The Gund Foundation Awards $1Mil to Hough’s Birthing Beautiful Community

The Gund Foundation provided $1 million to Birthing Beautiful Community (BBC) to support programs for maternal and infant health outcomes. The foundation’s statement of purpose includes improving the quality of care for areas that are affected by social determinants of health, such as racism, Medicaid coverage, systems change (systemic education and engagement), and increased focus on the most pressing issues. The funds will support BBC’s services, which include education and engagement, comprehensive sex education, and training 26 perinatal support specialists.

MISSISSIPPI LAWMAKERS COULD CHANGE THE STATE FLAG

Biden Wins, But a Reanimated Confederacy Is Alive and Well

Biden was elected as the 46th President of the United States, garnering over 70 million votes. Trump also routinely fueled racial tensions in America, yet his claims of a “hoax” perpetrated by Democrats have now been challenged by the electorate’s decision.

REANIMATED CONFEEDERACY IS ALIVE AND WELL

Congratulations are in order for President-Elect Joe Biden and the first woman Vice President of the U.S. Kamala Harris in what was a much closer election than many Americans envisioned at the onset. Moreover, let us not gloss over the fact that former President Donald Trump garnered over 70 million votes despite a woefully inadequate response to the deadly coronavirus, which has now claimed a quarter of a million lives, initially referring to it as a “hoax” perpetrated by Democrats. Trump also routinely fueled racial tensions in America and said Colin Kaepernick was an “SOB” that should be fired for kneeling during the national anthem, an act he (Continued on page 2)

PERSON EXTRAORDINAIRE: PASCALE SABLAN

Sharon Lewis

Pascale Sablan, AIA, NOMA, LEED AP, is only the 315th living black woman licensed as an architect in the United States. (AIA, 2018) She is the project lead on the new Cleveland Foundation complex to be located along East 66th Street. As a minority woman in a white male-dominated profession, the road has not always been clear or without its challenges. In her second week of classes at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY, Pascale and another classmate were told to stand. Initially, she thought she was being volunteered for a class assignment until the professor said to them that they would never be architects because of their gender and race.

In front of the entire class, can you imagine the shock and humiliation? The statement was cutting. However, having grown up in a supportive environment, she did not crumble. Also, at that moment, she was uplifted and strengthened, for she did not crumble. Also, at that moment, she was uplifted and strengthened, for she was not just representing herself, but every minority person that had come before her, and everyone that would come after her. Pascale holds no animosity toward her professor. His words made her stronger and prepared her for the future. He may have propelled her to her life’s work of advocating for Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) and female architects.

(Continued on page 8)

THE CLEVELAND OBSERVER

SERVING COMMUNITIES: ASIATOWN, CENTRAL, DOWNTOWN, E. CLEVELAND, FAIRFAX, GLENVILLE, HOUGH, KINSMAN, LEE-HARVARD, MIDTOWN CLEVELAND, ST. CLAIR-SUPERIOR, AND UNIVERSITY CIRCLE
Biden Wins (From first page)  

Deemed “unpatriotic.” He also approved the caging of immigrant children, and his camp claimed that the reason many of the over 500 children failed to be reunited with their parents was because their parents no longer wanted them. He called BLM and Antifa (an ideology not an organization) terrorists when those same investigations showed that white supremacists initiated much of the violence, looting, and property damage that BLM was being accused of. Trump also protected many of the statues and monuments of Confederate slaveholders and white supremacists, while allowing police and military personnel to bludgeon, tear-gas, and shoot not only black people protesting the disproportionate sanctioning of violence against blacks but white protestors who dared sympathize and align themselves with the BLM movement.

This blind, cultish allegiance to a man who lies as frequently as he speaks, showed a somewhat naive America what most black folk have known; America has always been attached to its money and white supremacy, far more than it has ever considered to acquiesce to the ideals of liberty, equality, and justice for all.

Mind you, it’s not that there aren’t those in the white community that desire a nation where justice and fair play exist; it’s just that most of those that enjoy the fruits of society have no reason to desire them, except they may want to maintain the status quo of victimization and creating both black and white people to varying degrees already accept a man who lies as frequently as he speaks, showed a somewhat naive America what most black folk have known; America has always been attached to its money and white supremacy, far more than it has ever considered to acquiesce to the ideals of liberty, equality, and justice for all.

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Healthcare disparities and inequities experienced by African-Americans are widely reported in both the local and national news. While healthcare inequities include obvious examples like diabetes, pregnancy is also one.

From the online article Exploring African American’s High Maternal and Infant Death Rate, we learn that per 100,000 births African-American women have a rate of 43.5%, compared to the rate of all US women, which is 14%.

Comparing this to developing countries is a folly, but looking at white and Latino women in America means there is a significant health care disparity. As Epidemiologists we look for patterns of illness in populations. The pandemic of COVID-19 makes predicting and getting in front of illnesses very important. While all the risk factors associated with this healthcare disparity are not fully known in research, many researchers and healthcare professionals are willing to call systemic or institutional racism a determining factor.

The effects of racism in healthcare are: at-onset, being a pregnant teen, high school dropout rate and education level of the mother and grandmother. Consequently, a pregnant Black woman during this pandemic has increased risk factors. Infectious disease can easily impact the state of maternal health.

Pregnancy and COVID: African-Americans and Another Disparity

Lisa Rose-Rodriguez

Black on Black Crime is Not... Ron Calhoun

people’s tolerance for criminal and immoral behavior. This false perspective can influence police officers to mistakenly view entire black neighborhoods as supportive of criminal behavior and exacerbate an already fragile relationship.

Urban environments experience the largest proportion of homicides, and black Americans tend to make up larger shares of urban populations relative to suburban and rural areas. Between 1980 and 2008, nearly 58 percent of homicides occurred in U.S. cities with a population of 100,000 or more (Cooper and Smith, 2011). More than one-third of all homicides in the U.S. during that same time period occurred in cities with one million or more residents. City-level analyses provide an important opportunity to understand the nature of homicide problems better. While useful in describing objective information on homicide incidents such as age, race, sex, and weapon type, national data systems, such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Supplementary Homicide Reports, are well known to be limited. Incomplete, unreliable and valid information on homicide circumstances and relationships between victims and offenders.

Although modest differences are associated with variations in local dynamics across other U.S. cities, the basic picture of black homicide victimization as highly concentrated among a small number of active offenders involved in high-risk social networks is essentially the same. Research has consistently documented that violence driven by conflicts within and among drug-selling crews, and other criminally active groups generate the bulk of urban homicide and violence problems.

Black residents clearly want police in their neighborhoods. However, they want them to know the community, treat residents with respect, prevent future outbreaks of violence rather than merely respond to incidents, and engage with them in appropriate, rather than indiscriminate policing strategies. We know the problem: why can’t we eliminate and resolve it?

Obstetrics-Gynecologists know that there are several factors that cause teratogenic effects. Terogens, refer to substances or chemicals which can cause developmental abnormalities. The presence of infectious diseases in pregnant women has also historically resulted in abnormalities.

The applicable formula we are discussing here is the one that increases negative birth outcomes within the realm of maternal-infant health for African-American women and their babies. During the on-going COVID-19 pandemic reports continue to expose the fact that African-Americans are experiencing more sickness and death than whites during this national crisis. This is not an exception; this is already the history within the community before the pandemic.

Black people are dying from illnesses that white people are cured from. Analyzing the background naturally a question emerges: what does this mean for a pregnant Black teen-ager who lives in a house where both of the people tested for COVID-19? Isolation and quarantine are the preventative strategies that come to mind, but what can we do about this juncture about COVID-19 and pregnancy in America?

The Mayo Clinic writes: “The overall risk of COVID-19 to pregnant women is low. However, pregnancy increases the risk for severe illness with COVID-19. People who have COVID-19 appear more likely to develop respiratory complications requiring intensive care than women who aren’t pregnant, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Pregnant women are more likely to be placed on a ventilator. In addition, pregnant women who are Black or Hispanic appear to be disproportionately affected by infection with the COVID-19 virus.”

The article continues by describing the unknowns. Children who have been born during the pandemic of 2020 are less than a year old. Currently, it is unknown if these babies, who are all developed in the womb, will have physical or mental deformities based on the exposure to the disease in the womb. The solution for reducing the cases of infant mortality and maternal deaths in African-Americans is a multipronged strategy. First within the context of a pandemic, health providers must work hard to drive home prevention methods for pregnant women. In today’s world, physicians must be brave enough to admit that there are still unknowns, such as will the baby have developmental delays as a toddler.

Knowing when and how you conceived the child will also be helpful in managing the risk of childbirth. Abstaining from alcohol and cigarettes during pregnancy has been one prevention that has been practiced for decades. So, too, the parents should also know their AIDS, Hepatitis and COVID-19 status.

Recent urban unrest has shed light on the thinly veiled suffering of African-Americans. These two seemingly unrelated events have

(Continued on page 5)
Café Phix Midtown and Our Covid-19 Experience

Jackie Larkins, owner of Café Phix Midtown (6815 Euclid Ave.) in Cleveland. Larkins has been in the coffee business and a small business owner for just shy of eight years.

The early years were a struggle: a few starts and stops. Business owners understand that this isn’t unusual when starting a new business. Most businesses like hers fail within the first year. In fact, it wasn’t until surpassing five years that she truly felt a chance of success.

In 2018, Larkins moved her little coffee shop to Midtown, and from the moment the doors opened, she began to see successes that far exceeded her experience in other locations. Indeed, I did better in sales on my first day open in Midtown than I did on my last day in the previous location”, Larkins said. “Being surrounded by many other businesses gave us access to customers we just could not connect to in a residential neighborhood.” The community welcomed Café Phix with their patronage; they were thrilled to have an independent coffee shop in the area. And Larkins was extremely excited for the café; the future looked bright. In March 2020, the unthinkable happened: a pandemic.

We’re embarking on a three-month public education and input project. The goal of this work is to ensure that residents and stakeholders are aware of what the new [zoning] code is, how it will impact their property rights, and to get their views and vision for the future of the neighborhood into the new regulations. Our kickoff for the project [was the “Freedom Zone”] outdoor event. The more residents and stakeholders that are involved with this process the better the final code will reflect the vision of the people who live and work there. The idea is that residents have several meetings with the Zoning Board to get an understanding of what real estate developers have in mind for their district; and then the people offer their thoughts, desires, and expectations on what the resulting plans for the neighborhood will be.

As generally defined in the regulations:

Form-based [zoning] codes are based on the inner workings of buildings and the public realm, the form and mass of buildings in relation to one another, and the scale of types of streets and blocks. The regulations and standards in form-based codes are presented in both words and clearly drawn diagrams and other visuals. They are keyed to a regulating plan that designates the appropriate form and scale (and therefore, character) of development, rather than only distinctions in land-use types (e.g. commercial, residential, etc).

http://thelandcode.com/2020/10/02/freedom-zone/
[courtesy of formbasedcodes.org]

Channel 5 News came out and did a feature story on the café. As a result of the local news coverage and some very enthusiastic followers on social media platforms, business started to pick up. Those who came out to support the café, particularly those who wanted to show support for a local black-owned business, helped move us from “hoping to survive” to “surviving.”

In recent weeks, the Café needed to shut down again, temporarily, due to Covid-19 contact among their employees. Ms. Larkins is happy to say “all is well.” However, she still needed to close the café to institute a deep cleaning. Though it was difficult to shut down a second time, she knew these measures had to be taken to ensure the safety of their staff and the safety of their customers. “We have reopened the café, and the fight continues.”

“God Bless our Community!”

The Willson Apartments at East 55th and Chester Avenue recently played host to “Freedom Zone,” an informational event for the Midtown community. The 45-minute outdoor program, which consisted of spoken word, dramas, dance, and music, was designed to make local constituents aware of opportunities to voice their opinions about neighborhood development issues, such as zoning for business, new street signs, and roadways, residential and parks construction, etc.

It was presented by Hood Ballets in conjunction with several neighborhood organizations including the East 66th Street Advisory Council, the Mutual Aid & Relief Society, and the Hough Youth Advisory Board, to name a few.

Lexy Lattimore, a self-titled “community practices social worker,” was the organizer of Hood Ballets’ presentation and one of its dancers. She describes the Freedom Zone Project as “neighborhood-building. through the Arts.” It was sponsored by The Cleveland Foundation, Midtown Cleveland, and LAND Studio.

The performance was part of what Lexy calls ongoing neighborhood conversations about the future of Cleveland’s Hough-Euclid community. Freedom Zone is a different way to speak to the history and effects of redlining, artistically explaining where we are as an inner-city community, how we got here, and (hopefully) ways to move forward and rise above our current situations. Lexy says she wants this production to encourage people that they should and DO have a voice in the future of their district.

Included in this endeavor was the ability for attendees to register to vote AND fill out their U.S. Census report, both of which incentivized neighborhood resources, funding, and future development.

Though this was the last in a short series of live performances in the Hough-Euclid corridor, this is not the last we’ll hear of the Freedom Zone. Efforts are underway to produce a filmed documentary of the performance and a website as ongoing educational tools for community residents and interested individuals/oranizations.

One of the upcoming opportunities that Freedom Zone points residents to is what’s called “form-based” zoning code meetings, where citizens can share their hopes and desires about the intended development of their neighborhood. Kyle Reisz, the chief planner for the Cleveland Planning Commission, explains it like this:

Mark where you live on the map. Where do you get your groceries? What makes the neighborhood special unique? Are there places you would like to see preserved? Are you worried about land use? Mark the places you really enjoy on the map. How do you get around the neighborhood?

In March 2020, the unthinkable happened: a pandemic.

Like many other businesses in Northeast Ohio, Café Phix was forced to shut down due to Covid-19. Closed for an excruciating 11 weeks, not returning until June 1. After returning she began the struggle of trying to survive amidst a world pandemic. Adding a new business model that included curbside pickup and “hoping to survive” to “surviving.”

From “hoping to survive” to “surviving.”

Ninety percent of previous customers were working from home. How in the world would they survive? A small grant was helpful. She also, like most businesses, availed herself to a PPP Loan. However, she knew that an average of 2 to 3 customers per day was not going to be enough. In desperation, Larkins reached out to local news to see if they were aware of any programs available to small businesses. To their credit, Jackie Larkins owner Café Phix Midtown (6815 Euclid Ave.) in Cleveland. Larkins has been in the coffee business and a small business owner for just shy of eight years.

Community

The Cleveland Observer

Your Voice, Your Future Melvin Twigg Mason

Volume 1 - Issue 4

December 2020

www.theclevelandobserver.com
Pregnancy and COVID:
(Continued from page 3)

Lisa Rose-Rodriguez received her Epidemiology training at the University of Connecticut HealthCare Campus.

Meet the New MidTown Staff!

Chelsey Kovar is the new Business Outreach Specialist on MidTown Cleveland, Inc.’s Economic Development Team. A self-proclaimed ‘local-lore,’ Chelsey is passionate about shopping small and supporting local businesses. Before coming to MTC, Chelsey served as Director at the Parma Area Chamber of Commerce, where she focused on helping businesses, organizations and the community grow & thrive.

Margaret Adams

High Blood Pressure

According to the American Heart Association, High Blood Pressure (HBP) or hypertension, is a condition in which the blood pressure in the arteries is persistently elevated.

Blood pressure is the force of blood flowing through the blood vessels in your body. High blood pressure damages the blood vessels. The damage from high blood pressure can cause stroke, heart failure, heart attacks, kidney failure (which leads to dialysis), loss of vision, sexual dysfunction, and DEATH.

High blood pressure is known as the silent killer because people may not be aware that they have it. Some serious symptoms, that may cause a stroke, are: headache, blurred vision, anxiety, shortness of breath, numbness on one side, drooping mouth or eyelids, and slurred speech. Seek Medical Attention Immediately if you have these symptoms.

It is advisable for people who have been diagnosed with high blood pressure to have a home blood pressure kit and take their blood pressure regularly, or as frequently as advised by their doctor. Most insurance plans may pay for all or part of the cost of a home blood pressure kit.

Children should also have their blood pressures taken routinely. Their numbers are based on age, height, and weight.

Blood Pressure Stages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blood Pressure Category</th>
<th>Systolic (mm/Hg)</th>
<th>Diastolic (mm/Hg)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>less than 120</td>
<td>less than 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elevated</td>
<td>120-129</td>
<td>less than 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Blood Pressure</td>
<td>130-139</td>
<td>80-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Hypertension) Stage 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Blood Pressure</td>
<td>140 or higher</td>
<td>90 or higher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Hypertension) Stage 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypertensive Crisis</td>
<td>Higher than 180</td>
<td>and/or Higher than 120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Seek Emergency Care)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Children should also have their blood pressures taken routinely. Their numbers are based on age, height, and weight.

T r e a t m e n t  s h o u l d  b e  a collaboration between patient and doctors. Make sure you understand why you are taking your medication and its side effects.

Here is a brief description of medications used to treat HBP:

- Diuretics (i.e. thiazides) used to decrease sodium and fluid.
- Angiotensin II receptor blockers (ARBs) (i.e. Losartan) help relax the blood vessels.
- Angiotensin-converting enzymes (ace inhibitors) (i.e. Lisinopril) widen the blood vessels.
- Beta-Blockers (i.e. Atenolol) reduce the heart rate.
- Calcium Channel Blockers (i.e. Amiodipine) reduce the amount of calcium entering the heart muscle which reduces the heart rate.
- Alpha-Blockers (i.e. Doxazosin) relax the heart muscles, arteries and veins.
- Renin Inhibitors (i.e. Aliskiren) inhibit the enzyme that favors angiotensin production which constricts blood vessels.

As a Public Health professional, I believe that the general public can take steps to reduce disease transmission. I urge people to continue to practice preventative measures. Remember that social distancing helps control the spread of virus particles that lodge in the respiratory tract. Singing, laughing, coughing and talking are all ways that the virus is spread.

This holiday season remember, wearing masks and washing hands is a gift to others.

Writers/Podcast Host

Register at

A GREAT WAY TO INFORM THE COMMUNITY
YOUR ARTICLE PUBLISHED NEXT MONTH

High Blood Pressure
Margaret Adams

October 15 is the start of the open season for seniors. It is the beginning of the Medicare enrollment period which means seniors will be bombarded with telephone calls and mailers from insurance companies offering their plans of Medicare coverage. The enrollment period will last until December 7, 2020. Medicare is the health insurance offered by the Federal Government to all Americans once they reach the age of 65.

As with most programs offered by the government, there are a lot of complicated things you have to understand in order to sign up for coverage. One of the first things one must know is when you should sign up for Medicare. You should sign up for Medicare 3 months before you turn 65 or 3 months after you turn 65.

The Social Security Administration will send out a Medicare card and sign-up information 3 months before you turn 65. If you are working when you turn 65 and are covered by your employer, or if you are covered by your spouse’s insurance you should still sign up for Medicare Part A and Part B. If you miss this enrollment period, you can end up paying a penalty for as long as you did not have Medicare coverage. There is no

(continued on page 6)
Form-Based Code: Making Zoning Work for Ward 7 Residents

MidtownCle

In response to the mixed signals being sent by the current zoning code, the Cleveland City Planning Commission has endeavored to realign its zoning regulations with this new vision. The goal is an entirely new zoning code that embodies the Mayor’s mantra of Health, Sustainability, and Equity – this new approach to zoning is called a Form-Based Code. The Cleveland Form-Based Code will be piloted in a few geographies to start – the City Planning Commission has identified sections of the Hough community as one of the first areas for implementation of this tool.

theilandcode.com

The Hough pilot of the zoning code will be developed through three phases. The first phase (October-December 2020) is an education phase led by the Hough Youth Council. The second phase will be grassroots focus groups (November-January 2021), and the final phase will be the compilation of the feedback into a draft code (January-March 2021). More information can be found at http://www.theilandcode.com.

Below are a few reflections from residents and youth of Ward 7 about why zoning is so important.

Making Zoning Work for Us
(By Jason Carter)

As a proud resident of Hough and Ward 7, it is an honor to share with you the blessings of this neighborhood in my own words. I have been a resident of Hough for 3 years and there has been endless love and support within this great community. I have made many new friends and met new families across our blocks, and I am excited to address the Zoning and Form-Based Code process. This is important because it allows a municipality to create urban development with specific regulations for that area. These selected areas would then be divided into zones, and each zone has its own set of blueprints. This would be grand for Hough because the people here deserve to have access to more opportunities.

The City of Cleveland Form-Based Code process, led by a firm called Code Studio, alongside the newly formed Hough Youth Council and the E. 66th Street Resident Council, allows residents to give input on how the built environment should look and feel based on what businesses or resources we want to come to the neighborhood. Once things are agreed upon by the residents and the Cleveland Planning Commission, the wants and needs of the community go into a written plan that residents to give input on how the built environment should look and feel based on what businesses or resources we want to come to the neighborhood. Once things are agreed upon by the residents and the Cleveland Planning Commission, the wants and needs of the community go into a written plan that protects residents from future establishments developing within the neighborhood against residents’ wishes.

This opportunity is extraordinary for Hough because there are many communities like ours that will not get to see this change. I feel that it would provide great optimism, motivation, and bring out more leadership from residents here.

When you fill a neighborhood with new lighting, artwork, health establishments, learning institutions, parks, sidewalk enhancements, and other family-oriented businesses, you spark change in generations to come. True inspiration comes directly from the loved ones around you and the environment we share. With this makeover of Hough, my children and your children will benefit from every resource we provide them with. My voice in

Hough matters just as much as my family’s voices does here, for WARD7!

Freedom Zone: The Hough Youth Council

On Thursday, November 19, the Hough Youth Council released a virtual livestream of a performance filled with original poetry and choreography about the impacts of redlining and zoning, and federal and local policies that had negative impacts on Black neighborhoods across the US. The production was filmed over the course of several weeks in October under the leadership of dancer, social worker, and entrepreneur, Lexi Baltimore, one of the project team members of the City of Cleveland Form-Based Code effort. The performance is beautiful, moving, and educational and can be found here: https://youtu.be/x3lIvyiV0

The project team hopes to use the performance as a way to spark conversation about the legacy of systematic injustice through a policy that has resulted in disinvestment. The purpose is to focus the community’s response on the opportunity to change the City’s antiquated zoning code. More opportunities to participate in shaping the Form-Based Code effort can be found at: https://www.theilandcode.com, and residents should share their thoughts on the Hough Freedom Zone Map here: https://thelandcode.landau.design/

Finally, residents who live in the pilot area (see photo) can expect to find out more information through door hangers and flyers.

Medicare: (from page 5)

Special Enrollment period if you miss the initial enrollment period. If you have questions contact Social Security at 1-800-772-1213 or Ohio Senior Health Insurance Information Program (OSGIIP) at 1-800-686-1578.

Here is a quick summary of the types of Medicare coverage.

• Part A covers basic hospital visits and services, some home health care, hospice, and skilled nursing services.

• Part B is a standard health insurance coverage and covers doctor and specialist visits. It carries a premium base rate of $144.60 per month for 2021, estimated to be $153 in 2021.

• Part C is known as Medicare Advantage and is an alternative to B. It is provided by private insurance companies who must sign up on their own if they choose this coverage. There are premiums that have to be paid and the company will provide some instructions on how to choose.

• Part D is a Medicare prescription drug coverage. Seniors need to know what medications they take and the cost of the medication, whether or not they are required to use a generic or the brand name, what their deductibles are, and where they live. Most of these plans include a prescription drug option.

Checking this option requires you to know your health status, what medications you take, and who your providers are. Part C Medicare Advantage coverage is why seniors are receiving calls and mailers from insurance providers asking people to enroll in them. It is the coverage people should take their time with and ask for help before making a decision.

Keep in mind the people calling you are salespeople.

Medicare doesn’t cover most dental care, dental procedures, or supplies, like cleanings, fillings, tooth extractions, dentures, dental plates, or other dental devices. Some cover dental during inpatient care.

The above is just a quick overview to help you have a better understanding of Medicare. Please note, if you are satisfied with your current coverage you usually do not have to do anything to continue with your coverage unless instructed by your provider. If you need assistance with the cost of coverage contact OSGIIP at 1-800-633-4227. More information can be obtained online at the websites for the Social Security Administration, Medicare, and AARP.

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**Greater Cleveland’s Movers and Shakers of 2020**

**Melvin Twigg Mason**

The following individuals have earned their place on The Cleveland Observer’s list of Movers and Shakers Of Greater Cleveland. Each is an emerging leader and influencer among the citizens in our area, especially Gen-Xers and Millennials. Each is making a difference in their community. They are rising stars in their industries, particularly among African-Americans. Their entrepreneurial and community-conscious efforts, along with their proven personal drives, are making them icons among their peers.

First up, as founder and CEO of The INDI Media Group, Jada Renee Hobson, 40, is poised for greatness. Still in her 20’s, Jada oversees the growth of her budding empire, which includes music production, artist management, casual urban fashion, and visual marketing and own spoken word performances. You see, Jada is all about individuality, artistic expression, and entrepreneurship, both for herself and others; hence the company’s name, The INDI Group (an acronym for individuality and independence.) Her branding slogan is “Inspiring the uninspired.” You can follow Jada and learn more about her company on Instagram (@indi.musicgroup, or @indi.media, Facebook (facebook.com/theadindigroup), or on the company website, www.theindigroup.com.

Another millennial who’s making moves and changing the landscape in Cleveland is 29-year-old Alexandria “Lexy” Lattimore, CEO of The INDI Media Group, Jada Renee Hobson’s podcast, or a podcast that collects & captures “feel good” local news stories throughout the neighborhoods of metro Cleveland. She’s also working with a few mask initiatives to get functional protective equipment (PPE) to those who need it most during this pandemic, the immune compromised and elderly. She launched a hyper-local community newspaper called A Greater Buckeye, to make sure the people in order to serve the people. And he tries to show his love and service in everything he says and does, including several endeavors he started recently.

With the help of Neighborhood Connections, he’s spearheaded Good News CLE, a podcast that collections & captures “feel good” local news stories throughout the neighborhoods of metro Cleveland. He’s also working with a few mask initiatives to get functional protective equipment (PPE) to those who need it most during this pandemic, the immune compromised and elderly. He also launched a hyper-local community newspaper called A Greater Buckeye.
Person Extraordinaire

Pascale is on a mission to correct the perception that minorities do not exist or excel in architecture. She needs us to know the stories and power of the BIPOC men and women responsible for our built environments. She is well on her way to righting the wrong created by the larger society's failure to document these accomplishments.

Her battle is won through excellence, presentation, exhibition, advocacy, hard work, and a ferocious heart, mind, and spirit. Self-described as passionate, vocal, and caring her beaming smile evidences her love for her work as she discusses her work.

Pascale received her bachelor’s degree in Architecture from Pratt Institute (Magnae Cum Laude), and her Master of Science in Advanced Architectural Design from Columbus University. She is currently President of Beyond the Built Environment, an organization since 2018 the Foundation & Executive Director of Beyond the Built Environment, an organization positioned to uniquely address the profession’s inequities by providing a platform to support BIPOC and women’s accomplishments at all levels of the architectural realm. To that end, she works tirelessly.

She states that Beyond the Built Environment is her most ambitious endeavor to date. Her organization has a three-prong dismantling injustice approach to making a change in the profession. First, approaching designers of color. Her goal was to collect 500 submissions in five years. In just over two years, she has collected 421 entries. Each architect showcases one of their designs and tells who inspired them to become an architect. This material will become a sort of online resume for the featured designers as well as content for a Great Diverse Designers book.

One of the things that spurred her on was when she Googled “great architects” and found only one female, nine minorities, and zero African Americans. (Fazzare, 2020) She approached Google and was told that the information was not available, so she chose to capture the data for us all. I am sure that she will have that book published in record time, and the Architecture textbook publishers will have to yield to her demands.

Lastly, in collaboration with Remesh, Beyond the Built Environment holds virtual focus groups with diverse architects and designers from all over the world. The aim is to “collect the data needed to understand how we can make policy changes to combat discrimination and promote economic equity within the world of architecture. (Beyond the Built Environment, 2020)

Her skills have earned her numerous awards and honors, 17 to date. She has shared her knowledge, enthusiasm, and fight for justice in her professional work. The Cleveland, Ohio Exhibition was initially set to open on March 12, 2020, at Karamu House just as a Senior Architect she was put down the state due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Due to its closure, you missed getting to meet one of Ohio’s homegrown talent.

(Continued from front page)

Please take a few minutes and check out SAY IT LOUD: Ohio (https://www.beyondthebuilt.com/say-it-loud-Ohio).

You will be surprised by who built what Pascale has put out a clarion call for submissions from diverse architects from around the world. This portfolio includes all women and architects/designers of color. Her goal was to collect 500 submissions in five years. In just over two years, she has collected 421 entries. Each architect showcases one of their designs and tells who inspired them to become an architect. This material will become a sort of online resume for the featured designers as well as content for a Great Diverse Designers book.

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was the value of her awards, her response was: “that her recognition made it possible for her to elevate others and showcase their talents and accomplishments.” Being an award recipient gives her work at S9 ARCHITECTURE and Beyond the Built Environment, she is president-elect (2021–2022) of the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA). She will be the 5th woman to serve as president in the organization’s 50-year history. She served as the Northeast Regional Vice President (2018-2020) of NOMA and will continue through 2021 as its Historian. Her remaining memberships and affiliations are far too numerous to mention. Yet to her credit, she has appeared in 85 professional publications, most recently, Interior Design Magazine, Culture Magazine and Landscape Architecture Magazine, to name a few.

In talking to Pascale, I learned that there is no ready-made template for good design. A good design is one that meets the needs of its users. To meet the needs of the users you must talk to them and find out what they want to accomplish with the space. One should never assume that their concept for a building is sufficient.

A good architect must be “a good collaborator (leader and supporter), be inventive and creative, be determined because of the number of challenges, and be patient because some projects take years to complete.

One should enjoy the process and be a community advocate.” All those critical skills came into play with the design of the new Cleveland Foundation Headquarters. The design is unique, involving more than a city block and a partnership with the former Euclid Tavern Museum. It will include:

- Enhanced green spaces
- A welcoming lobby
- The Steven A. Minter Conference Center
- Additional ground-floor conference rooms or meetings and gatherings
- A multi-purpose room for community events, classes, performances, and other activities
- A community staircase connecting the second and third levels, which is a natural gathering and event space
- Indoor-outdoor event and meeting spaces (The Cleveland Foundation, 2020).

The building itself has large glass windows which allow you to look in at your community foundation, and the community foundation to look out to the community that it supports. (The Cleveland Foundation, 2020)

For this writer’s vantage point, Pascale Sablan is fierce. One of the hardest things she has ever done is to pass her Architect Registration Examination. It took her five years. Each time she failed, she realized she did not know enough and pushed harder until she succeeded. “A fierce woman is always looking to better herself and the world around her”. She gladly acknowledges that her mother is her hero because she has loved and promoted her. As a child, she missed her birthday celebration.

When asked if she could have it all, she said, “yes, with support.” Sharing the care and nurturing of her young son is her heart’s delight. She desires to be remembered as his mother and one who loved and promoted him to his purpose.

Pascale Sablan is leaving her mark all over the world. The very act of writing the story of architecture’s great minority architects and designers so that all the world will know of their contributions is something no one has ever even considered doing.

She is dedicated, talented, unfselfish, unsung, dynamic, and fierce!

 Courtesy of Pascale Sablan & ACE Mentoring Program

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