



DETROITERS SPEAK

News from Detroit's to Detroit's

Local games inspire youth through friendly competition

The founder of the Courageous Games, Keith Williams, a Detroit native and former Wayne County commissioner, expressed his dedication to supporting children facing challenges in their lives during the third-annual event held over the weekend on Wayne State University's Detroit campus.

Williams, currently serving as the Michigan Democratic Party Black Caucus chair, established the event in 2012 with a clear mission: to aid and uplift children encountering difficulties. The nonprofit organization behind the games, Courageous Inc., focuses on building communities by strengthening families.

Working in collaboration with organizations providing social service assistance, the Detroit-based group aims to promote healthy lives and employs a coaching staff to serve as role models, guiding youth towards becoming productive and successful citizens and athletes.



In addition to organizing the Courageous Games, Courageous Inc. extends its impact through after-school sports programs for Detroit Public Middle School students. The organization's commitment to fostering community and positive development has resonated with hundreds of youth and adults from Southeast Michigan and the greater Midwest.

The two-day Olympic-style event features a range of sports, including basketball, track and field, swimming, softball, and baseball. Attendees engage in friendly competition while embracing the values of teamwork, sportsmanship, and personal growth.

Recent years have seen a broader effort by Michigan elected officials to allocate funds for youth sports. State budget funds have historically supported Detroit-area youth programs, such as the Detroit Police Athletic League, an agency providing baseball, football, soccer, and other sports since its establishment in 1969.

The Courageous Games contribute to this broader initiative, emphasizing the significance of youth sports in promoting physical activity, teamwork, and community engagement.

For more info, visit:
courageousinc.org

A MESSAGE FROM OUR EDITOR



KEITH
WILLIAMS

IN THE DETROIT FREE PRESS, THERE'S A REPORT ON DEMOCRATS LOOKING TO THE FUTURE AFTER YEARS OF "FIRSTS." THE SUB-TITLE DISCUSSES THE LEGISLATIVE MAJORITIES' SUCCESS IN DELIVERING WINS, BUT IT NOTES THAT AGENDA ITEMS HAVE STALLED AFTER SUMMER BREAKS.

THE LEGISLATED VICTORY INCLUDES ACHIEVEMENTS IN ABORTION RIGHTS, GAINS FOR GUN RIGHTS ADVOCATES, INCREASED PROTECTIONS FOR THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY, AND THE REMOVAL OF THE RIGHT-TO-WORK LAW. HOWEVER, THE AUTHOR QUESTIONS WHAT BLACK INDIVIDUALS GAINED, CONSIDERING THEIR APPARENT SACRIFICE FOR THE PARTY'S ACQUISITION OF POWER. ACCORDING TO THE AUTHOR, THE BLACK COMMUNITY RECEIVED NOTHING MORE THAN PLATITUDES AND A PAT ON THE BACK FOR THEIR LOYALTY.

THE AUTHOR DIRECTS A QUESTION TO THEIR BLACK LEGISLATOR, ASKING IF THEY BROUGHT UP A BLACK AGENDA FOR DISCUSSION AND, IF SO, WHAT PROPOSALS WERE SUBMITTED TO BECOME LAW. EXPRESSING FRUSTRATION WITH WHAT THEY PERCEIVE AS EMPTY GESTURES, THE AUTHOR CRITICIZES INDIVIDUALS WHO APPEAR BLACK BUT SEEK APPROVAL FROM THOSE IN POWER BEFORE DECIDING ON ISSUES LIKE REPARATIONS.

IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, THE AUTHOR LAMENTS THAT BLACK PEOPLE, DESPITE BEING THE MOST LOYAL DEMOGRAPHIC TO THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY, HAVE RECEIVED ONLY PLATITUDES AND HANDSHAKES IN RETURN. THEY EXPRESS WEARINESS WITH BLACK INDIVIDUALS BEING TAKEN FOR GRANTED AND DISREGARDED, PARTICULARLY CRITICIZING THOSE THEY LABEL AS "UNCLE TOM NEGROES" WHO SEEK CLEARANCE FROM THOSE IN POWER BEFORE MAKING DECISIONS.

THE AUTHOR EXPRESSES A DESIRE FOR A POLITICIAN WITH COURAGE WHO PRIORITIZES TAKING CARE OF HOME FIRST, REFERENCING ADVICE FROM A FORMER HEAD COACH FROM TOLEDO WHO EMPHASIZED FISHING ON ONE'S OWN SHORES FIRST, MEANING TAKING CARE OF HOME BEFORE ANYTHING ELSE.

DETROITERS SPEAK

EMERGENCY MANAGER?

ACT 436 ONLY AFFECTS BLACKS AND NEED TO BE REPEALED



Former Emergency Manager of Detroit Kevyn Orr (right) and former Governor Snyder (left)



50% of Blacks in Michigan have been under ACT 436

In 2012, Michigan ushered in the Local Financial Stability and Choice Act, officially named Act 436, to bolster the financial accountability of local government entities. However, this legislation has become a source of contention, primarily due to the expansive powers granted to unelected "emergency managers," who can displace or dissolve local governments and school districts.

The reverberations of Act 436 are keenly felt in black communities across the state. Shocking statistics expose a troubling pattern: emergency managers are disproportionately imposed on these vulnerable communities. Perhaps more alarming is the fact that 50% of Michigan's Black residents have found themselves under the emergency manager law, a stark contrast to the mere 2% of the state's white population facing similar governance.

Critics argue that Act 436 raises constitutional and international law concerns, citing potential violations of the Equal Protection Clause and the international prohibition of practices showing a "purpose or effect" of racial discrimination. The disproportionate application of emergency managers in black communities raises vital questions about the law's impact on minority rights and local representation, challenging the very essence of our democratic ideals. As communities grapple with the consequences of Act 436, the debate over its constitutionality and its impact on racial equality rages on. The legislation's effects on local governance and the extent of emergency managers' authority continue to be subjects of contention, fueling a discourse that transcends the boundaries of state law.

In response to these concerns, Representative Brenda Carter has introduced House Bill 4065, a crucial step toward repealing 2012 PA 436, also known as the "Local financial stability and Choice Act." Signing this bill into law is imperative to safeguard our communities from potential exploitation by Lansing. Now, more than ever, it is essential for residents to engage with their local state representatives, expressing support for the passage of HB4065. This collective effort will contribute to protecting the interests of our communities and ensuring a more just and equitable future.

BLACK REPARATIONS

In recent times, the discussion surrounding reparations for the Black community has gained momentum, prompting a reconsideration of historical injustices and a call for restorative measures. Advocates argue that reparations are a crucial step towards addressing the enduring legacy of slavery and systemic racism in the United States.

A CALL FOR RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

The concept of reparations involves compensating the descendants of those who suffered under centuries of enslavement, segregation, and discriminatory policies. Proponents argue that these historical injustices have had a lasting impact on the economic, social, and educational opportunities available to Black individuals and communities.

One key aspect of the reparations debate revolves around acknowledging the economic disparities that persist today. Historical injustices, such as slavery and the Jim Crow era, have contributed to a wealth gap between Black and White Americans. Reparations are seen by some as a means to rectify this imbalance and provide a foundation for generational wealth-building within the Black community.

NEW BEGINNINGS?

Critics of reparations often question the feasibility and logistics of implementing such a policy. They argue that determining who qualifies for reparations and how to distribute compensation presents significant challenges. However, proponents argue that these challenges should not hinder the pursuit of justice and equality.

Several proposals for reparations have been put forth, ranging from financial compensation to targeted investments in education, housing, and healthcare. Some advocates emphasize the importance of addressing systemic issues, such as criminal justice reform and equitable access to quality education and employment opportunities, as part of a comprehensive reparations strategy.

Efforts to advance the conversation on reparations have gained traction at both local and national levels, with some municipalities and states exploring initiatives to study the impact of historical injustices and potential avenues for redress. Discussions at the federal level have included considerations for establishing a commission to examine the historical context and present-day consequences of slavery and discrimination. As the nation grapples with its history and the persistent effects of systemic racism, the question of reparations remains a complex and multifaceted issue. While there is no one-size-fits-all solution, ongoing dialogue at various levels of government reflects a broader commitment to acknowledging historical injustices and working towards a more equitable future for all.



REPARATIONS IN DETROIT



In addressing historical discrimination against its Black community, Detroit has emerged as a leader in the realm of black reparations, notably establishing The Detroit Reparations Task Force. Guided by Council President Sheffield, this 13-member body is on a mission to formulate recommendations for housing and economic development programs, strategically combatting systemic racism.

The impetus for this initiative came in November 2021 with an emphatic 80% voter approval of Prop R. This mandate empowers the task force to delve into reparations, offering a nuanced approach to rectify the city's legacy of discriminatory policies. Notably, the task force distinguishes itself by prioritizing generational change over mere handouts, meticulously exploring solutions to dismantle systemic barriers impeding the success of Black residents in Detroit.

Operating on a tight schedule, the task force is obligated to present policy recommendations to the City Council within 18 months of its inaugural public meeting. Its responsibilities are expansive, encompassing the confrontation of systemic discrimination, addressing access to affordable housing, and tackling educational inequities. The establishment of The Detroit Reparations Task Force underscores the city's commitment to correcting historical injustices and shaping a future characterized by equity and justice.

For more information on the Reparations Task Force, visit:

<https://detroitmi.gov/government/city-council/city-council-president-district-5/reparations-task-force>

By: Nicholas D. Barnes, Political Strategist



Prop R was passed in November 2021 with the help of the Michigan Democratic Party Black Caucus



The 13 member Reparations Task Force with Council President Sheffield