anxiety, fear, and self-harm are becoming more common among students.

"I am a college student; I am around students all the time. I notice a lot of us are afraid to talk about our problems and our worries because we think that people won't understand and it won't get better by talking about it. We are concerned about what others might think and say of us," Rivas said. "Pressure from professors, deans, peers, school and my social life at the same time makes it harder for me to stay focused and feel confident in speaking up and making time for myself."

I feel busier and more stressed than usual. Schools should help by giving students more support and creating spaces where they feel open to share how they feel.”

Julie, another community member and local student, spoke about how students sometimes hesitate to talk and seek help because they feel embarrassed, fear of being judged, and looked down upon because of their mental health.

“Some of us students, such as me, are afraid to talk about our problems because we feel by avoiding them, it affects us less. We often go out more and act out sometimes to avoid our problems and forget about it.” Julie said, “Many of my peer’s struggle from trauma but won’t speak up about it. Others suffer from self-harm, migraines, anxiety, and they feel the need to keep to themselves because they don’t want to ruin their image.”

These interviews showed that stress and anxiety are common concerns across different households, and many adults believe that better communication and support, relationship between students, parents and schools could help reduce and prevent pressure and social battles. Research shows that mental health struggles among college students have been increasing for years.

A study by Johns Hopkins Medicine of more than 560,000 U.S. college students found that symptoms of depression have steadily risen from 2007 to 2022, especially in women, minority students and those who are dealing with financial stress. The study also found that thoughts of suicide increase by nearly 154%, showing that mental health concerns are becoming more serious and that colleges need stronger preventions and support resources.

Students facing financial problems or belonging to minority groups were found to experience higher, stronger levels of symptoms like trouble sleeping, loss of concentrations, feelings of worthlessness, and this shows that different challenges can affect each person's mental health differently.



Anicet Ekane Died in Military Detention in Cameroon

by Maxime Poutcheu Noumbibou

Anicet Ekane died in military detention on December 1, 2025 on Monday morning. He died in Yaounde, the capital of Cameroon. He had a difficult time breathing. His family told the officials, but they did not respond in time. Anicet Ekane was an opposition leader in Cameroon. He was a supporter of presidential candidate Issa Tchiroma Bakary. Many in the public believe Bakary had won the recent election, and Ekane was supporting Bakary. However, the President, Biya Paul, and some members of the country's government did not agree with the election and arrested Ekane without an arrest warrant.

Many in the population of Cameroon do not like that he died in custody of the President. Supporters want justice for Anicet Ekane and his family because they think Ekane is innocent.

I interviewed people from Cameroon to see how they felt about the president. One DC resident from Cameroon, Marvin, said, "He was innocent because he has the right to support any political party and the other thing is the population has to uprising."

Another DC resident from Cameroon, Ombrel, believes, "I know the government killed Ekane because he supported the other person."

Biya Paul, the president of Cameroon, has been president for 43 years and some people in Cameroon do not think he improves supermarkets, office buildings, and the roads for his country. Some people do not like this president because he does not give an opportunity for people to have work and he does not want to change that.



The National Guard Takeover by Juan Artis

On August 11, 2025, the National Guard was deployed to the streets of Washington DC. The President invoked the Home Rule Act as his resort to “crack down on crime.” The Home Rule Act gave DC the ability to elect its own local government for the city but also allows the president to temporarily take over the DC Police Department in a state of emergency. Also, because Washington DC isn’t a state, the Home Rule Act allows the President to activate the National Guard in the city.

The president has deployed approximately 2,200 National Guard troops to the streets of Washington DC. Also, in accordance with the law, the President has taken control of the DC Police Department for a maximum of 30 days. However, on September 2nd, the DC Mayor signed an order to continue the work of the Safe and Beautiful Emergency Operations Center and stated that they will be cooperating with federal law enforcement agencies.

One DC resident, Robert Roche, stated, “I personally like to feel safe when I’m outside, so I hope that they have my best interest at heart. So yeah, I feel comfortable with the presence of the national guard, but it could be difficult for other people to feel safe when they're walking around with rifles.”

Another DC resident, Aaron Davis, stated, “I don’t feel safe when I see them walking through the city with big guns. It feels like the president wants us to live in fear of him so he can continue to do whatever he wants.”

The US Appeals Court is now allowing Trump to deploy the National Guard to Portland. He has already sent troops to Chicago and has plans to send more troops across the country.



DCPS Enforces New Cell Phone Policy by James Dawson

Starting on August 25, 2025, DC Public School students will no longer be allowed to use cell phones in the classroom. This is due to a law that is meant to address how cell phone use in the classroom can significantly decrease academic success by causing distractions that hinder students' ability to focus and retain information. The law states that the ban on personal cell phones in DCPS was enacted to address issues like student distraction, reduced focus, and negative impacts on mental health and bullying. Schools are responding by having students follow a procedure, usually having phones and other personal devices locked in a locker, and by ensuring parents have the contact information of the school. One DCPS student, Eli states, "I feel like not having my phone is a way to keep me from distractions, but I do sometimes miss my phone."

Another DCPS student, Ian says, "I wish I had my phone as its easier and helps with my work and gets it done faster." According to ABC News, across the country, 20 districts, including DC and Virgin Islands, have completely banned cellphone devices in the classroom.



President Trump Signs “Securing Our Borders” Executive Order by Joshua Brown

President Trump's Executive Order called "Securing Our Borders" targets all immigrants who are undocumented and the ones that are in violation of federal immigration law. The order calls for the immigrants to be caught and get criminal charges and be deported from the United States. For the first time in over 50 years, the U. S. immigrant population is decreasing. Recent data from the Pew Research Center shows that the number of foreign-born residents fell from 53.3 million in January 2025 to 51.9 million by June 2025, a 2.6% decline.

According to Pew Research Center, the unauthorized immigrant population in the U.S. reached 14 million in 2023. California has the largest share, with 11.3 million immigrants, making up 28.4% of the total. Texas follows with over 6 million, then Florida and New York. During the first 100 days of Trump's second term, he introduced over 100 executive actions on immigration. The focus is to prevent new immigrants and refugees from entering and removing temporary protections for some to increase deportations. Trump promised a large-scale deportation campaign targeting 1 million people in the first year.

This has impacted the DMV by putting large numbers of ICE agents on the streets targeting Hispanic people even if they were born here. There have been claims that some people are getting mistaken for immigrants even though they are not.

One DC resident, Jessica Ellis, stated, “I agree, it’s wrong what they are doing, but that doesn’t have nothing to do with us and what we have going on.” Another DC resident, Brenda Ellis, stated, “they are trying to get them out of here and send them back to where they’re from.”

According to NPR, another bill gives 45 billion dollars for immigration detention centers, and also around another 30 billion to hire new agents to work with them.



GPS Student-Led Conferences

By Teontre Wright

Garnett Patterson STAY held student-led conferences for their parent-teacher conference day on October 9th at the school building. Student-led conferences are an approach to parent-teacher meetings with a focus on student-driven reflection of each of their classes. The students will be able to present their classwork to the principal, deans, teachers, and their parents.

Student-led conferences can get the students more involved in their own work instead of just informing the parents and not the students. This is a method to keep the students more involved and have them lead the conference to inform both the parents and teachers. The conference will be led by the students, just explaining what they're proud about, what they are struggling with, and how they will accomplish getting over that issue and moving on. Students use examples to show proof of progress or challenges. The two main people that put all this together at Garnett Patterson STAY are Dean Lovos and student Jovan Bishop. Dean Lovos stated, "I believe that student voices need to be heard. It's important for students to advocate for the implementation of education. And what that looks like for each individual student."

Some students may feel as though this is a way they can get to know their teachers and the teachers to get to know their students a little more than what they already do know.

Jovan Bishop stated, "I feel like it'll be better if each teacher had a 1-on-1 conversation and I'm not going to lie, it's so people can say what people have going on at home and what their challenges are in the school. I feel like it's safe to say that."

Educators sought ways to influence students to take responsibility for their academic progress, and student-led conferences were the opportunity, actively involving students in their work and setting goals and communicating their strengths and weaknesses. These conferences aim to have a deeper understanding of the students' learning process.



OPINIONS



Editorial Cartoon by Thoma'ri King to describe the current state of information sharing since the advent of the smartphone.

The Ethiopian Government and the Tigray Forces Have to Make a Peace Deal

by Bruke Berhe

My own cousins have had to leave Tigray because Ethiopia is threatening them. They had to leave their city because the Ethiopian forces were getting close to the border. Flights out of the city were limited. I understand their fear because I went through the same situation.

The Ethiopian and Tigray war must stop because the war is leading to starvation, forcing people to leave their homes, and causing environmental damage from bombardment. Now is the time for violence to stop.

The government of Ethiopia is trying to starve the people of Tigray in order to win the war. According to Martin Plaut, "Famine in Tigray was the result of war strategy followed by the central government to starve the civilians including IDPs [internally displaced people]." The government should have been feeding people instead of trying to starve them, and they have to stop. Starving average people is horrible because they are civilians, and Ethiopia should see the difference between civilians and soldiers.



Also, the government of Ethiopia is forcing people to leave the capital of Tigray to go to the capital of Ethiopia. According to BBC, "Those who can afford it fly, those who can't use buses," one person in the main city of Mekelle told the BBC - going on to explain how large numbers of young people were heading to the capital, Addis Ababa." People are leaving because of possible danger. When people are forced to leave, they have to stop going to school and working. People are separated from their families.

Finally, the war needs to end because it is causing significant environmental damage to communities. According to The University of Alabama at Birmingham, "These include: bombardment, which creates craters and degrades the soil's chemical composition; damage to water supply tanks and other infrastructure, resulting in half of Tigray's water supply coverage being destroyed; and accumulation of waste associated with the war effort, resulting in pollution of local towns and increased water pollution." The war is leaving a lot of damage that will not just have an impact now, but even in the future it will affect the people of Tigray.

The damage is ruining their land and leaving environmental damage that future generations will have to deal with even after the war.

The government of Ethiopia says the war is necessary because Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) launched an attack on the northern headquarters of the Ethiopian National Defense Force on November 4, 2020. However, according to The Guardian, the Ethiopian government had created instability through reforms, stating, "The TPLF dominated Ethiopia's governing coalition for decades before Abiy took office in 2018 and announced sweeping political reforms. Those reforms, however, have allowed old ethnic and other grievances to surface, and led to instability." When Abiy took control of the Ethiopia government, he swept Trigya's leaders from power and he cancelled elections. This is the main reason the war started.

Overall, the war needs to stop because people of Tigray need peace and they must live their lives. The war has caused a lot of damage to people and it's enough. The people need to come together and push for an end to the war.



The Federal Government Should Not Repeal DC's "Improving Police Accountability and Transparency Act"

by Sakia Curry

On May 25, 2020, George Floyd was killed by police due to an officer continuing to press his knee to Floyd's neck for 9 minutes and 29 seconds while he was handcuffed face down in the street. In response to this and the protests that followed, the DC Council passed the "Improving Police Accountability and Transparency Act" which was passed to make DC residents feel safe and secure when interacting with the police. However, now, the federal government is trying to take back this set of laws that were supposed to protect us. The Act should not be repealed by the federal government because it will heighten the risk that police conduct will spiral out of control, and the police of the city will not be held accountable.

First, the "Improving Police Accountability and Transparency Act" prohibits the use of neck restraints, which should not be repealed. Prohibiting neck restraints by police is good because it protects the people from police brutality. For example, according to CNN in 2020, it states that in Minneapolis, where Floyd was killed, "Officers used neck restraints on 428 people since 2012, and 14% lost consciousness, the data showed.

That means the procedure, which is restricted or banned in many large police departments around the country, was used an average of about once a week in the city over that time period." This shows that the police are not properly trained and that they are abusing their power using neck restraints. Banning neck restraints will benefit the community by allowing the city to not feel afraid and will protect community members from potentially lethal force.

Second, the Act gives the public easier access to body worn camera footage. It is good to have access to this footage because the public can see how the police go about their jobs and how they deal with incidents under pressure. For example, according to NPR in 2021, after Minneapolis required body cameras, "complaints against police dropped by 17 percent and the use of force by police, during fatal and non-fatal encounters, fell by nearly 10 percent." This shows the positive outcomes that body cameras bring to the community because they cause police to think before they act and push them to have integrity. By allowing public access to body cameras, they will be proving to the public that they are willing to serve and protect. Also, the public no longer has to ask if it's being recorded because they must always keep the cameras on.

Finally, the Act should not be repealed because the Act promotes continued education of the police force to make sure they are properly trained on de-escalation. This is important because we are trying to reduce police brutality as best as we can. We do not want any more families devastated by their loved ones passing all because officers can't control their anger. For example, in an article by University of Cincinnati News, it states that a training called Integrating Communications, Assessments, and Tactics (ICAT) "was associated with 28% fewer use-of-force incidents, 26% fewer injuries to community members and 36% fewer injuries to police officers." This shows that they are not serious about what they are doing in their line of work if they are trying to repeal these laws. Promoting de-escalation training such as ICAT can help our communities because we as a city can provide funds to keep the training going so we can continue to get the officers the correct training that they need.

The Trump administration believes that it is too much money and that they don't need to monitor police because they are here to protect and serve. They believe the Act will hurt their ability to police. However, it's not going to impact the way police work, and it would help improve their situation and get others to open up to them more and trust them. If the Act gets more people to trust the police, things can improve for both police and citizens because they will be working to get on the same page and both will not be as hostile towards each other.

Overall, we should not repeal the "Improving Police Accountability and Transparency Act" because it's going to help bring back the trust people are losing in the police. The benefits of this act will not only give back some trust to police, but it will also help the community by allowing them to be relieved of fear.



We Demand Accountability Around the Epstein Files by CJ Williams

In November 2025, Congress passed a bill called the “Epstein Transparency Act.” The bill was signed by President Donald Trump to release what are known as the Epstein files. The public wanted these files released because they contain evidence from the investigation of Jeffery Epstein and other wealthy people who might have been involved in his sex trafficking ring. There needs to be more accountability and investigations of people in the Epstein files because the crimes are abhorrent, few people have been arrested, and the public demands accountability.

First, there needs to be more accountability because crimes are incredibly abhorrent. These crimes deal with soliciting prostitution of minors and sexual trafficking of underage girls. A press release from the United Nations explains how there were several crimes that were committed by Jeffery Epstein. Specifically, it states, “that a number of [his crimes] may reasonably meet the legal threshold of crimes against humanity.” The United Nations defines acts such as “sexual slavery, rape, enforced prostration, trafficking, torture, or murder are committed as part of a widespread systematic attack against a civilian population with knowledge of the attack” as crimes against humanity.

This emphasizes that the crimes that were committed were heinous by people who feel that since they had power, they could get away with these crimes and there wouldn't be any punishment. These crimes are so bad that even the United Nations put out a statement about them.

Second, there needs to be more people investigated, tried, and sentenced because so far there have been few people prosecuted for their crimes. Business Insider states, there have been “12 people who have experienced consequences following the Justice Department's January 30 data dump, including two arrests. None of the people featured in this story has been accused of participating in Epstein's sex-trafficking scheme.” Most of these investigations have been from countries outside of the United States. This shows that the Epstein scandal isn't taken seriously because of the lack of pursuing the names or people who have been linked to the files. There has been a huge amount of information released, but only 12 investigations is incredibly small.



Finally, there needs to be more investigations because the public's opinion on the Epstein files is that the people mentioned in files should be held accountable. There should be justice served for the victims, not just for Epstein, but for the one who have not come out and said anything. According to a poll by Reuters, it states, "69% said their views were captured 'very well' or 'extremely well' by a statement that the Epstein files 'show that powerful people in the U.S. are rarely held accountable for their actions.'" This shows people want justice to be served against the victims and shows that situations with people with power aren't being held accountable, or how it makes it easier to cover things up with a certain amount of fame or wealth.



Some may argue that the Justice Department is doing what they can, and we should trust the process. However, there has been enough time and plenty of people who have been listed and connected to the files for there to be justice for the victims, or at least further investigations. It seems that they are trying to release certain documents, but it has not had any effect on the public or made any progress on justice for the many victims.



I think people who have been mentioned or documented in the Epstein files should be investigated for information or for possible crimes they have committed. As a community, we need to push the people in office to hold those in the files accountable.

The US Should Focus on the US

by Sincere Brown

Will the killing of a cartel boss affect America, yes or no? In my opinion, I don't think it will affect the US the way the experts state. On February 22, 2026, the United States government and Mexican government carried out an assassination of Nemesio Rubén Oseguera Cervantes, also known as El Mencho, the head of drug cartels in Mexico. The government did this because the government claimed he was on the most wanted list. Since this event, violence erupted all throughout Mexico. Instead of focusing on other countries, the United States should focus on the drug issues within its borders, not the issues over in Mexico. First, the killing of El Mencho has caused a lot of violence and issues for Mexico. In the article "Mexico is on Edge After the Killing of Cartel Boss," it states, "Violence erupted across the country over the weekend after the leader of the nation's most powerful criminal organization was killed yesterday." This shows that the death of the cartel boss affects the Mexican citizens and the American citizens traveling in Mexico, who were scared and there were people getting trapped in the violence. This is why the United States should focus on trying to keep their citizens safe before enticing violence in another country.

Second, the United States should focus on our own drug issues because there are overdoses throughout America. For example, according to National Safety Council, it states, "A total of 97231 people died from preventable drug overdoses in 2023, the first decrease (2.4%) since tracking started in 1999." This shows why we need to focus on the United States because the rate of overdoses has been increasing over the time-period from 1999-2023. This is good that it has been going down in the past year, but I also think the US should maintain that instead of putting their nose into another country's business.



Third, there are drug criminals in the United States that need to be focused on.

According to the Center for Strategic and International Studies, “there are unconfirmed reports that Juan Carlos Valencia González, El Mencho’s stepson, who runs the Elite Group within the CJNG, has assumed control. If confirmed, Valencia González’s leadership would present a host of challenges for JIATF-CC, as he was born in the United States; there are limits on intelligence collection and kinetic operations against U.S. citizens.” This shows that this attack will not be the end to the cartel; it was just keep passing the throne on to the next person in the rank. The US would be focusing on something they cannot control in a country that is not theirs.



Some people may argue that the cartels bring drugs to the United States, so it was good to help kill El Mencho. However, even if we stop El Mencho, he is not the root of the problem, and it can cause chaos without helping. It would be more effective to focus on the issues inside the United States first before we branch out to other countries.

Overall, drugs in the US had been getting increasingly dangerous over the years and the US needs to find a stop to it within its own borders before focusing on another country. We should all work together to stop drugs and overdoses in the United States.



ICE Needs Better Training

by Zoe Paul

According to The Guardian, thirty-two people have died in ICE custody which shows that ICE takes things too far when it comes to deporting and detaining people. They are also wrongfully detaining citizens with no criminal records and some of them are U.S. citizens. This is bad for the country because it's against what America stands for. America is known for freedom and liberty for all, but they wrongfully detaining people because they speak Spanish.

ICE needs better training because people are dying, and innocent people are being arrested, which is now based on what language they speak and not if they have proper documents or criminal records.

First, ICE officers need to be properly trained because they are killing innocent people for peacefully protesting and expressing their freedom of speech. Since protesting wasn't any harm to the community and they're just expressing their opinions, they should have the right to protest without getting teargassed and harmed by ICE agents. For example, in The Marshall Project, it states, "The enforcement of federal agents from ICE and the Border Patrol violently reacting to protests, including the shooting deaths of U.S. citizens Renee Good and Alex Pretti." This shows that ICE is killing people for following the First Amendment. Now innocent lives have been lost for people exercising their rights.

Second, ICE officers need better training because they are arresting innocent people. For example, in The Guardian, it states, "The agency was holding 68,440 people in detention in mid-December, nearly 75% of them had no criminal convictions." This shows that ICE doesn't care if you're legal, illegal, have no criminal records, or you do; they're going based off what language you speak or how you look.

Finally, better training can help them understand how to correctly detain criminals and enforce immigration laws without killing American citizens and tear gassing children, so Congress needs to act. Congress needs to stop funding ICE until properly trained and open their eyes to their citizens that make America. For example, in Politico, it states, "A handful of GOP lawmakers are showing in the wake of the shooting of 37-year-old Renee Good in Minneapolis." This shows that it takes a death of a Caucasian woman for some people in the government to open their eyes and see that their American citizens are also in danger with ICE around.

ICE is made to deport illegal immigrants and immigrants with criminal records, but their intentions do not match their actions. If they are supposed to be deporting illegal immigrants, why are they so focused on harming children and innocent American citizens.

ICE aggression is never necessary unless the illegal immigrant is an actual dangerous person, but if they're disabled, elderly, etc. they have no reason to be aggressive.

Lately, ICE hasn't been acting like they have basic human decency and basic training. I'm sure there is a system that they look at to see what immigrants have caused crimes and what people live here but don't have their papers, but they are not using their systems properly. I want ICE to show that they care about people and children, and act like they are actually trained.



Awh Crap - The Bathroom Crisis of DC

by Briahna Tyree

Poop. On my walk into school, I saw poop. Nobody wants to address it, but people should not have to use the restroom at the bus stop because they do not have a public restroom to use. While the city is working on installing public restrooms called “Thrones,” there are not enough, and also not everyone is able to use them. Using the restroom is human right so access to them should be too! DC residents deserve greater access to public restrooms to provide human dignity to everyone, including our vulnerable populations.

First, greater access to public restrooms is good for everyone, especially those with disabilities. Imagine you're on the National Mall and nature is calling, but there are no bathrooms in sight. In a survey by The Crohn's & Colitis Foundation it states, “A new survey of U.S. consumers by the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation reveals an alarming nationwide shortage of public restrooms” and “The lack of public restrooms is an urgent public health crisis: 53% of respondents said that they or a family member had difficulty finding or accessing a public toilet within the last seven days.” The lack of access to restrooms isn't just affecting the regular person; it affects people that have disabilities as they might be having a medical episode or having to administer medication.

Second, public restroom access gives us dignity and privacy. Everyday-people and those who experience homelessness still are going to use the restroom (like I wrote about in my introduction). But homeless people are still more likely to be declined at stores and businesses, causing them to use the restroom outside. According to the DC Fiscal Policy Institute, “Residents experiencing homelessness, in particular, stand to benefit from public restroom expansions. The pandemic made restroom access worse, as many downtown businesses closed restrooms that non- customers once were able to use.” The article continues, “They also found that businesses discriminated against a PFFC [People for Fairness Coalition] member experiencing homelessness who visited the restrooms. Multiple businesses allowed a white woman who appeared housed to use the restroom but not a black man who appeared possibly homeless.” The District's homeless population often has the greatest barriers to accessing restrooms, often being denied because of looks, race, or not having the money to pay for an item.



Third, all parties should be able to get equal access to public restrooms. A possible solution to the public restroom issue in Washington, D.C. is focusing on these three things. According to Greater Greater Washington, “Availability, Accessibility and Usability.” These three things are essential to making sure that the public restrooms are functional for everyone. Public restrooms that require apps or QR codes are discriminatory by limiting the people that can enter.

Some might say “I do not want to spend my tax dollars on public restrooms; we have more important things,” or “It is going to attract the wrong crowd.” But public restrooms are an important matter. Imagine if your elderly mother must use the restroom and you’re down by the National Mall. No restrooms in sight; a public restroom would be able to fix that problem. Some of restrooms the city is installing are more like private bathrooms than public bathrooms because they do not allow people who do not have phones or apps to use them since they require a QR code.

People are going to come into the restroom, do what they must do, and leave. We should not be making assumptions about what people are doing in the bathroom. We need to treat every human with respect. By focusing on, availability, accessibility and usability, we can help give DC residents greater access to public restrooms, providing human dignity to everyone, including our vulnerable populations.



Unemployment Isn't Just a Number

by Yanileth Rivas

Right now, Americans are feeling and experiencing how unstable the job market can be. Across the country some people are getting new jobs, but the pay isn't good enough and fewer people are being hired and many laid off. Many are still struggling to find steady work. For families, unemployment isn't just a number: it's debt, stress, bills, and the worries of not knowing how they'll get by.

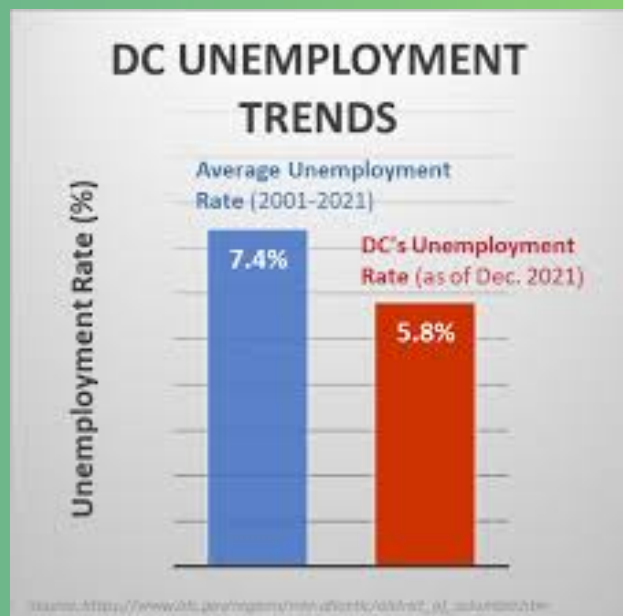
The government and employers need to do better. Workers deserve fair pay and better hours. Jobs are not just jobs, and shifts aren't just shifts. They're what families rely on to put food on the table, pay rent, and keep their financial balance good. Without them, businesses can't function either, and communities start to feel the impact too. Businesses should treat their workers better, as they would to their own family.

In March 2026, The U.S. added 178,000 jobs, but wage growth dropped 3.8% to 3.5%, and less people were participating in labor force than at any time in 2021. Even when jobs are available, a lot of Americans still can't pay for rent, groceries, gas, and childcare. Employment can feel anything but secure.

Even big, well-known respected companies are feeling the pressure. The Washington Post laid off 30% of its staff, including over 300 journalists. These cuts show that unemployment affects everyone, even skilled professionals, and it hurts the stability of entire communities.

Some argue that unemployment numbers are very low and economic growth should create more jobs, but statistics don't show the whole story. Behind these big numbers are real hard-working people and long hours just to keep a roof over their heads, pay their bills, and take care of their families, or themselves.

Unemployment is not just a statistic - its real life, with real consequences. The government and employers must do more to make work fair, when it should already be fair, secure, and livable. Families and communities depend on it, and we can't wait any longer if they keep ignoring us. We will stand up.



Ekane's Death is a Tragedy for Cameroon

by Maxime Poutcheu Noubibou

On December 1st 2025, Anicet Ekane died in military detention because the government arrested Ekane for going against the president. He got sick but the president didn't take care of him in time. The death of Ekane is a tragedy because he did not get the medical help he needed, he supported the opposition candidate to the current president, and he was a helpful person throughout his life.

First, Ekane's death was a tragedy because he did not get the medical help he needed. Aljazeera says, "The government said Ekane was charged with encouraging rebellion. His family said he became very sick in jail and had trouble breathing, but guards did not give him proper medical help. His lawyer said Ekane was denied good treatment and that they still don't know why he was arrested." The government arrested Ekane, but he was innocent. Ekane was sick and the guards didn't help. That is why I think he is dead. I think the president didn't help on purpose.

Secondly, Ekane supported the opposition candidate to the current president. According to afriquexxi.info, "Ekane led a political group called the African Movement for New Independence and Democracy (MANIDEM).

He was arrested in October after he supported another candidate, Issa Tchiroma Bakary, who said he actually won the election instead of president Paul Biya. Biya, who is 92, has led Cameroon for more than 40 years." Issa Tchiroma Bakary was a candidate in the election in Cameroon.

He won the election and the government changed the results, but the people did not believe it. He wanted Cameroon to evolve by fixing roads, buildings for work, and opening new places for markets.

Ekane supported Issa Tchiroma Bakary because Biya is bad for Cameroon and doesn't want progress for the population.

Finally, Ekane helped people throughout his life. Afriquexxi.info published this quote from Ekane, stating, "What motivated our approach—and I emphasize 'our' because it's a collective approach by our party, Manidem—is the country's best interest. It was, and still is, absolutely essential to find a way to put an end to this neocolonial and dictatorial regime. We did this in 1992 when we supported John Fru Ndi, hoping to bring down Biya.

This is what motivates nationalist parties like ours, which claims to be the heir of the Union of the Peoples of Cameroon (UPC). This is our guiding principle.” Ekane was motivated by and supported the nationalist parties because they wanted to bring new change to Cameroon. Paul Biya was dictatorial and Ekane spoke out against that.

The government killed Ekane and the family needs justice. Ekane was important to Cameroon.



The RENTAL Act is Bad for Renters

by Juan Artis

On September 17, 2025, DC passed the RENTAL Act which stands for “Rebalancing Expectations for Neighbors, Tenants, and Landlords Act.” This act speeds up the eviction process and hinders tenants from keeping their units when landlords sell their buildings. The DC Council passed this act because it was brought to their attention by landlords who claim that existing laws, which were passed to help tenants, are slowing down the process of constructing new buildings. This act is harmful to tenants because it interferes with an existing act that gives tenants a chance to have the first opportunity to purchase their unit before the landlord can sell the building, it speeds up evictions which can lead to more homelessness, and the housing economy is already in a bad place for renters.

First, this new law is harmful because it interferes with an existing act that gives tenants a chance to purchase their home if sold by the landlord. According to Urban Turf’s overview of the new law, it states, “buildings that are less than 15 years old are now exempt from issuing a TOPA offer of sale” and “Certain 2–4-unit buildings are also exempt from TOPA requirements, depending on ownership structure and portfolio size.”

This is harmful because prior to the RENTAL Act being passed, people who lived in buildings that were less than 15 years old and some smaller unit buildings were entitled to the right to purchase if the landlord was planning to sell. By the RENTAL Act stripping away tenants’ rights to purchase, they are put in a disadvantage of stability and wealth.

Second, the new law makes evictions easier and faster, which can lead to more homelessness. According to Urban Turf it states, “The eviction process is now streamlined, reducing delays that had extended since the pandemic” and “Evictions are permitted if a tenant or occupant is arrested or charged with a violent crime in or near the property.” The faster evictions are harmful because tenants aren’t given the proper amount of time to move out or possibly fight for their home in court. The law is also harmful due to the fact that being charged or arrested can make someone unhoused. So, if someone was arrested, they would come back to nothing. Furthermore, this law is a problem because even the alleged wrongdoings of someone who isn’t a tenant could put a renter in jeopardy.

Lastly, the housing economy is already in bad shape, and the RENTAL Act is only going to make things harder. According to United Planning Organization, “more DC renters are paying more than half their income for rent and utilities than a decade ago, despite substantial affordable housing investments. Over 44,000 renter households-about one in four renters-had housing costs this high in 2022, up from 36,000 in 2010” and according to DC Fiscal Policy Institute, “Rent burden among renters of color in DC is even higher.

This high level of rent burden-which has not statistically changed since 2021-should be an urgent call to lawmakers to address the affordability crisis.” These statistics illustrate this law is harmful because renters are paying higher prices than they were years ago. If a renter was evicted, they would have to start from scratch, meaning that if renters are already struggling to pay rent and utilities imagine having to start all the way over. The housing economy was already in a bad shape when they decided to pass this law.

The Landlord Association argued that unpaid rent and strict eviction laws were making it difficult to do business in DC and keeping them from building more affordable housing.

However, according to Greater Greater Washington, “While a few dozen households did have rental arrears above \$30,000 at the time of the eviction filing, the median back rent owed was \$4,500, meaning that most tenants are approximately three months behind on rent.” This conveys that The Landlord Association hyperbolized the amount of money that they were losing from unpaid rent. Also, Greater Greater Washington writes, “These are the types of data points that councilmembers will need to track to determine the impacts of the RENTAL Act, and to adequately budget for and distribute rental assistance and legal aid services. But right now, neither the DC Council nor housing services providers have this data, and the consequences show.” This illustrates the negligence of the Landlord Association and DC Council. The data that is supposed to be tracked to see the effects of the RENTAL Act are nowhere to be found.

Overall, the passing of the RENTAL Act was detrimental to the housing economy and the tenants who are just barely able to pay their rent. I think the DC Council should be held accountable for not keeping track of the data that was supposed to determine the effects of the RENTAL Act. I also think that, at the very least, they should revise the rules of the law to allow the right to purchase a unit in a building that is less than 15 years old and change other harmful components of the law.



End to ICE

by James Dawson

One day, walking through DC on 13th street, I saw ICE agents hop out of two big black trucks and wrongfully harass a Hispanic individual and pick him up and throw him in the back of the truck and speed off. The ICE agents were fully masked with no official badges and were in an unmarked vehicle. The ICE raids in DC need to stop because it is a violation of rights, hurts local businesses, and is scaring the public.

First, the ICE raids need to stop because they are a violation of rights. It is a violation because it violates people's 4th amendment. It is not right for the government and President Trump to allow immigration officers and workers to show up in unmarked cars and hop out with no agency being stated on their vests, while also wearing a ski mask and stereotyping any Hispanic, snatching them up and pulling off without even asking them for papers. For example, the Fourth Amendment states, "The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized." This shows that in America, which is supposed to be a free country, people are getting harassed and locked up and deported after being illegally stopped and searched.

Second, the ICE raids need to stop because they are hurting local businesses. Businesses are losing money and customers because people are fearful and don't want to see ICE agents and federal police. In the article by CNN titled "Trump's Federal Takeover is Disrupting DC's Ailing Economy", it states, "In the week starting August 11, foot traffic was down about 81% of retail-store categories in Washington compared to data from a year ago, according to pass by, with car dealerships, department stores, convenience stores and beauty-supply shops seeing some of the steepest drops." This shows things have not been the same since Trump started this policing surge, and it is scaring away local customers and causing a reduction in money for businesses.

Finally, Trump's takeover is scaring the public. The public is scared because they are afraid to witness someone get hurt or wrongfully deported or arrested or detained or, it even happening to themselves. In the article "Some DC Residents are Angry Over Trump Crackdown" in USA Today, it states, "Outside the White House, Donna Powell grew visibly frustrated as she was briefly questioned by Secret Service in the August heat. Powell said that in recent weeks, police have been questioning demonstrators more and she fears conflict could erupt now that Trump has mobilized the National Guard."

This shows the people are getting scared of the consequences that can occur for the people due to Trump's actions.

People like Donna Powell are also scared after being stopped and questioned and harassed, and it has them scared and upset due to their own personal experiences.

Some might argue that Trump is enforcing immigration laws and is doing a good service for the city. While immigration laws being enforced are helping remove people who came illegally from the country, the way that they are being enforced by Trump and his officers is very inappropriate and violent and is resulting in hurting true American citizens and their lives that they have going on.

Overall, harassing and illegal detaining has to come to a stop. They should come up with a better system to catch people who came illegally and then a better procedure for when they do catch them. People should help out and speak out against this instead of fearing. Some good ways to help out is to pull out your phone and record and send the video out to people who can help. Also, if you know any undocumented people, you help them get their papers and can possibly warn people when they know ICE is coming.



Stop the Government Shutdowns

by Joshua Brown

It has been the longest government shutdown in history and it's affecting everybody from elderly people to government workers. People are losing their jobs, food stamps are being cut off, and federal workers are off or working without pay. Congress needs to make sure shutdowns like this never happen again because it causes a lot of disruption in our community by hurting people's access to food, people's access to their pay, and people's access to their healthcare.

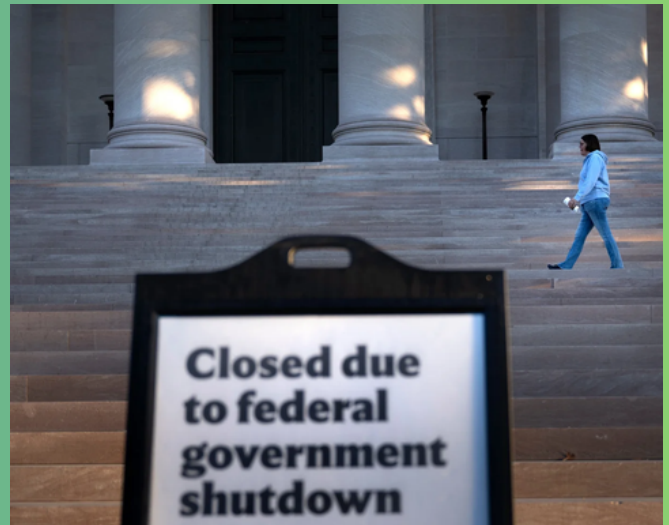
First, we need to stop these shutdowns from happening because it hurts people's access to food. With the government shutdown in effect, people are losing their ways to feed their families. According to the Business Insider "The Trump-Vance administration continues to play politics with people's lives through failing to ensure SNAP payments are expeditiously available." Trump said he will withhold food stamps until government reopens which is affecting 42 million Americans that rely on them to afford groceries each month. If shutdowns were to stop happening, Americans wouldn't have to worry about going hungry because of political games.

Second, we need to stop these shutdowns because many of those in federal government and public safety continue working without pay. This is important because people have homes and kids to care for, and they are working without payment.

For example, in CNBC News, it states, "If the shutdown lasts through Dec. 1, about \$21 billion in federal wages may be withheld, estimates the Bipartisan Policy Center." That's a lot of money that government employees are missing out on because of the shutdown. This shows that the government shutdown shouldn't happen again because a lot of workers are losing money that they need to take care of their families and bills that need to get paid.

Finally, there should never be another government shutdown because of funding for child health care and development. Programs such as Head Start that provide early education and child development for low-income children started to lose federal funding. According to CNN "The head start child program serve a total of a little more than 750,000 children in America and receive just over \$12 billion in funding annually but recently some of the programs that haven't received their federal funds could have to temporarily close their doors." Child programs losing funding would affect a lot of low-income families in America that need the education.

Some people might think it's a good idea to keep government shutdowns going because of the federal spending levels. However, many American communities have been damaged already. Many people don't know where they are going to get their next meal from, whether because of missing paychecks or because services being on hold for low-income families. I want to see an end to all government shutdowns.



Get the Federal Troops Out of DC

by Ian Cameron

On August 13, 2025, Donald Trump put D.C. police "under direct federal control" and later he sent the National Guard. Since then, I have seen a lot of armed guards around the train stations and neighborhoods walking around in groups holding assault rifles. This is why Donald Trump needs to remove the federal forces from DC. When you check the stats of crime from the previous years, it went down a lot, so there was no need to bring armed guards. Trump is just mad that some of his friends were robbed but he didn't care when everybody else was getting robbed. The National Guard should leave DC because crime was going down, it is not a good use of military resources, and it hurts the community.

Trump did not care about all the people getting robbed until it was his friends, because if you check the stats on criminal activity, it went down from where it was last year and the year before that. In an article by CBS News Politics, it states, "Violent crime, for example, in the two weeks prior to Aug. 7, was down about 20% already from the same period in prior years, according to the MPD data." This shows that in the past few years when crime was arguably at its worst, the government did nothing and was sitting back watching people getting robbed, but in 2025, the crime went down by 20% and everything was cooling down, but then Trump decides to swoop in when he was not needed and bring the National Guard.

Another reason troops need to leave is because it is not a good use of military resources. In the article by ACLU District of Columbia, it states, "The President's use of the military to further his apparent desire to 'take [the District] back,' 'take it away from the Mayor,' and 'run it the way it's supposed to be run' defies any notion of democratic representation and flies in the face of the more than 200-year old fight by District residents to achieve Home Rule.' The coalition asserts that the troops are 'locally unaccountable and not trained for domestic law enforcement.'" This shows that the National Guard are not wanted by the public and not trained so they will not even be able to do the job of helping the city.

Last, the National Guard needs to leave because it hurts the community. In the article "Sending in the National Guard Won't Make Our Cities Safer" by Vera, it states, "In Washington, DC, 79 percent of polled residents oppose the militarization of their local law enforcement and 61 percent say the military police presence has made them feel less safe." This shows that the National Guard cannot be doing all the good that they say they are because the majority of people are saying they are unhappy with their presence.

Some people might say that the crime is down and will stay down now because of the National Guard. However, crime statistics are complex, and again, crime was already dropping in the city before the National Guard arrived, so it is too early and inaccurate to say that it is the result of the National Guard. Overall, the National Guard just needs to leave because it is not a good use of military power, and the community feels that they are not helping because the crime was already going down without them.



AI Versus the Human Mind

by Teontre Wright

Artificial intelligence is no longer a futuristic fantasy. It's rapidly becoming a part of our daily lives. From self-driving cars to virtual assistants, AI is transforming industries and reshaping society. The question is not whether AI will change our education, it's if it will be harmful to the actual learning experience.

Most artists, writers, and creative students are losing touch. It's hampering the creativity of students. AI operates with predefined parameters, limiting opportunities for students to think more outside the box. AI should be limited in the classroom because it can hurt problem solving skills, creativity, and interpersonal relationships.

First, everyone knows about problem solving, whether you were in school and it's being taught to you, or you learned on your own. Problem solving is always needed just because of the simple fact that your brain is always sending messages to you. Before you do something, you question yourself, then act on it. For adults, problem solving could include managing your money so you can pay bills and buy food. You need to figure out how much money you need to spend and how much you can save until the next check.

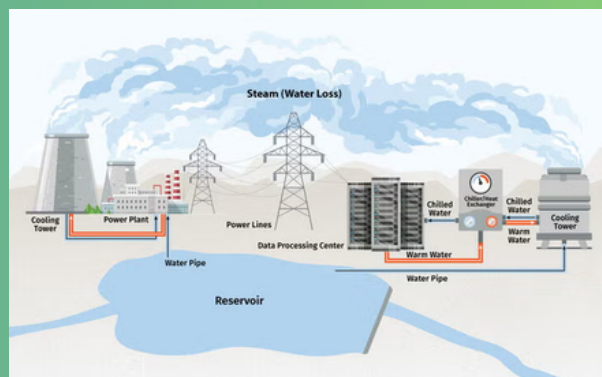
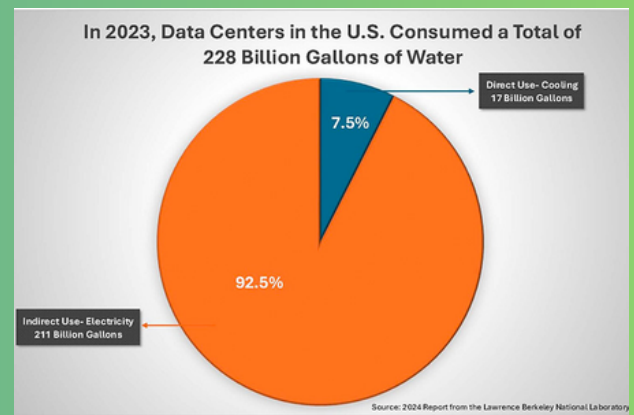
According to a study conducted by Dr. Michael Gerlich of SBS Swiss Business School, "The findings revealed a significant negative correlation between frequent AI tool usage and critical thinking abilities, mediated by increased cognitive offloading. Younger participants exhibited higher dependence on AI tools and lower critical thinking scores compared to older participants." This shows that students that use AI usually do not always practice information processing when using AI in the classroom. Those results highlight the potential cognitive cost of AI tool reliance.

Without engaging in the mental exercise of problem solving, students miss out on developing resilience, critical thinking, and creativity. Creativity all falls on thinking for yourself, which is a part of the learning experience that students are taught even before high school and college years. Some students may have similar ideas, but they will never be the same. At the World Economic Forum, multiple labor leaders stated that "The decisions we make today about artificial intelligence will resonate globally, shaping not only the future of creative industries but also setting precedents for ethical practices in other sectors.

These choices will impact international collaborations, cross-border productions, and the global framework for how AI integrates with human creativity.” This shows that leaders are taking seriously what AI means for creativity and it is important not to simply integrate these tools without understanding what it means for our creative processes. One of the other negative consequences AI is having on students is that it's hurting the ability to create relationships with other students and teachers. Using AI can make you lose connection with your teachers, just because of the simple fact that the teacher's job is to educate and help you if you're having trouble learning. Asking questions builds relationships and helps people know where your mind is just in case you need support or encouragement. Illinois Education states that “Relying more on AI may reduce the teacher-to-student interactions and relationships and take away from the social-emotional aspects of learning. If those interactions diminish, students’ social skills and interpersonal development will suffer.”

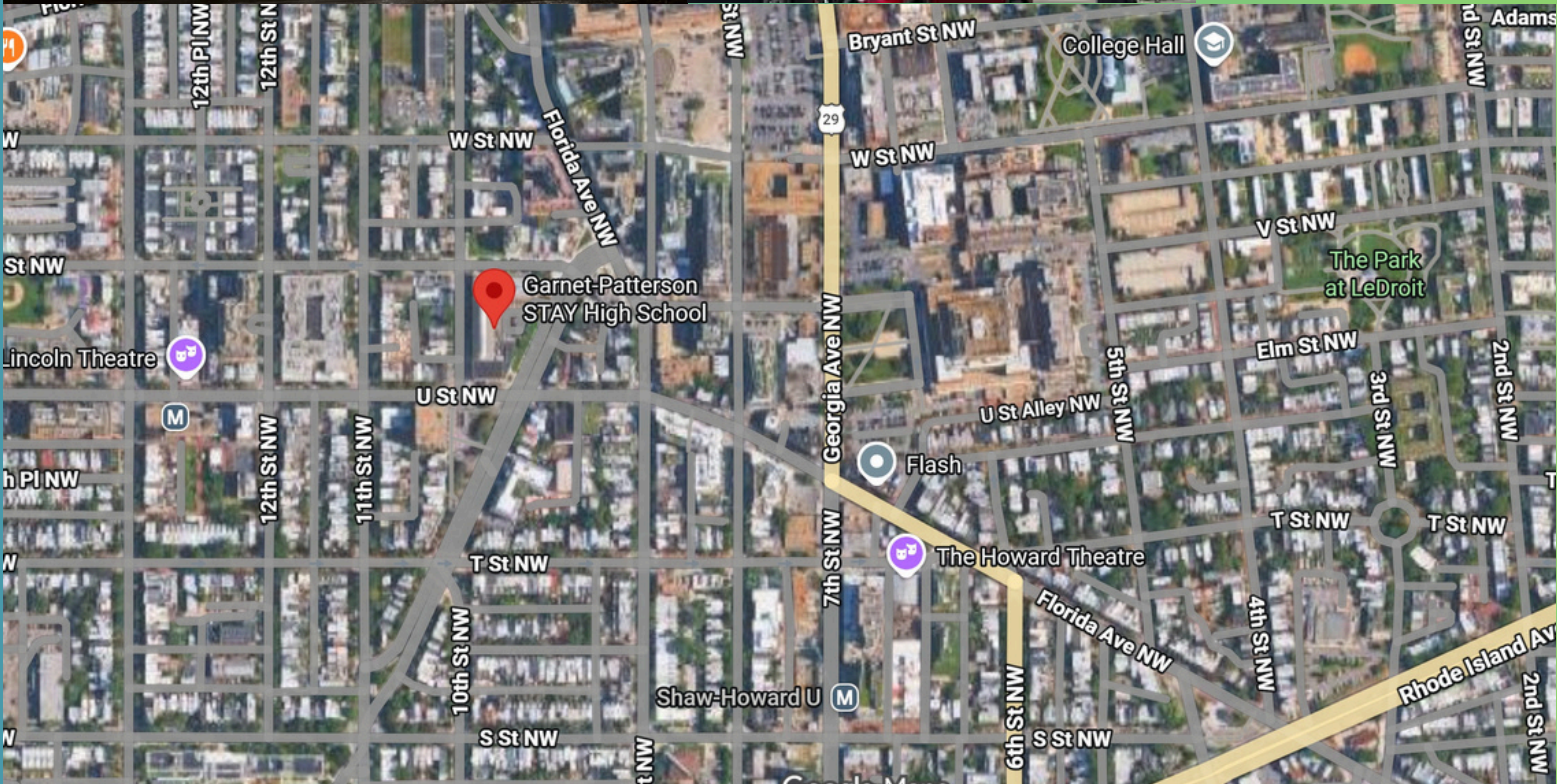
You may ask, “why is he only naming the negative side of AI? What about the positive?” AI does have its pros - things like enhancing decision making and working 24/7 without any rest.

Unlike humans, AI does not need a reset like sleep. AI can be helpful for breaking down things that you find challenging, turning your ideas into something different and making it easier to solve problems. But what if you start to use AI on an everyday basis, you’ll lose the ability to think for yourself. Relying on technology, you risk being lost without it and may struggle to socialize with people in the real world. AI is changing our world in positive and negative ways, but it's the future. The future is no longer coming we are now living in it. I do think that educationally, we put an end to AI unless it is being used incredibly carefully. Let your teacher do their job, that's what they are for - to make your life easier in the classroom. Currently, AI is not doing anything for you but giving you potentially false reports and taking away your critical thinking.





Features



Hidden Gems: America's Black Equestrians

by Briahna Tyree

What is equestrianism? According to Merriam Webster, equestrianism is the art or practice of riding a horse. Did you know that African Americans have a long history in the field of equestrianism? Since slavery, African Americans have been tasked with caring for, riding, and spending time with horses. As time moved on, African American equestrians created their own riding styles and developed deep relationships with horses, going on to be famous cowboys and winning jockeys.

Three prominent African American equestrians were Bill Pickett, Cheryl White, and Oliver Lewis.

A Forgotten Cowboy

Bill Pickett was born in Jenks Branch, Texas on December 5, 1870, and passed away in Ponca City, Oklahoma on April 2, 1932.

Pickett was one of the most notable black cowboys in America. He was the originator of bulldogging and steer wrestling, which is now an important feature in the rodeo showcase. The National Cowboy Museum says Bulldogging is, “to take down a steer by grabbing its horns, twisting its head and biting its tender upper lip.”



Growing up, he trained horses, tamed cattle, and started a business with his brothers called the Pickett Brothers Bronco Busters and Rough Riders. In the late 1880's Pickett started to compete in rodeo events, and by the early 1900's, he was a famous rodeo performer. But this fame did not come easy, as the Oklahoma Historical Society states, "In order to enter these events, Pickett was often identified as being an Indian, not an African American." Many times, Pickett had to conceal his identity to be able to compete and perform. Today Bill Pickett is honored by his fellow African American equestrians with a yearly Rodeo in Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

The Trailblazer

Cheryl White paved the way for future female African American jockeys and equestrians. She was born on October 29, 1953, and died on September 20, 2019. Cheryl was the first black female jockey in the United States of America. On September 3, 1971, at the age of 17, Cheryl rode her father's horse Jetolara into victory becoming the first female African American registered jockey to win a race. Cheryl had always been around horses growing up. With a father who was a horse trainer, and a mother who was a horse breeder, she was destined to become a jockey.

According to Andscape, "Through the first seven months of 1972, White had 12 first-place finishes, 21 second-place results and 19 third-place finishes in 231 mounts, earning approximately \$31,583." She made an impressive amount of money in the beginning of her career. Cheryl White's legacy continues to live on today with a book written about her called *The Jockey & Her Horse*, written by Sarah Maslin Nir and Raymond White Jr. She also has a Breyer horse and figurine made to represent her. These items show young girls that they are represented in a community where they tend to be a minority.



Kentucky's First Champion

The first Kentucky Derby winner, Oliver Lewis, made history on May 17, 1875. He was born in Fayette County, Kentucky on December 22, 1856, and died in Cincinnati, Ohio on January 30, 1924. Lewis was born a free black man and at the young age of 19 joined the Kentucky Derby. According to Wikipedia, "Oliver Lewis followed his instructions and was pushing most of the field while trailing a horse named Volcano for most of the race. However, in the late stretch, Chesapeake was unexpectedly far back in the pack while Aristides and Volcano were running neck and neck for first place. Lewis and Aristides pulled away near the finish line and won the race by two lengths." This win was monumental, as he was the first person ever to win the Kentucky Derby, and he was an African American man.

His trainer, Ansel Williamson, was also an African American man. 13 of the 15 jockeys running in the 1st Kentucky Derby were African American, which compared to today is completely unheard of. In the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights it states, "By the early 1900's, however, African Americans had been pushed out of the business, which had also become wealthier and less accessible to the working classes. It was not until 2000 that black jockeys reappeared in horse racing." The positions of jockey and horse trainer that Black people used to have were no longer available. Now they have become grooms and stables hands, the lower positions that didn't pay as well, something that caused people to leave the industry entirely.



Today, the horse ridden by Oliver Lewis, Aristides, and Lewis's trainer Ansel Williamson are both in the National Racing Hall of Fame. Lewis has paved the way for future African American jockeys and those who dream about racing in the Kentucky Derby themselves.

Conclusion

In conclusion, as a Black equestrian myself, I feel inspired by all the stories and articles that I read about the people that came before me. As a minority in this community, it gives me a sense of security to see big African American figures in history that have influenced today's equestrian community. In the future, I hope that I can inspire African American kids to ride as well.

Prediction Markets, Legality, and Morality

by Juan Artis

Polymarket and Kalshi are betting apps that allow people to place bets on virtually anything, particularly real-world events. Polymarket is owned by Shayne Coplan, and Kalshi is owned by Tarek Mansour and Luana Lopes Lara. These new betting apps have questionable histories, legalities, and allow morally problematic betting.

Polymarket was launched in 2020 under its previous name, Union.market. In 2022, the platform was fined \$1.4 million by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) which didn't allow user access until 2025. While restricted, the platform tried to operate overseas, which resulted in the platform being banned from several international jurisdictions. According to Responsible Statecraft, "It is important to note that Polymarket had previously been banned from operating in the U.S. under President Biden, due to regulatory considerations. However, it was allowed to return under the second Trump administration." This illustrates the complicated and controversial history of these prediction markets and how they finally landed in the United States. The legality of the markets has changed frequently. Reason states, "By January 2022, Polymarket had settled the CFTC's charges—facilitating event markets without registering with the CFTC." This shows that Polymarket was initially banned from the US during the Biden administration due to not registering with the CFTC.

The platform is currently banned in several countries. For instance, Portugal and Taiwan restricted the platform due to their strict laws prohibiting people from placing bets on political events. Other countries such as France and Australia have placed stricter laws around gambling platforms. Because of problems with government regulators, the platform continues to face legal action. According to Callan Quinn, "Polymarket has kicked off 2026 facing a slew of regulatory actions from jurisdictions in Europe and the US even as it edges its way back into the American market." The platform is making its way back to the US because it was allowed by the second Trump administration to return.

The reason the administration is willing to let the platform return is because they can profit from it. As stated by Katie Fruge, "President Trump's son Donald Trump Jr. has been serving as an advisor to Polymarket since August 2025." This alludes to the administration's desire to make a profit from this platform. The gluttonous behavior of the Trump administration is amplifying a larger ethical problem. The backlash from numerous countries and the previous restriction from the US shed light on how these platforms are profiting from immoral action. Fruge also claims, "When you buy shares betting that a war will escalate, a pandemic will worsen, or a public figure will die, you are financially incentivized to bet on catastrophe."

It is wrong to encourage the public to profit from the suffering of other people around the world. Humans are social creatures who need to find a way to work together to make the world we live in a better place. However, when seeing through only one lens like most users on Polymarket, people fail to see the bigger picture and consequences of their actions.

This should make one ask themselves, what am I willing to place a bet on to make some money? Who am I affecting and how? Better yet, this should make people look at how the recent Trump administration would rather allow these prediction markets to make money than help those in need. In conclusion, Polymarket should be banned and there should be strict laws placed around all prediction markets in the US to prevent the loss of morality amongst the public.



Cameroon is the Best by Maxime Poutcheu

Noumbibou

Cameroon is located in West Africa. Cameroon is an interesting country because we have good people and fun entertainment. Cameroon is the best because of the food, music, and different cultures.

First, Cameroon is the best because of the great music that comes from the country. The music is rhythmic and uses a lot of guitars and piano. My personal favorite artist is Manu Dibango who makes Makossa. According to World Music Central, “Makossa was originally a Cameroonian dance rhythm from the Douala region. It later developed into a popular pop style typified by Manu Dibango and Sam Fan Thomas.” People listen to this music at the bar and restaurants and the musicians play instruments live.

Another reason the country is the best is because of the food. Cameroonian food is different from other countries because in Cameroon some food is cooked with strong spices. One popular type of food is soup, like Eru and Ndole. According to World Food and Wine, “Ndole is a stew made with special bitter leaves, peanuts, and meat or fish. People often eat it with plantains or rice. It is a favorite dish at parties and family gatherings.” They also state, “Eru is a thick vegetable stew. It is made with green leaves, waterleaf, spinach, palm oil, and meat or smoked fish.” My favorite of the two soups is Ndole because it is a dish that we Cameroonians truly enjoy, and it is different from other meals because it is very spicy.

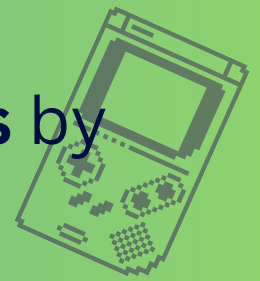
Lastly, Cameroon is the best because of the culture. The cultures are very different because you are going to see the different languages spoken depending on the village you visit. My culture is Bamileke. I like my culture because the ceremony is the best. The ceremony is for when someone important visits. In the ceremony we dance, we cook food, and we play games. Also, when the king of the village goes on vacation, when he comes back, we have the ceremony. In the text Travels Helper, it states, “The Bamileke are renowned for their entrepreneurial spirit, dominating commerce in urban centres like Douala and Yaoundé, despite their rural roots.” The Bamileke open businesses like markets that sell shoes, pants, and jackets.

You should visit Cameroon because you can see the different languages spoken at the villages, you can see the new food, you see the dancing from Cameroon, and you can visit new places like a beach called Kribi. This is all why Cameroon is the best country in Africa.





The Evolution of Gaming Controllers by Rosay Fuller



Imagine a dark room, the glow of a CRT television, and the specific click clack of a plastic joystick or the thumb cramping stiffness of an original controller. Contrast that with a modern gamer today using a controller that vibrates with the texture of the game or someone just moving their hands in the air for motion controls.

While gaming hardware has become more powerful, the true revolution lies in the interface. The evolution of the video game controller represents a journey from abstract technical command to biological intuition, transforming the players from mere operators into a seamless extension of the digital world.

Early controllers were boxy and unintuitive; designers were still figuring out how a human hand wants to hold a device for hours. Gunpei Yokoi, the inventor of the D pad, called it, “lateral thinking with withered technology.” The D pad is the plus shaped thumb control we still see today. “Lateral thinking with withered technology” meant taking mature, inexpensive technology and using it in radically new ways rather than chasing the most expensive, cutting-edge hardware. By using simple electrical contacts under a plastic cross, he created a precise way to navigate 2D worlds that were cheap to produce and easy to master.

We moved from 2D planes to complex 3D worlds; the D pads four basic directions were no longer enough. This ushered in the analogue revolution. The introduction of the thumb stick changed everything by allowing for 360-degree movement and varying degrees of sensitivity. Push a little to walk, push a lot to sprint. The leap into 3D was defined by two titans: the Nintendo 64 and the PlayStation DualShock. The n64 controller pioneered the single, central analogue stick, while the DualShock refined the experience with two sticks and built in vibration motors. This rumble turned gaming into a tactile experience, giving players physical feedback for every crash or explosion. Modern controllers aren’t just buttons: they use haptic feedback to let you feel rain or tension. Unlike standard vibrations, haptics uses precise actuators to mimic specific sensations, such as the grit of gravel under a car’s tires or the resistance of a bowstring being pulled tight. However, the perfect design isn’t just about high-tech immersion; it’s about accessibility. The Xbox adaptive controller represents a peak in inclusive design. It features a large, customizable hub that allows gamers with limited mobility to plug in the specific switches and joysticks they need. Whether we are clicking a single red button or wearing a VR glove, the goal of controller has always been the same: to make the screen experience feel real.

Top 3 Breakfast Spots in DC by James Dawson

What do you look for in a good breakfast spot? Number one for me is the price. I always check the prices to make sure it's reasonable, and then I check to see if it's homemade fresh cooked food. The best breakfast spots in DC are Tony's Breakfast, 14th Street Snack Bar, and White Corner Restaurant.

3.) White Corner

Where is it?

White Corner is in Coral Hills, Maryland on Southern Avenue which is right on the border between P.G. County, Maryland and Southeast, Washington DC.

How would you describe it?

I would describe the White Corner as an old-fashioned business with homemade fresh cooked food served hot and ready and offering fresh coffee with opening at 5 am.

What is it known for?

Breakfast and early opening.

Why is it #3?

It is number 3 in my opinion because of its strong menu and decent location.

2.) 14th Street Snack Bar

Where is it?

The 14th Street Snack Bar is located on 14th Street Northwest near Crittenden Street Northwest.

How would you describe it?

I also would describe it as a lovely homemade generational restaurant that has been around for years serving the community with great fresh food for affordable prices with great business hours like 5am – 2pm with a mixed menu of breakfast and lunch.



What is it known for?

It is known for its cheap, fresh breakfast platters and fast service. Mostly serving early morning construction workers and people of the neighborhood.

Why is it #2?

Because it is a great location, very nice customer service, but closes too soon and sometimes it is too packed and doesn't taste as good as our number one spot.



1.) Tony's Breakfast

Where is it?

Tony's has multiple locations with its first original location being H Street Northeast, but they have a location in every quadrant in DC except for Southwest, with a total of

4 locations.

How would you describe it?

I would describe it as a well-known DC landmark breakfast spot with fresh homemade food ranging from breakfast platters to ribeye steak. They have great speedy customer service with a diverse staff.

What is it known for?

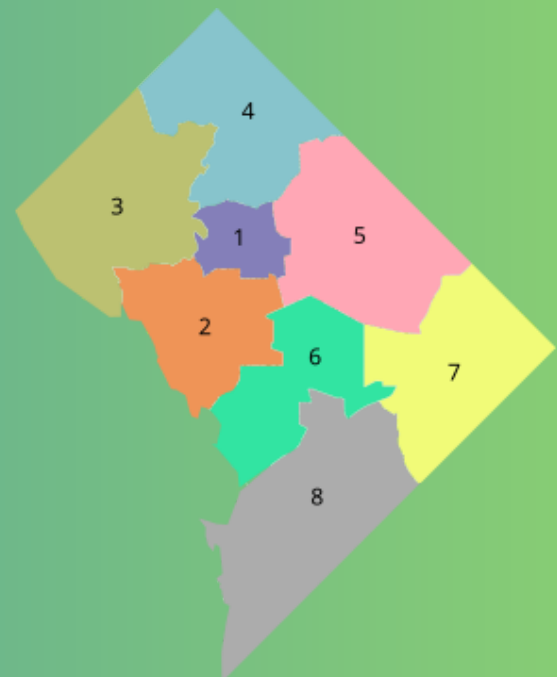
They are known for being one of the first and top breakfast spots in the northeast quadrant of DC and eventually becoming one of the most known and top homemade breakfast and lunch spots in DC. They are also known for their fried chicken.

Why is it #1?

It is number 1 in my opinion because it has multiple locations. They are very cheap, fresh, and very delicious. It is also one of the breakfast spots I grew up on and very much enjoy til this day.

Conclusion:

Overall, the next time you are in town you should for sure give one of these spots a try; in any order, regardless of my opinion, they are all really lovely great spots.



Changes in DMV Style by Joshua Brown

Nowadays, you can't go to the grocery store without seeing somebody dressed down in some designer shoes. Back in the day, we used to dress much differently. People didn't really care about all the expensive stuff - it was more about how you looked in it. From 2015-2025, the DMV has seen major changes in footwear, headwear, and outside wear.

Back in the Day: 2010s

Outside Wear

Coats are a big part of the DMV fashion, but now the coat trends have gotten far too expensive compared to back in the 2010s. Back around 2015, the DMV was introduced to the coat brand Helly Hansen. It became so popular in the city that it was the unofficial official winter coat of the early 2010s. The seasonal fashion trend was one of the most popular trends of the metropolitan area during its time. It could be seen on children from as young as toddlers to adults as grown as your grandmother wearing what the locals called a 'Helly.' The 'Helly' winter coat was a coat for everybody. It was pretty affordable so everyone in the city had them on. They came in all types of colors. This fashion trend was one of the best but unfortunately it went out of style around 2019, but you still can see them around today in the streets of DC.

Footwear

During the early 2010s, the New Balance were all over DC. Kids, celebrities, sneakerheads, you might even see an old lady with a pair on. That's how popular they got during the time. New Balance 990s have been a staple of DC street culture since the early 80s. What first started off as a sneaker designed for orthopedic comfort came a long way to become a status symbol and a key piece of fashion in the city. From the comfort, long-lasting wear, the color, and especially the prices made the New Balance the shoe of DC at the time. They were very affordable, so everyone was getting a pair. According to the blog JDSport, "New Balance wasn't as big as sneaker brands like Adidas and Nike, but the culture. Still had a significant presence in rap and hip-hop culture." During the time, rap and hip hop had a lot of influence on what people were wearing.

Headwear

In 2010s headwear wasn't really a big thing in fashion, but people still had something they would wear, such as durags and bucket hats. The durag compresses your hair down and forces it to start spinning. Most people use the durag to help them get wavy hair. Durags are also worn as an identity-marking

fashion choice, popular in Black culture. According to globaldurag.com “In the early 20th century, the durag evolved into a staple for maintaining hairstyles, particularly during the 1930s and 1940s when ‘conk’ hairstyles—straightened hair popularized by Black men—gained prominence. The durag helped preserve these styles, ensuring they remained sleek and intact.” They came in all different types of fabrics - silk, satin, polyester, and cotton.

Nowadays: 2020s

Outside Wear

Nowadays you would see some “Hellys” here and there, but they are not really popular anymore. The new trend on coats became designer coats. One of the popular brands that been trending lately is the Canada Goose. Because they are expensive, some view Canada Goose as a symbol of wealth. Many celebrities wear these expensive jackets and people want to dress just like their idols. Their parkas are designed for arctic conditions, so they are a great winter coat. In the blog, Gentleman’s Gazette, they stated, “this reputation for performance in extreme cold was cemented in the 1980s when the company developed the big red parka for scientists at antarctica.” The Canada Goose Thermal Experience Index (TEI) was created to help you find the warmth you need for the experience you seek. Although they are among the warmest you can buy, that doesn’t justify how much they are charging for the coats.

Footwear

The footwear we wear now is a big difference from back in the 2010s. In the past years, brands like Asics, Balenciaga, Nikes, and Jordans have gotten popular. Balenciaga has become very popular for their oversized track sneaker design. Teens and celebrities all around the world fell in love with them and they have been around for a while, but during the past years the DMV picked up on the trend. Nike has been around since 1964 and is currently still popular around the DMV area. If you come to DC and look around, you can see a pair of Nikes everywhere. Nike is known worldwide for its ability to blend performance, style, and innovation in its footwear. They can be fashionable and athletic, plus they are affordable. According to the Printfull Blog, “Nike is one of the companies that have taken notice and are catering to the needs of young people”

Headwear

The ski masks became popular during the pandemic but over the years became a staple in street wear. The TikTok creators started wearing the “Shiesty” mask while working out at the gym during the pandemic to comply with indoor mask restrictions. Then after the pandemic was over the Nike ski was introduced. Rapper Pooh Shiesty is the one who popularized the term “shiesty.” He made the balaclava and Nike ski mask part of his trademark look and wore them in his music videos. The public and his fans began to associate him with the mask and started wearing them themselves. 68

The ski mask was once so popular the DC mayor wanted to ban them from being worn on the city because of the crime rate.

The Fit of Clothing Worn in 2025
Gen Z now are sticking with their streetwear styles and outfits consisting of oversized clothing, such as oversized t shirts, baggy pants, custom hoodies, and chunky sneakers. According to Gen Z, it is more than just aesthetics- it develops a sense of self and creativity and brings you to the fast-paced urban culture. The graphics on the clothing and the baggy fit can be said to be both comfortable and stylish.

The style and fashion in the DMV have changed a lot throughout the years. Overall, the major difference between the 2010s era and the 2020s era is the difference in cost. In the 2010s, people didn't really care about who had the most expensive clothes; it was about how you dressed in them. Back in 2015 you can see somebody wearing gray new balances, regular jeans, and a plain white t-shirt on, and that would be considered stylish. Nowadays, everything has to be branded. What was considered trending back then is now considered out of style. The trends in fashion now are stylish, but the prices are too high.



The Themes of all the Toy Story Movies to Prepare for Toy Story 5 by Ian Cameron

The first Toy Story movie came out on November 22, 1995. It had a budget of 30 million and sold 401.1 million at the box office. Now, Toy Story 5 is set to release June 19, 2026. To prepare for the new Toy Story movie, we can look at the lessons taught by the first four movies.

The original Toy Story was about how toys come to life when their owners are not around and how the main character named Woody thought he was getting replaced with a new toy named Buzz Lightyear. According to Business Insider, it states, “The animated film broke a record for being the first feature-length computer-animated movie ever made.” This movie teaches us how jealousy can lead you in the wrong direction and that acceptance can help with that sometimes.

Toy Story 2 came out November 13, 1999. This movie was about how the main toy character, Woody, gets a tear in his clothes and he thinks that his owner would not want him. His former enemy, Buzz Lightyear, ends up saving him. According to Bustle, “The toy collector plans to sell the toys to a museum, but thanks to a rescue mission led by Buzz Lightyear, Woody is able to get back home, along with Jessie and a horse named Bullseye, who become Andy's new toys.” This movie teaches us that even if you are hurt or broken it's not the end of the world and you can always heal or find people who are also broken and both of y'all can help each other.

Toy Story 3 came out June 18, 2010. This movie was about how Andy, the owner, got older and is ready to put the toys in the attic but instead they get thrown in the trash. The toys felt hurt by this, but the main character Woody did not because he saw that the bag the toys were in was mistaken as trash, but the other toys did not believe him.

According to Entertainment Weekly, Toy Story 3 was the highest grossing animated film of all time until it was surpassed by Frozen in 2014. This movie teaches us that mistakes happen, and you can't control that. It also teaches us that you should listen to your friends that have your best interests at heart and that not everyone you meet is going to be friendly and tell you the truth.

Toy Story 4 came out June 11, 2019. This movie was about how Woody and the toys found a new owner and Woody can't accept that he is not the favorite toy anymore. This film is also special because a voice actor of one of the toys (Don Rickles as Mr. Potato Head) passed away before the movie was made but was still able to voice him in the movie. According to PixarPost, “We learned that after Don's passing, his family reached out to Pixar (since Don had already officially signed on for Toy Story 4) and asked if there was any way that Pixar could create his performance from the 25 years of material that he completed.

Josh noted what an honor it was and praised the editorial team for pulling together audio from the films, television specials, Disney parks, and even the Disney on Ice performances to craft his lines for the film.” This movie teaches us that change cannot be avoided but when you accept it you find new happiness to make your life better.

Now that we have been refreshed on all 4 of the previous Toy Story movies, we can go into the 5th movie expecting a deeper message. The next movie might explore the invention of iPads and how toys compare.



Music Heals by Teontre Wright



Music isn't just rap or singing - it's therapy. From the beat to the vocals and lyrics, there's a message. No matter how you're feeling, music can change the way you feel. Imagine, late at night on a clear road cruising to wherever you're going and you play a Rod Wave song. You start singing your heart out because it's relatable to you, but then a DMV song comes on and now you're in the car rapping and bobbing your head hard to the new song. Music is more than just entertainment; it's therapy, a powerful tool that can bring people together and regulate emotional well-being.

Everyone goes through something. Most of the time the problems are similar. No matter what, everyone has something they go through, and music can be the solution. The Greater Good Magazine, a science magazine based in UC Berkley, states that "Listening to music and singing together has been shown in several studies to directly impact neurochemicals in the brain, many of which play a role in closeness and connection." Music encourages the formation of social networks and provides a safe way for people to interact, get to know one another, and share experiences. Music can create social rituals, such as drum circles or concerts of big artists, to create belonging through participation rather than just listening by yourself.

Music can also be helpful in therapy because it can help clients' express emotions that may be difficult to verbalize, providing them a pathway to self-awareness and healing.

Hakeen Leonard, a music therapist, states, "Affect, mood, and emotions are really the backbone of music and even the way we make sense of and talk about musical elements often correlate to internal feelings. For example, just our internal feelings can rise, music can rise; just like we can a surge of excitement or surprise, music can surge; just as moods and feelings can fade, music can fade; music has tension and relaxation."

Music affects emotional regulation too, whether it's positive or negative. Engaging with music through listening or creating can cause the release of dopamine, a neurotransmitter associated with pleasure and reward. Calming music can slow heart rates down and relax muscles, making it an effective tool for managing anxiety and stress. Leonard, the music therapist, states, "In one sense, there are the properties of music. For example, in general, music that is a slower tempo helps to cue the body into a relaxation state as opposed to moderate to fast tempo music that tends to send your body into a more alert state. A lot of times when people are trying to purposely regulate their emotions, they seek to calm themselves down, so this cue into a relaxation state is something that can be intentionally done. Another music property that deeply relates to music and the regulation of music is rhythm, and particularly rhythmic entertainment and how we want to synchronize to music. Other properties are impactful for that as well."

The flow of music can regulate emotions, whether you are dancing or just sitting there vibing to the music, letting the rhythm take you away.

Music can enhance all aspects of our lives - mental health, relationships, productivity, culture, and self-expression. Imagine, you're lying down at night, unable to fall asleep because something is bothering you. You start playing some music, but a new song comes on, and it starts to feel relatable. Next thing you know you're sitting up on your bed replaying the song repeatedly. Then you decide to post on Instagram about the song, and you see one of your friends posted the same song not too long after you. Now you're going back and forth talking about who heard the song first. At the end of the day, you and your friend have another song to play together, bringing you guys closer and improving your well-being.



