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TIFFANY BACON THE NEW PROGRAM & NEWS DIRECTOR, WURD RADIO



By Shelly "Shell" Williams
Photo courtesy of Tiffany Bacon

I've known Tiffany Bacon for years and have always admired her talent, voice, and non-stop work ethic. Her radio career is extensive and impressive; however, she's so much more. Tiffany Bacon spent years on the air at Radio One and has taken a leap of faith, and is now the new Program and News Director for WURD Radio. Take a moment to get to know more about Tiffany Bacon.

Shelly Shell: When you were a child, what did you want to be when you grew up? Are you doing that now?

Tiffany Bacon: I can honestly say that everything I loved as a child I am doing now. Initially, I wanted to be a dancer. I was trained in Ballet, Tap & Jazz at Massey's School of Dance and then at Philadanco. I was training on Pointe shoes by age ten, and I really wanted to be a ballerina. A serious accident in gymnastics class put a hold on that dream. I snapped my right leg in half, doing a front round-off. I was bedridden and out of school for three months. During that time, I watched copious amounts of TV, and I began daydreaming about creating episodes for my favorite shows. My love for the media was born. I was already very creative and very talkative. At age 6, my mom, tired of me talking

her to death, purchased a little tape recorder, gave it to me, and said, "here, talk to this for a while. Mommy's tired." I happily walked around the house, talking into that tape recorder! I created plays, skits, and radio shows; you name it. Little did I know, mom inspired my career in radio and theater with that one purchase. All of my childhood gifts and interests I've used or explored in my adult life except for three. I hope to make it to Broadway, TV, or the movies at some point in the next 40 years!

Shelly Shell: What is your why?

Tiffany Bacon: My why? I am on purpose when I use my gifts and interests in edutainment. I am full when I can encourage deep thought, provide factual information, spark joy or even change someone's perception or understanding of a situation. I've got stories to tell...

Shelly Shell: Tiffany, you excel in many creative areas; actor, radio personality, voice-over artist, health educator, fashion and costume designer; do you have a favorite?
You were at the forefront of the Neo-Soul Movement with the Inner City Radio **Show** on Power 99fm.

Tiffany Bacon: Man, I really love them all in different ways. Radio is my first career love. I truly cherish the wonderful experiences I've had during my journey in broadcasting. I have the most memorable stories! The first 15 years of my career were like a fairy tale! I never felt like I was working because I loved it so much. Being in the midst of the Neo-Soul Movement was nothing less than magic. Working every day of the week, playing music, interviewing celebrities, attending events, seeing EWEY concert in town, watching hometown talent be-

come worldwide sensations...magical.

Shelly Shell: What do you think halted the Neo-Soul Movement, and do you miss it?
With this illustrious radio career, do you ever feel Unsung?

Tiffany Bacon: There's no one answer for why the movement moved on. I can say that the year of the major shift was 2005. That's the year the Five Spot burned down. Live music venues were changing ownership, major players in the movement gained national recognition, and they were not as available to consistently participate in the Philly music scene. Radio support for the music changed; Inner City was reduced to 1 hour in 2006, then canceled in 2007. The magic of the movement, in addition to the amazing talent we had in Philly, was the collaboration between performance venues, promoters, and radio. I do miss that time in Philly. There was something to do, see, and experience every night of the week. It was amazing. Do I feel Unsung? Well, I do feel like I missed a window of opportunity for a larger, national "next step." I know that God doesn't make any mistakes, so I'm beginning to think that I haven't made a national jump yet because there's some personal mess I need to settle before I elevate to that level. My job is to lean on God, slay those demons and fully walk in my purpose.

Shelly Shell: One of your many talents includes creating a fashion line. What motivated you to release your fashion line, Mo'Tiff Designs?

Tiffany Bacon: I began my sewing journey in 2004. I co-founded The Headline Theater Company, and my business partner and I didn't

have money for costumes. I taught myself how to sew to provide the cast with costumes. The first costumes were ROUGH! I cried while sewing because I didn't know what I was doing. Eventually, I got better. Once, a cast member liked his costume so much that he purchased the garment. That's when I knew I had a marketable skill, and I was still learning the craft. I made some of my own clothes and received nice compliments on my garments. It wasn't until 2018 when Dr. Marquita Williams asked if I was interested in showing some of my personal garments in the Lov'n My Curves fashion show at the Comcast Center. Later that year, I had my first showing at Philly Fashion Week. I was unable to sustain the fashion line through the Pandemic. I'm exclusively creating costumes for various theater companies in the Tri-State area. You can see my work in the upcoming production of *Fabulation, Or The Re-Education of Undine* at The Lantern Theater Company June 2-26th and the Theatre in The X production of *Dreamgirls* August 18th - 21st in Malcolm X Park.

Shelly Shell: The Pandemic brought about many changes. How did you navigate through the Pandemic, and what changes did you make in your career?

Tiffany Bacon: WHEW, well, the Pandemic was a tragedy but the quarantine, for me, was a blessing. I had an opportunity to rest, heal from a series of stressful & unhealthy experiences and work on myself. That time of clarity prepared me for a wonderful opportunity at WURD. I participated in the great resignation of 2021 when I resigned from my part-time and full-time jobs and accepted a position at WURD as the News & Program Director. I've been

overjoyed to return to radio full-time.

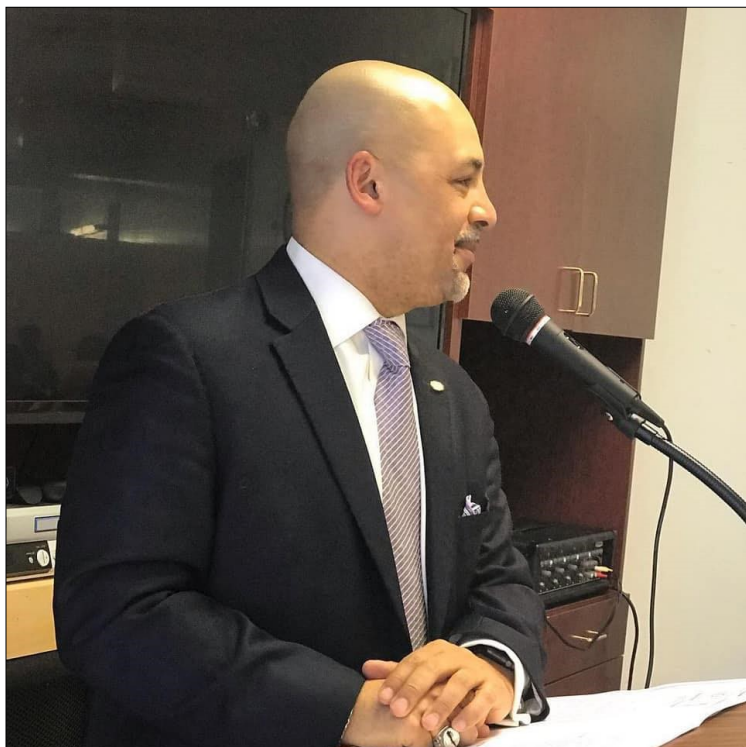
Shelly Shell: I want to get a little personal; we share similar stories, never married, no children. Do you ever want to have children? Or have you ever regretted not having children?

Tiffany Bacon: Yeah, that's a difficult topic for me to discuss. I always wanted to get married and have children. I promised myself when I was 15 that I would never have a baby unless I were married. I just never thought I wouldn't get married! I kept my promise to myself. I've never been pregnant, and I deeply regret that. I still have hope for marriage. I'm working on myself so that I can bring joy, stability, fun, love, loyalty, faith, and patience to my next relationship. I have to make sure I am what I'm looking for.

Shelly Shell: Let's talk about your new position with WURD? You've been with Radio One for many years; what type of emotions did you experience when you leaped into a new station and role?

Tiffany Bacon: I worked at Radio One for 13 years, and I really loved my co-workers. I was sad about leaving them, but I was/am excited about this new opportunity. I'm fully immersed in my first career love again, and it feels like a homecoming. I was/am filled with nervous energy because I want to do a good job. There's much I have to learn, but I'm open and ready!

REP. RABB WORKS TO IMPROVE PA ELECTIONS



By Gia Banner,
Chief Correspondant

Can you explain exactly what you mean by electronic petitioning? The common voter may not know exactly what that means, and what is the main goal of this piece of legislation?

I think most people don't even know what petitioning is because most people will never see it or have never signed one. But every election cycle in order for any candidate, whether they're already in office, like me, or a first time candidate has to get signatures for their nomination petition in order to get on the ballot for whatever upcoming election there may be. So whether it's a dog catcher or president, every election cycle, you have to get back on the ballot, that is something that you have to earn and return. And the way to do it is to surpass a threshold of eligible signatures from voters. And what eligible means is they have to be from the same party that you're affiliated with. And they have to live in your district. And they have to sign a piece of paper in the right way. If they sign a piece of paper in the wrong way, even though they're from the right party, and they live in your district, their signatures can be knocked off.

And so for races like mine, if you're a state representative, and you're running anywhere in the state, you have to get 300 good signatures. Well, what happens is, if the circulator of us has a petition, and that could be like my son, or a neighbor, or someone else, someone who is a registered Democrat, anywhere in the state can be a circulator, for a candidate. But if they do it wrong, not fraudulently. But if they make a mistake, all the signatures that they've gotten could be wiped out, which means that someone who's doing what they think is the right thing, may actually have made a mistake, and therefore not get on the ballot and therefore not be able to run with their name on the ballot. And if they still wanted to run, they would have to be a write-in candidate, which is really, really hard to be successful. But here's the thing, we're in the 21st century, we use our phones for everything you can register to vote on here. You can buy groceries, you can do whatever. So we have the technology in other states as well. So if you want to help someone get on the ballot, whether you're going to vote for them or not, you just feel it's their right to have the opportunity to run. Well, why don't we make it easy for folks and allow them to, to record their support of some

getting on the ballot electronically. So other states are doing this? I have conferred with the Pennsylvania Department of State who oversees elections, they said this can be done in the near future. And here's the thing, I've run in a number of races now, I'm the one who wakes up at six in the morning and goes to the train station, and it goes up to my neighbors who are barely awake, trying to wait for the train saying; can you sign my petition so I can get on the ballot. But if it's freezing cold, or the person may have an illness, or a disability that makes it hard for them to write, if they're rushing, they want to help they want to do it the right way with the rushing to catch the train or, or get their groceries or pick up their kids from school. It's hard and they may make a minor error that somebody who has a lawyer who wants to get that person off the ballot can say, Oh, well, you know, this shouldn't count, even though that is an eligible voter. So we can avoid all the legal fees, all the drama, all the unnecessary hoops and hurdles by just going online and saying, Hey, I'm going to sign electronically to get this person on the ballot. And it can be as safe as all the other things we've done. We've just come to the most significant election season of a lifetime. And Pennsylvania was at the front of the crowd in terms of doing it right, having a safe and open election. So if we can do that we can certainly acquire electronic signatures in a secure and consistent manner.

How exactly will this legislation increase voter turnout, because you can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink. So how do you see this legislation really influencing an increase in voter turnout?

Well, we have a 0% chance if we don't open it up, right, we can't make voters be

interested. But that's also where the media comes in. Right? If the media doesn't cover these issues, like you've chosen to cover these bills, The Philadelphia Inquirer hasn't covered these bills. But you have. So it involves an independent, independent media, non corporate media in particular, who is concerned about communities and democracy and transparency. It requires all stakeholders to see the importance of something like this. No legislation in and of itself will be meaningful, unless people know about the changes that are created as a result of it and other people promoting those changes. So people know what the law is. And you know, so this is as much reflection of how engaged our local media is how other stakeholders, whether there's community groups, activist groups, political organizations, they all have to weigh in and say, this is a good bill, and we're going to promote and publicize these these meetings so that we can have more sunlight on the process, but if people feel disengaged because they don't have a forum to actually hear or see what's going on. then none of this matters.

We have the PA primaries, they're slated to be a very competitive race. We have many incumbents that are stepping down along with the redistricting, those masks were upheld by the Supreme Court, even you yourself facing a competitive race as well against Isabella Fitzgerald due to that redistricting. Right. So in the bigger picture of the primary elections, and your focus, especially with these pieces of legislation to standardize, modernize and increase voter turnout, transparency. Why do you think that modernizing the election process is ultimately going to benefit the Democratic Party?

I don't think it will benefit the

Democratic Party per se, it will benefit democracy. So when I introduce these bills, I'm not introducing them. As a Democrat, I'm interested in helping expand and empower the electorate through transparency, accountability and modernization. So this would not have a disproportionately positive impact on Democrats versus Republicans, urban versus rural. I have some Conservative colleagues in Harrisburg who represent rural areas who like oh, my gosh, electronic would be amazing, because it would be what it takes for me to get signatures just going to set the station, most of my colleagues in rural areas, in fact, all of them, there's no public transportation. So there's no train station for them to go to, they have to go to a farm and it may take them 20 minutes to get from the start of the property to the person's home, just to get one signature. So their ability to access their constituents and neighbors more easily in a different part of the state. That benefits largely Republicans. And I'm okay with that. As long as it levels the playing field and makes it easier for greater participation of more Pennsylvanians, whether they're in Philly, or, you know, Elk County, that's what this is about. This is not how this can have a disproportionate impact on me, or Democrats or Philadelphians. In fact, this would make it harder, this would make it easier for people to run against me. And so a lot of incumbents would be like, Well, I don't know if I want to do that. But right is right. And if I'm running on my track record, and I believe in accountability and transparency, then I shouldn't fear however many people want to run it's their right to the right to run, not the right to win, but it's definitely the right to run and we shouldn't put up any barriers to folks who are operating in good faith to get on the ballot.

CITY COUNCILMAN DAVID OH TAKES ON DHS BY FORMING SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON CHILD SEPERATIONS



Jared Piper / PHL Council

By Gia Banner,
Chief Correspondent

You recently formed a special committee on child separations to address the disproportionate rate of child removals happening in Philadelphia by DHS. What really inspired you to introduce this legislation to create the committee?

So, it's a very long story that I'll try to make short because it's not like one thing happened. As a as an at large council person, I serve the whole city. And we're very accessible. And one day, someone approached me and African American woman, and started telling me about her daughter, who was not with her. And it was not like a very cohesive story. And I could tell that she was not like the most astute or to get the person. But I did listen, and then I would run into her again. And she would complain that the daughter was in somebody else's care, and that the Department of Human Services had removed her daughter. And, you know, I could not tell what exactly, you know, like what the issue was. But eventually, she brought to me a newspaper paper article, which confirmed what I was getting from her after-

noon, several different meetings by chance, stopping by unannounced all that type of thing. And that is that in a newspaper article that talked about her daughter had run away from a, a situation in foster care where she was being sexually abused. And then she was returned to the same person. And he was eventually arrested, prosecuted, and imprisoned. And I saw that what she was telling me was true. And then one day on, announced she, she stopped by when I was in my conference room with a little girl. And that girl was so happy. She was happy to be with her mother. She was delightful. She ran up to me, she hugged me, I never saw her before. And, and her mother told her that I was helping, but I wasn't doing much I was listening. And, and I was just so amazed at how well adjusted and how positive this this this young girl was, I think she might have been 10 or 12. And, and I thought, wow, that's really, you know, terrible what happened to her, but I'm glad you know, I think she's happy to be with her mother. And a couple months later, or less than that, the mother came to me and said, they took my daughter again, they, they open the file for no reason,

simply to get my daughter and they took my daughter. Now that sounds incredible. It sounds like something very difficult to understand. But I took it at face value for investigative purposes, I began to investigate it. And she had a former staffer of a different council person who she referred to who

was a lawyer who had worked on her case, and I called that person and she told me that everything was true. And that in her because she tried to help this woman, there was an effort to have her disbarred by the Department of Human Services, and she was now working in Washington, DC, and she would not come back to Philadelphia. Now I knew this person, I found her to be a very credible person. I never heard this story. I was unaware of it. And so, I believed it was true, but I didn't know is that like one problem is something that fell through the cracks or was that the systemic problem? Like is it one pothole or is it 10,000 potholes and how do you approach it? Because I'm just a legislator on a council person at large I deal with legislation. And then I was teaching my children martial arts and my son got hurt. When I did a judo

throw on him as I do every Sunday morning. And we have mats and I'm you know, I'm an I've been an instructor and all that my four kids come upstairs, and you know, I teach them because my wife wants me to teach them because kids you know, you can't wake them up Monday through Friday but Sunday morning I really raised in heck, hey, I said, Listen, I will. She was at her wit's end. I said, Listen, I'm going to start teaching him because she wanted me to. I said, I'll teach you eight o'clock in the morning. And the way he landed; he didn't look good. I called my wife, we rushed to the hospital. And, you know, there a social worker told me that she was going to report it to DHS. And she said, it's not a big deal. And I said, well, what would you report why? And eventually, she said to me, any time an adult male comes to the

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hospital with a child that's hurt, like, you know, because of an activity, I reported to DHS, and I said, that would make DHS very busy. And she said, you should not be teaching your son judo. And I said, what if I teach him breakdancing basketball, or riding a bicycle or wrestling, or soccer, she said, any time a adult male comes here with a child that's hurt in such a way, I report it to DHS. So, DHS came to my house. And they were very polite, and they determined everything to be unfounded. And, and I had shown the doctor photographs of the room and the, you know, all of them, learning martial arts and everything. And the doctor said, this should not be reported. I'm going to talk to the social worker, but the social worker already reported it. So once the DHS worker came out and said, there's nothing here, I said to my wife, we should talk to her son, you know, and we asked him, did you? Did she ask you anything, the social worker? And he said that she said, you don't like judo, do you? And I said, what did you say? And he said sometimes, and that was that. So, I went to the hospital to talk to the executives about what had happened thinking maybe the social worker had a bad day. And I just wanted to let

them know that, you know, this is what happened. But they told me they trained the social workers that if you have a gut feeling, no evidence, you just look at someone and you think something's funny reported to DHS. And we had a whole discussion about that. And I just didn't think that was the right thing. So, I told my wife, I'm going to talk to the DHS Commissioner. And I did meet with her. And she said, that is right. We want people if they have a funny feeling a tingly feeling to report it. And I said, well, I read the Child Protective Services Law. And that's not the law, the law is you must have a reasonable suspicion of abuse. And, you know, because there are so many reports, and because they teach mandated reporters to report anything or a gut feeling they have, they're overwhelmed with so many things. And they begin to investigate things that have no basis other than rumor, that type of thing. And even when they determine that the anonymous allegations are unfounded, they end up removing the children, not just one child, all the children, and they separate them and they put them in different foster care placements, sometimes not even in the city of Philadelphia. And they are not returned. And

years later, they are put up for adoption. And this is a case that's unfounded. Now, I could not imagine anything worse than someone coming in and taking your children from you, especially when they have no evidence of any harm to the child. And listen, many of these children are able to speak for themselves. So that is how I got involved. And I began to look at how the law should be enforced. And on the way I ran into cases that were horrendous, where a grandmother takes her two children to choke a children's hospital St. Christopher's, because when she got her granddaughter and grandson they had been placed somewhere without their parents. They were able to reach her on a cell phone. She picked them up, but the five-year-old granddaughter was defecating on herself. And she said because she had been easily penetrated so often by her mother's boyfriend. And that report was made in front of medical staff, police and, and the social worker. DHS took the children, placed them separately and then tried to return those two children to the person they identified as the rapist. Now that Out is not the end of the story, because then they come to the grandmother's home and with uniformed police officers at

like 130. In the afternoon, they have a piece of paper that they say is a court order to remove the third granddaughter. And it's not it's just a piece of paper I have. And they take the child, the baby, and the grandmother has not. She had full custody of that child, she was the primary caretaker from a different daughter, and she has not seen she has not had that granddaughter since and they put her up for adoption. And this has been years. Now this is this is a problem. People who believe, you know, I'm not saying everyone has a problem. DHS has an important mission. They do important things; they have a lot of good people. But they also have a lot of abuse. And they have also a lot of farms that they do. Philadelphia removes a child from their families at a rate higher than any big city in America, three times higher than New York City, four times higher than Chicago. And overwhelmingly, those children are black.

So why do you believe that, you know, children that identify as part of one of those racial minority groups are part of a lower socioeconomic status? Why do you believe that they're being disproportionately removed from their parents?

Because their parents and their families and their communities are perceived as vulnerable, and unable to stand up for their rights and unable to fight the system. They, they rarely take children from educated people with good jobs, who articulate in powerful positions. They rarely take children, even from poor white people, although they do. But when it comes to black and brown people, they take they take the children. And as I said, even when they determined the allegations to be unfounded, they end up taking the children and they set up a series of obstacles where you must prove you're worthy of your children, you cannot prove to someone who subjectively has an adverse feeling about you with no evidence of wrongdoing, the children and say they're perfectly fine, there's no problem there. But they won't return the children because you have not proven to them that you're worthy of your children. So, for example, you must take anger management, if you don't take it and not worthy of your children. So, you take anger management, you must take parenting class, you don't take it you know, whether you have children, you go jump through all these hoops, and you end up for

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example, they'll tell you, you must move out of your parents' home, or you must separate from the man you're living with. You must live by yourself; you must prepare room for your children's years into this and you have completed everything. You don't get your children back, what you do have is a record that your unworthy parent, right, you had to do all these courses and everything and all these certificates and anger management, you know, child raising and whatnot. And, you know, that is completely illegal in, in my opinion. And according to the law, the fundamental problem is an agency that is supposed to help children and help keep families together is that the route of taking children away from their community, their brothers and sisters, their neighborhoods, and isolating them, where they are traumatized and easily victimized. And, then when they turn 18. And there's no more money for everybody there on the street.

What long lasting effects do you think these children face after having been separated from their parents for an extended period or being put up being up for adoption and something comes back on founded, what long term

effects do you think they face?

The women, the mothers who lost their children, this a very, very hurtful thing. And I believe that a part of the gun violence and the just a wanton violence, I believe many of the people who are committing these murders and, you know, horrible acts have some experience in family separation and foster care. There's a very large number of people in our penal system that have this experience. I believe I read that like 67% of California's huge penal population, have some experience in foster care. And it's no indictment on foster parents. They're wonderful people, you know, lots of really loving people provide the decency of a home and a loving background. But there are also people who are only in it for the money. And there are also people who are pedophiles, who like to abuse children that have made themselves available into the system, it is important that the agency, police it, monitor it protect the children. And you know, there's a huge amount of money that's involved in in this system. And the system has become one where they do not support the family being together. Like if you have a leaky roof, the answer is not to remove your children

from you and spend all this money and create all this heartache. The answer is help with the leaky roof. And what does a leaky roof have to do with bad parenting? So, as I said, before, you know, over 85% of the cases where children are removed from their parents must do something about like, you know, like money, call in poverty or not just, you know, someone is not satisfied with how you're providing for your children. You give them the internet, take your children, you don't give them the internet, take your children, you're too lenient on them. You're too harsh on them, take your children take your children, there must be standards. And the fact that this has gone on this long, created this much damage and has been riddled.

What if any, actions have been taken to address this situation?

Not much. I mean, part of it is that when things happen like the Sandusky case, a terrible, you know, child abuse case, people start coming up with laws and procedures and things which is well intended. But again, it creates problems so when you get to over reporting, in other words, you know, the idea that more is better is not true. If I just simply say,

anytime you feel like it, like there may be some fire someplace, so you have no evidence, go pull a fire alarm, you will have fire engines racing all over the city and wasting their time, there will be a real fire, and there will be no fire engine for it. And that's what we've run up against. There are children who need help, and they can't get it. There are children in perfectly good homes that are traumatized and victimized, and parents and communities. You know, the problem now is that when you run into a parent who needs help, they don't want to call the city because they don't want DHS involved. For certain people, not all people, for certain people. They don't want online school, because now someone's looking into their house. You know, when kids, for example, are beaten up in school and they don't want to go to school anymore. parents worry if you don't go to school, DHS is coming to get you. You know, I was recently contacted by someone saying you know, we're going to have these Ukrainian refugees. We want DHS to take the children and place them. I'm like, I don't think you want that. You better check that out very carefully. First, these kids don't speak English. They've been traumatized by war. Now you're

separating from everyone they know, and you don't know what house, they're going to like, like, you know, and that's a problem. Right? What Why should I as an elected official have to think that way? Why wouldn't I say fantastic. We have a wonderful DHS system, they're going to get loving homes are going to be well, you know, taking care of that type of thing, but I can't say that.

Which brings me to the special committee. So can you explain you know, just in a bit more detail, what the special committee on child separations really hopes to address and accomplish?

So, we are limited, let me first say that for everybody knows, because the laws on child abuse and, you know, Child Protective Services is a state law. So, there must be changes at the state level in Harrisburg from your state representative and your state senator. But there is a city Agency, Department of Human Services that contracts with community umbrella organizations. That do, oftentimes the work for them. And they must be held accountable to the law. First, they must stop teaching mandated reporters, the incorrect law, they also they also must follow the law

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themselves. And they must provide a transparent process where you know what the allegations are, they don't have to tell you who said it, but you should know what they're looking for. And then they must provide you an opportunity to record your responses. What happens the problem in Philadelphia is when they bring allegations against you, and it's anonymous, and they don't tell you what it is, and they take your children, they say, don't worry, you'll go talk to the judge, well, you won't talk to the judge. It's a closed courtroom, and you're waiting outside, when the social workers and the judge and the child advocate, and everyone's in there talking about your kids. And they come out and they tell you the case has been continued, well, you know, we're never in there. So, you won't get a chance to testify, you got to come back three, four months later. And that might be continued. Again, you'll come back three or four months later. And you might be upset, and your child is no longer in the school, because they've been placed with a family or someone who lives far outside of your school catchment area, or even the city of Philadelphia, and your child might become depressed. And you may find

that they've decided to medicate your child without your permission. A lot of things happen. And that is harm to the child. And so, by following the law, by amending the law, by ensuring that the agency provides opportunities and transparency and the court as well, we should be able to address it. And you are entitled to a lawyer. But that lawyer gets paid such little money, that oftentimes the lawyer does not even prepare for the case, let alone show up. So, they tell you get a free lawyer. But you get a lawyer who has not paid enough money to pay for parking and gas, let alone read your file. And they are dependent on DHS and the judge to get their appointments. And so, they're not oftentimes arguing. And that's why people want to get a private lawyer, but they can't afford it. And so, who is being targeted people can afford a lawyer, no people who they believe cannot afford a lawyer based on their race based on their appearance based on their zip code. Those are all illegal unconstitutional, wrong things and the damage is severe. And the community needs to step forward. To really if they don't know about this, investigate it. If you know about it, act on it. And if you are in BHS, and a good person, you know, don't be afraid

about speaking up. You will have to speak up

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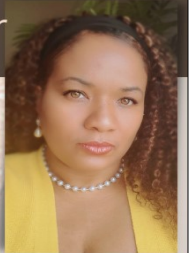


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COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF PHILADELPHIA EXPANDS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

By Tom MacDonald, WHYY

Another 500 students could get help going to college through the expansion of the Community College of Philadelphia's Octavius Catto Scholarship program.

The expansion will allow students who were originally not eligible to now apply. That includes students transferring from another institution who have earned up to

30 credits, returning Community College of Philadelphia students who have not been registered for classes for at least 12 months and meet all other eligibility requirements, as well as other students who have graduated from a high school outside of Philadelphia.

"We're really excited to provide opportunities to these students," said CCP's April Voltz. She says it could add another 500 to the number of students being helped by the scholarship

that was created two years ago.

In order to qualify for the funding, which covers tuition, other expenses and academic support, students must have a high school diploma or GED, attend Community College full-time, and have been a Philadelphia resident for at least a year.

The expansion will also give undocumented students an opportunity to receive the last-dollar scholarship

money, says Voltz.

"They must complete the FAFSA so that we're able to document an expected family contribution EFC of 8,000 or less. Now, what is great about this scholarship is that students who are undocumented can also qualify for the scholarship by completing the College Board EFC calculator," said Voltz. The scholarship is named after local civil rights activist, baseball pioneer, and scholar Octavius Catto. In 2017, the city dedicated a

statue to Catto in front of City Hall, the city's first public statue of an African American person.

Earlier this year, Mayor Jim Kenney visited CCP to celebrate the achievements of hundreds of Catto scholarship students, as well as the first graduate of the program.

WOLF ANNOUNCES \$5 MILLION INVESTMENT IN CHEYNEY UNIVERSITY'S THINKUBATOR PROJECT



Photo courtesy of Cheyney Univ.

By Liz Tung, WHYY

Cheyney University is probably best known as the nation's oldest historically Black university. But soon, it could also become known for something else — being a leader in biotech. On Tuesday morning, Governor Tom Wolf announced that the state of Pennsylvania has awarded Cheyney University with a \$5 million investment for a new initia-

tive called "ThinkUinator" — a biotech incubator designed to bring biologics, cell, and gene therapy companies to the campus. "ThinkUinator is helping to bring the life sciences community to the Cheyney campus in a big way," Wolf said. "This is a major step. Through partnerships that will advance groundbreaking research while also helping to train a whole new generation of life science leaders and innovators."

The money will be used to help build and renovate collaborative lab spaces for the companies to use — while offering students, who are normally underrepresented in the STEM fields, a chance to explore careers in science.

"This work is tremendously important because it positions our Cheyney university students to reduce the disparity that exists," said Vanessa Atkins, director of the life sciences and tech-

nology hub at Cheyney University, "because Black Americans make up 11% of the total workforce, but only 6% of the life sciences workforce."

Greg Reaves, the founder and co-owner of Mosaic Development Partners, which helped spearhead the project, described ThinkUinator as "the WeWork of labs."

"They're the highest quality labs that deal with a certain

level of research that will give students here a significant leg up in opportunity in research," Reaves said. "And we're hoping that they'll focus primarily on cell and gene therapy, which is a major emphasis of focus in this region that was incubated primarily by the University of Pennsylvania."

The project has so far enlisted four companies, but Reaves said they hope to expand that number to around 25.

"So you can imagine a work situation where a number of companies are in here operating," he said. "They're looking to grow their ecosystem as well, and they're bringing students and learning as they're growing. So it's a really great model. We're excited to be able to launch it here."

Construction is expected to begin later this year.

POLITICS

CHILD CARE WORKERS RALLY AT CITY HALL IN PHILLY FOR RAISES DURING ONE-DAY STRIKE

By Tom MacDonald,
WHYY

About two hundred day care workers staged a one-day strike in Philadelphia and came to City Hall calling for higher wages. The "Day Without Child Care" protest was designed to show the pay disparities between child care workers and others whose wages have been going up since the pandemic.

Laverne Cheesborough of Heavenly Made Creations, a facility at 73rd and Passayunk, said she is constantly fighting to keep workers from leaving for better-paying positions. "All of the fast-food chains, they are paying their employees \$15, \$16, \$17 an hour. We should not be working under wages of \$10, \$11, \$12 an hour. We should not be working under wages like that," she said.

Chanel Hunter is a fourth-generation child care provider who is not sure she wants her children to continue the family tradition.

"I do not want to start a fifth generation giving it to my daughters, putting them into an industry of poverty," she said. "Child care providers need to make a thriving

wage. We need money to support our families. We're providing services to the neediest children, but we can't provide for our own children."

Isis Brooks complained about the disparity between professional athletes and teachers. She believed it was wrong that the people helping others learn the skills to make millions of dollars in the workforce were unfairly compensated.

Several state lawmakers spoke out at the rally, saying there is money in the state budget to fund for pay increases for preschool workers, but there isn't a will to spend the money on the issue.

Donna Cooper, who heads up Children First, the region's leading child advocacy organization, told those at the rally this must be just the first in a series of informational rallies focused on this issue. She urged those in attendance to seek out members of the state House and Senate to make sure their message gets across and that politicians vote yes to increase worker wages. "Let's make sure we're working to make sure every 'no' vote doesn't return to Harrisburg or Washington," Cooper said.

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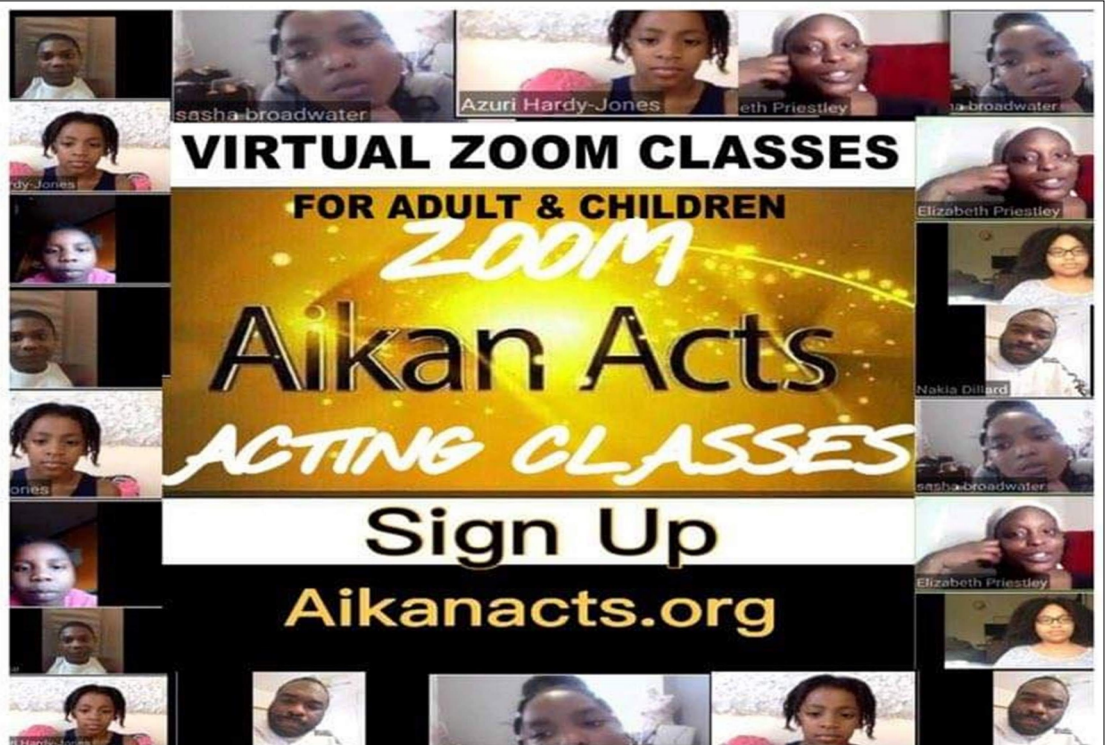
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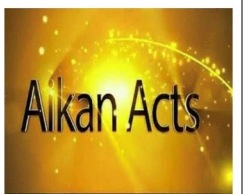
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OVERTURNING ROE WOULD HAND POWER OVER ABORTION TO STATES. MANY WOULD BAN IT

A group of Democratic governors, including Pa. Gov. Tom Wolf, asked congressional leaders Tuesday to pass a federal law protecting abortion

By Jacob Fischler and Ariana Figueroa
Pennsylvania Capital-Star

A U.S. Supreme Court ruling striking down a nearly 50-year-old right to abortion would lead to strict restrictions or bans by states across nearly half the country almost immediately. The court is poised to overturn the landmark 1973 case *Roe v. Wade*, as well as a subsequent ruling on fetal viability, according to an initial draft of a majority opinion in a pending abortion case published Monday by Politico.

The draft is not final, and could change before the court issues a ruling, but the revelation ignited a push among Democrats — including a group of 17 governors — to codify abortion protections under federal law.

If made final, the court opinion would create a

patchwork of legal abortion access across the country by leaving policymaking to the states, 26 of which are poised to immediately ban the procedure or place severe restrictions on it, according to an analysis from the Guttmacher Institute, a pro-reproductive rights research group. The states are concentrated in the South and Midwest.

A group of Democratic governors, led by Wisconsin's Tony Evers, wrote a letter to congressional leaders Tuesday asking them to pass a federal law protecting abortion access.

"Our collective responsibility to defend access to reproductive healthcare, including abortion, has never been more important," the letter said.

"Overturning *Roe* will turn back the clock on reproductive health, and Congress

must immediately take action to ensure that our nation does not go backward and that the rights of all Americans to access reproductive healthcare and abortion continue to be protected."

The letter was signed by governors including Evers, Jared Polis of Colorado, Gretchen Whitmer of Michigan, Tim Walz of Minnesota, Steve Sisolak of Nevada, Phil Murphy of New Jersey, Michelle Lujan Grisham of New Mexico, Roy Cooper of North Carolina, Kate Brown of Oregon and Tom Wolf of Pennsylvania.

Alito draft

The draft opinion, written by Justice Samuel Alito, leaves no doubt that it seeks a direct reversal of *Roe* as well as *Casey v. Planned Parenthood*, a 1992 ruling that relied on the 1973 ruling as precedent to uphold abortion rights.

"We hold that *Roe* and *Ca-*

sey must be overruled," the draft says. "The Constitution makes no reference to abortion, and no such right is implicitly protected ... It is time to heed the Constitution and return the issue of abortion to the people's elected representatives."

Those elected representatives have taken vastly different approaches to abortion policy, but 26 states are likely or nearly certain to ban or restrict access, according to Guttmacher. Seven other states, including Colorado, Maryland, New Jersey and Oregon, have enacted laws this year to protect abortion rights.

The mostly Republican-led states poised to restrict abortion access either never repealed dormant pre-*Roe* restrictions that would go back into effect if the ruling is overturned; enacted "trigger laws" that would ban or severely restrict abortion conditional on a decision overturning *Roe*;

or enacted restrictions after *Roe* that haven't been enforced but would become enforceable if *Roe* was overturned.

Enacting anti-abortion measures at the state level in preparation for *Roe*'s nullification has been a priority of groups opposed to abortion rights.

"Anti-abortion advocacy groups have been really great about getting cookie-cutter legislation to the states," said Grace Howard, an assistant professor of justice studies at San Jose State University.

Threatening other rights

Legal observers expected a ruling overturning or significantly weakening *Roe*, but the breadth and extremity of the draft opinion was surprising.

The opinion was dated Feb. 10 and marked as a first draft. To attract enough justices to take effect, it would likely need to be moderated, said Carrie N. Baker, a professor of gender studies at Smith College, who pointed out the leaked document is only a draft.

"It's clearly Alito's wish opinion," she said. "I have a hard time believing he's going to get everybody on board because it's quite an extreme opinion. But it's very shocking. It's appalling. It makes what we know is coming all the more real."

Politico reported that "a person familiar" with court deliberations said four other conservative justices — Clarence Thomas, Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh and Amy Coney Barrett — voted with Alito in the confer-

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ence held among justices following the Dec. 1 oral arguments and the “lineup remains unchanged as of this week.”

The legal reasoning — that any right not explicitly described in the Constitution or protected at the founding of the country could not be implied by other rights — threatens a whole range of protections the court has upheld, including access to contraception, interracial marriage and gay marriage and sex, legal experts said.

President Joe Biden on Tuesday noted the wider threat to other implied rights. “If the rationale of the decision as released were to be sustained, a whole range of rights are in question — a whole range of rights,” he said. “And the idea we’re letting the states make those decisions, localities make those decisions would be a fundamental shift in what we’ve done.” Howard said she expects a

trend of abortion criminalization to increase if Roe is overturned. Her research focuses on the criminalization of pregnancy in the U.S. where she specifically looked at three states: Alabama, Tennessee and South Carolina from the enactment of Roe in 1973 to 2015.

She found hundreds of cases where mothers were jailed under circumstances people who were not pregnant would not be subject to, including non-consensual drug tests. “The leaked draft of the Dobbs opinion blasts that door wide open,” she said. “And when that goes into effect, if it looks anything like this draft did, we’re gonna see a lot more of that kind of stuff happening.”

She said patients who continue to suffer under those conditions typically include low-income pregnant people and Black birthing patients. Even under Roe, states have prosecuted cases against

mothers, she said. In a statement, former President Barack Obama and first lady Michelle Obama highlighted the broad powers the ruling would give states to enact wide-reaching bans. “Under the Court’s logic, state legislatures could dictate that women carry every pregnancy to term, no matter how early it is and no matter what circumstances led to it — even rape or incest,” the Obamas said.

Congressional action
On the steps of the U.S. Capitol Tuesday, Senate Democrats condemned “right-wing justices” and vowed to bring a vote on the Senate floor to codify the abortion protections of Roe.

Sen. Debbie Stabenow said Tuesday overturning Roe would “have grave consequences” for everyone. The law in her home state of Michigan would revert to a 1931 statute that made getting an abortion a felony,

with no exception for incest or rape. “Imagine what this would mean for a 12-year-old in Michigan who is raped,” Stabenow said. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, Democrat of New York, said that he expects reproductive rights to be a major issue for voters in midterm elections in November. Roe didn’t guarantee access.

Even with *Roe in place, not all pregnant patients have had equal access to abortion, said Derek Siegel, a Ph.D. candidate in sociology at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst who studies race, gender and reproduction. Siegel uses they/them pronouns.*

“Roe v. Wade has never been a reality for most people in the U.S.,” they said. “Abortions are extremely expensive because of the Hyde amendment prohibiting federal funds to going

towards abortion. That doesn’t even include travel, lodging and childcare costs.” The Hyde Amendment has been attached to federal funding bills every year since 1977 to prevent the use of Medicaid funds for abortion care, except in extreme cases.

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BLACK AMERICAN AVERAGE NET WORTH COULD REACH ZERO BY 2050



By R.S. Broker

This is disturbing. I would've never thought this but in reality I can surely see this happening. As a group we are not financially literate, and we disproportionately do not support our black owned businesses. We buy a whole lot of expense clothes and will get a Mercedes or BMW as a group, but don't have a financial advisor or planner on deck. Black Americans still think life insurance policies are a scam. It seems like most Black Americans want to look rich before they actually are rich. I'm not trying to talk down on our people, but we really have to make some changes.

Black men currently on average has a median wealth of \$10K. That's not a lot, but when bacon is \$8.99 a pack or gas over \$5 for 93

premium octane, it tells you how little 10K can do for you in 2022. Black women are the most educated demographics in the United States, which correlates to them having the most student loan debt because we normally must get loans to go to school.

If you're a black American, did your parents set up a college fund for you? And how many parents you know of your peers planned financially for them to go to school? That's due to black families never having a college fund created for their children in general. And according to Black Enterprise and I'm paraphrasing, single black women ages 20-39 who hold a Bachelor's degree, have a median net worth of -11,000 to \$0 compared to white woman in the same bracket whose net worth ranges from \$3,400 – \$7,500. Married Black women ages 20-39 with bachelor's degrees have a median net worth of -\$20,500 to \$7,700 while married white women have a net worth range of \$18,700 to \$97,000.

As a group we watch way too much TV. We also rarely put our money together

to build any wealth. Like my guy George Fraser said, Economics needs to be the new black power. White folks are planning for 3 generations, while Black folks are planning for Saturday night. We would rather by a 7 series before talking to a guy with a Series 7 about investments. You can't be black and proud, and be N!66@'s to. The goal is to win, not just to look like you winning. Most of us talk about working hard, but we never talk about working smart. Let's start working smart and have a gameplan for our

kids future. If you want to invest, please talk to your local bank or a financial advisor.

Whether your 20 or 60, a new transfer of wealth is upon the horizon. This isn't just the USA going through a change. The universe is... It won't be easy, but you never know until you try. Oh, and don't forget to follow me on IG or YouTube at @TheGetMoneyShow. Believe in yourself, believe in your dreams, and always remember money a'int just green.

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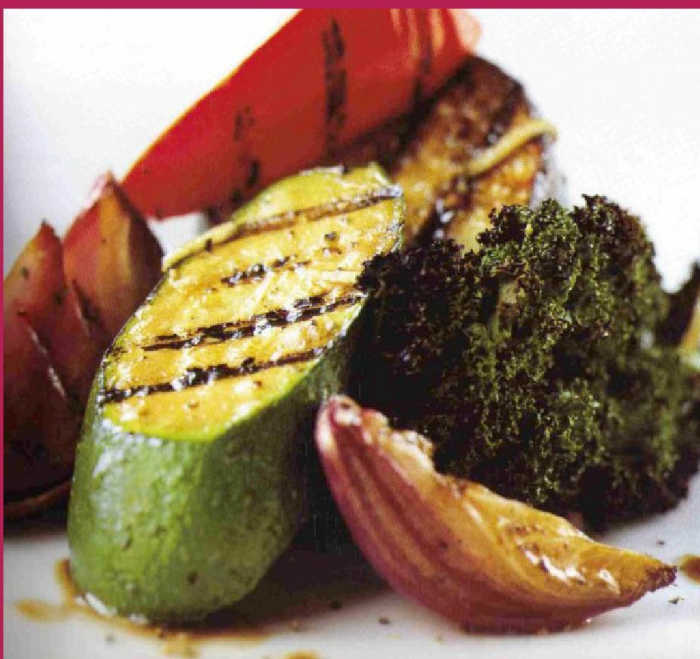
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