



NORTH STAR  
CONVENTION

# A Black Agenda for Pennsylvania

OCTOBER 2020

[www.northstarconvention.com](http://www.northstarconvention.com)

**“Power concedes  
nothing without a  
demand. It never did  
and it never will.”**

Frederick Douglass

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01

# Introduction

**The North Star Convention was established by Black leaders and concerned citizens throughout the state of Pennsylvania who have an interest in improving the quality of life for Black citizens, children, and families in our state.**

The organizers of this event wanted to create an opportunity for Black people to come together to discuss and address issues impacting the Black community and determine solutions for how we solve the systemic problems we've faced. This event was created by a group of Black civic and grassroots leaders, elected officials, business leaders, union leaders, and residents who reside in Pennsylvania (PA).

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Talk Magazine*

Over the course of five (5) weeks beginning September 8th through September 29th, we hosted forums focusing on gun violence, police, criminal and judicial reform, economic justice, education, Black women and girls, health, and the environment. We had panel discussions and engaged in dialogue about these issues and identified solutions that we wanted to see implemented by the next President of the United States. This was followed by a two (2) day conference on Friday, October 9th from 2 PM - 5 PM and Saturday, October 10th from 12 PM - 4 PM at which time we heard from keynote speakers Sybrina Fulton and Dr. Cornel West. We also finalized all recommendations discussed in previous forums, developing our Black agenda.

The goal of this Convention was to create a collective agenda organized and determined by Black people to present to the Presidential nominees which we would ask each candidate to adopt and implement if elected to office. Knowing how critical Pennsylvania is in this year's general election, we also highlighted and stressed the importance of voting and had an honest discussion regarding what could motivate people to go to the polls and exercise their right to vote. This event was a nonpartisan activity. Due to the COVID-19 global pandemic and to ensure everyone's safety, the entire convention was held virtually.

Thanks to our generous sponsors and partners, the Convention was also free to all participants.

The North Star Convention is the brainchild of Black local and state legislators, community leaders, union leaders, business leaders, and concerned citizens who are using their collective power to advocate for improvements and resources in the Black community throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.



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# Gun Violence

## DISCUSSION AREAS

- ◇ Policy & Legislation
- ◇ Injuries from Firearms
- ◇ Solving Unsolved Murders
- ◇ Empowerment & Activism

Gun Violence has been plaguing our cities and our commonwealth for far too long. This summer, gun violence was at an all time high and children and women (including pregnant women) fell victim to violence in our streets. What are we as a Black community going to do to protect our most vulnerable populations and what are we going to demand of our next President in order to end gun violence and ensure our streets and our neighborhoods are safe?

### Panelists

**Tiffany Garner**  
Gifford Law Center on Gun Violence

**Dr. John Rich**  
Co-Director, Center for Nonviolence and Social Justice

**Stanley Crawford**  
Black Male Community Council

**Dr. Dorothy Johnson-Speight**  
Mothers in Charge

## INJURIES FROM FIRE ARMS

- ◇ Gun reform – Universal background checks, the creation of a lost and stolen gun registry, stricter gun show laws, and trafficking prohibitions.
- ◇ Allocate resources to address the root causes – failing education, lack of opportunity, and lack of access to culturally responsive healing, counseling, and community-based resources.
- ◇ Recreate policing by incentivizing interventions that improve the wellbeing of communities in partnership with community organizations and leaders.

## SOLVING UNSOLVED MURDERS

- ◇ Funding support groups for the family of victims.
- ◇ Investing in evidence based violence intervention and prevention programs. Every year A single gun homicide generates nearly \$450,000 in Medical care and criminal justice expenses. Evidence-based programs cost money, but they're are strategic and cost effective investments that create returns.

## EMPOWERMENT & ACTIVISM

- ◇ Fund trauma informed centers in all African American communities that focus on healing. The centers should be staffed with people who are trained to be culturally aware and sensitive to the needs of the communities.
- ◇ Create community outreach programs that involves men in the community who understand the culture, to reach out to young men and help steer toward a different path.
- ◇ Create a mobilization day, so every year around the issue of urban gun violence we have a day set aside to ask our elected officials question and hold them accountable.
- ◇ Enact the Caretakers' Bill in law, so that any single parent with a child under the age, who commits a minor non-violent offence will get an alternative to sentencing to remain home with their child.
- ◇ Enact the Victims of Crime Bill to bring more funding and resources to help victims recover from their interaction with gun violence.

# Police, Criminal, and Judicial Reform



## DISCUSSION AREAS

- ◇ Police Reform
- ◇ Criminal Justice Reform
- ◇ Judicial Reform

Throughout our country, there have been a significant number of Black men and women who have been victims of police brutality and state violence. Some refer to our criminal justice system as “modern day slavery”. What do we need to do to ensure members of the Black community are safe? What types of reforms and policies are still needed for our criminal justice and judicial systems? What are we demanding of our next President to ensure police are held accountable and to ensure equity and fairness within these systems?



## PANELISTS

### Keir Bradford-Grey

*Chief Defender of the Defender Association of Philadelphia*

### Summer Lee

*State Representative, 34th Legislative District*

### Anthony Williams

*State Senator, 8th District*

### Jordan Harris

*State Representative, 186th Legislative District*

### Kevin Harden, Jr. Esq.

*Attorney, Ross Feller Casey, LLP*

### Honorable Timika Lane

*Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas Judge*



## JUDICIAL REFORM

- ◇ Increase access to live court cases through television broadcasting or online streaming for the public to be conveniently able to see how justice is administered, how certain judges treat people poorly and how others work hard to make the system fair. This increased transparency would be a great means of improving our judicial system and ultimately democracy.
- ◇ Building a coalition of lawyers to prepare them for judicial appointments.
- ◇ Making sure that judges retain their discretion, in regards to sentencing and retain jurisdiction even if the defendant has been sentenced for more than two years in prison.
- ◇ Sponsor mentorship programs where judges will mentor both lawyers and young people.
- ◇ Individuals becoming investigators for the judicial commission to investigate judges.
- ◇ Appoint more Black judges to federal benches so the judiciary reflects the ethnic diversity of our state and country.



## POLICE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

- ◇ Reallocate and restore funding for education.
- ◇ Redefine what policing is. No longer put police in schools.
- ◇ Use bully pulpit
- ◇ Need money to support programs and change systems and cultures that we are operating in
- ◇ Children who are exposed to violence every day, trauma, and PTSD that children have been exposed to. Trauma needs to be defined as a medical problem. And we need to sue for medical neglect
- ◇ The Justice System is not accountable to anyone and doesn't have to report anything. We have to change that. Justice systems have to agree to be more fiscally responsible. There should be a right to sue if race is playing a role in any of the decision making of individuals.
- ◇ We need reparations.
- ◇ The Justice system has to promote public safety. There needs to be far more accountability in the system.
- ◇ The President needs to sign an executive order to force all police officers to have de-escalation training and we need to have mental health professionals respond to emergency calls that are dealing with mental health, not just police officers who don't know how to handle these cases.
- ◇ Teaching culture and history is important, by High School, most students only learn from slavery to the civil rights, that's a problem in itself because we learn about all other cultures that originate from great beginnings. Learning your history is important, and if you only learn that you are less than, that's how you'll act.

- ◇ We cannot overlook trauma, and how it affects young children mentally. Also the trauma their mothers have experienced while pregnant, if the mother is highly stressed, eating poorly, and traumatized, that child experiences those same emotions and carry those traumas as well. Talking about trauma is important for understanding violent and abusive attitudes and mental problems, and ultimately addressing them by coming up with solutions and programs.
- ◇ True accountability for bad actors in the police department would act as a deterrent for those who know that their union will advocate for them to retain their job when egregious behavior takes place. If they knew that their profession will be taken away with a zero-tolerance policy, better performance will follow suit.
- ◇ We need the President to question policing and accountability. We should not be protecting police officers with taxpayer dollars.

- ◇ We need the President to question policing and accountability. We should not be protecting police officers with taxpayer dollars.
- ◇ Commissioner Harrison is currently in Baltimore and formerly in New Orleans developed a community policing policy. Police need to engage in the community and listen to the community.
- ◇ Having "Safe Spaces" could be a good starting ground. One example could be Community Gardens as a place to connect. It will be good to connect communities and provide activities for the elderly down to the youths. Such as gardening, preparing simple healthy recipes, earthing/grounding, safe space to do homework, etc. Also, it will be a great space for police to interact with the community and collaborate with programs together, having fundraisers, BBQs, Community arts and children's programs, etc.
- ◇ We need to have community ambassadors in place.
- ◇ The prisons need to be held more accountable for their Vocational/Educational Programming. People who receive certifications should be linked more directly to competitive job opportunities. I'm not sure of the data, but from working within Workforce Development there are too many people coming out of prisons with certifications that are either not applicable outside prison or are not in demand. Re-entry support needs to begin (and be held accountable) while the person is still in prison so there is less gap to competitive employment.
- ◇ End the use of no-knock warrants.
- ◇ End the practice of only sending police officers to mental health and domestic disturbance calls. Officers should not be first responders to mental health crisis calls. There should be trained therapists and social service professionals available to assist officers with negotiating and de-escalating mental health and domestic disturbances.

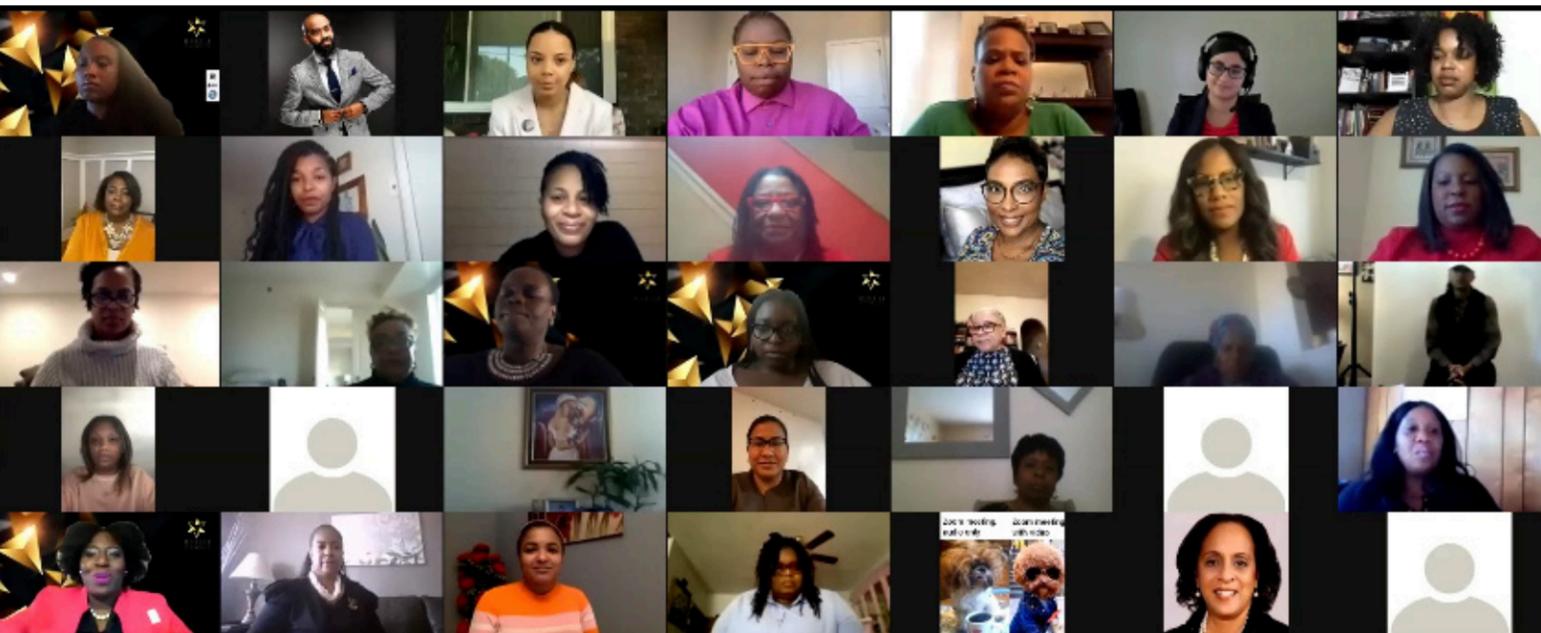
- ◇ Require officers to respect gender identity and expression in all police interactions, searches, and placements in police custody.
- ◇ Create and enact use-of-force policies to prohibit the use of Tasers or excessive force on pregnant women or children.
- ◇ Require police officers to receive yearly de-escalation training and tactics so that shooting someone is not an officer's first line of defense or response to a situation.
- ◇ Require use of body cameras on police officers which are turned on at all times when issuing citations or warrants.
- ◇ Require officers to undergo yearly implicit bias training.

# Economic Justice

Our country is one of the wealthiest economies in the world, yet when you examine the economics of Black Americans we still fall woefully behind in access to wealth, business sustainability and growth, capital, housing, and career opportunities. Black individuals were enslaved and brought to the U.S. in chains to build the economy of this nation, yet despite gaining our freedom, we have not been able to fully benefit from the economy we helped build. Should we be given reparations? How do we address and end poverty in our state? How do we grow Black businesses and what are we demanding of our next President to ensure we have access to opportunities and economic justice?

## Discussion Areas

- ◆ **Reparations**
- ◆ **Workforce Development**
- ◆ **Housing**
- ◆ **Wealth Building**



## PANELISTS

**Rick Adams**  
*Chair, Institute of the Black World 21st Century*

**Chris Rabb**  
*State Representative, 200th Legislative District*

**Earl Buford**  
*CEO, Partners 4 Work*

**Myra Brown**  
*National Workforce Opportunity Network*

**Regina Young**  
*Moderator/Host*

**Ronell Guy**  
*Pittsburgh Union Regional Renters*

**Ogechi Chieke**  
*Belmar Gardens Tenants Cooperation*

**Randall Taylor**  
*Penn Plaza Supported Action Coalition*

**Reggie Fuller**  
*Fulton Bank*

**Jake Wheatley**  
*Moderator & State Representative, 19th Legislative District*

**David Oxley**  
*Financial Advisor, Fulton Bank*



## REPARATIONS

- ◇ There are examples of the United States government paying reparations; for example to victims of Japanese internment camps, the Tuskegee experiments, etc. We have also just witnessed a litmus test of what it would look like for the United States to provide a massive disbursement to citizens. We should use the knowledge to guide how we can give reparations to African Americans.
- ◇ Instead of individual gain, the goal should be to build trans generational wealth over a long period of time. Efforts should be focused on the key wealth builders,; housing, small businesses, and higher education. Many Americans were able to build wealth through the GI Bill and African Americans were excluded from it. So it is even more imperative that some form of reparations come in the form of grants and scholarships to pursue higher education.
- ◇ The HR40 bill should be passed.
- ◇ We need criminal justice reform.
- ◇ African Americans should have the choice of how redress is afforded them and their families.
- ◇ Political power is necessary to not only achieve reparations but to be able to maintain it. Therefore efforts should be made to encourage increased participation of African Americans in all levels of government.
- ◇ Freedom of black political leaders.
- ◇ Vacating fines of those returning home from the carceral system.

## POVERTY

- ◇ Implementing a universal basic income as a way to provide economic dignity.
- ◇ Funding should be given to research into poverty as a source of trauma in African American communities.
- ◇ Reparations need to play a role in transforming poverty in black communities.
- ◇ Poverty intervention should be through a lens that is understanding of black communities.
- ◇ Universal access to healthcare.
- ◇ Transforming the education system to increase access to high-quality education and healthcare.
- ◇ Transforming the way we teach and manage people as related to trauma.

## HOUSING

- ◇ The government should rethink public/social housing and return to building publicly owned and maintained housing whose sole purpose is to house people and not to make a profit.
- ◇ End the public-private for-profit partnership in public housing.
- ◇ Bring back community support programs in public housing.
- ◇ Support the creation of more co-operative housing programs, especially those that focus on tenant ownership
- ◇ Vouchers are currently being underutilized, so efforts need to be made to find more creative ways to put them to use.
- ◇ Protect low-income families from rent spiraling and gentrification.

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

- ◊ Fund programs that focus on leadership, management development, and career education.
- ◊ Focus on developing alternative workforce opportunities for returning citizens.

**WEALTH BUILDING**

- ◊ End Student loan debt for all black people.
- ◊ Create an investment strategy that allows for direct interventions for business development, for support of African Americans from a family, business, and communal standpoint.
- ◊ Mandates should be given to banks in African American communities to ensure that they invest in the communities, by helping residents gain access to mortgages and small businesses gain access to loans.
- ◊ Investment should be made on measures that encourage homeownership, support the creation of programs that aid African Americans in buying their homes and affording to live in the homes that are passed to them from their parents or grandparents.
- ◊ Investment in school and programming that teaches financial literacy to young people and even goes as far as a certification to guarantee that they learn how to invest in themselves.

# NORTH STAR CONVENTION

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**2-Day Convention**  
**OCT** FRIDAY 9<sup>th</sup> 2 PM - 5 PM  
 SATURDAY 10<sup>th</sup> 12 PM - 4 PM



**KEYNOTE SPEAKERS**



**Cornel West**  
 Professor of Public Philosophy at Harvard University, Best Selling Author, and Civil Rights Activist



**Sybrina Fulton**  
 Mother of Trayvon Martin and Founder of the Trayvon Martin Foundation



**DEVELOPING A BLACK AGENDA FOR PA**  
 GUN VIOLENCE  
 POLICE, CRIMINAL, AND JUDICIAL REFORM  
 ECONOMIC JUSTICE  
 EDUCATION  
 BLACK WOMEN & GIRLS  
 HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

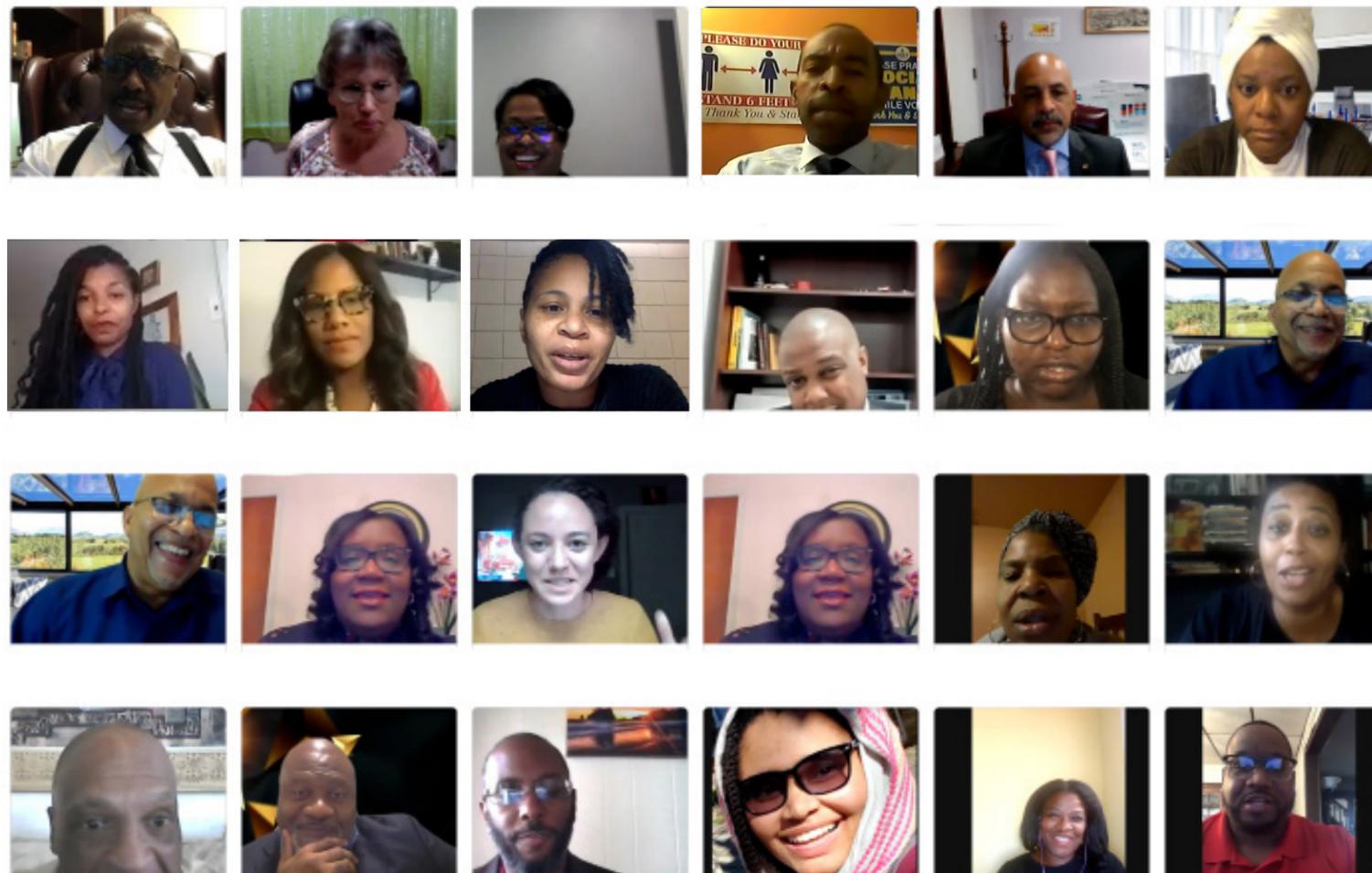


**Carol Riddick**



**Kelly Price**

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Laborers' International Union of North America



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# Education

## DISCUSSION AREAS

- ◇ Future of k-12 Public Education
- ◇ Work Readiness: Trades, Certifications & Entrepreneurship
- ◇ Post Secondary Education: HBCU's & College Debt
- ◇ The Future of Educational Governance

Access to a high quality education is a major factor in determining a child's life trajectory. In addition to a strong academic program, it is equally important to teach Black history, celebrate a child's ethnicity and culture, and support social and emotional wellness of children. Is what children are learning in school today, properly preparing them for the workforce post high school and/or college? How do we ensure there is equity in access to quality public schools? What is the future of k-12 public education and what are we going to demand of our next President in order to ensure all Black children have access to a high quality education and path from preK-12 to postsecondary education and career readiness?

**Panelists**

**Sylvester Mobley**

*Founder, Coded by Kids*

**Shayna Terrell**

**Sam Staten, Jr.**

*Business Manager, Laborer's Local 332 & Vice President of International Laborer's Union*

**Angela Mike**

*Director of the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Division of the Pittsburgh Public School District*

**Katherine Gilmore Richardson**

*Philadelphia City Councilwoman*

**Will Dunbar**

*Lincoln University, Board of Directors*

**Darrien Johnson**

*HBCU Graduate*

**Anshera Hines**

*HBCU Graduate*

**Dwan Walker**

*Moderator & Mayor of Aliquippa*

**Andre Horton**

*Erie Councilman, At-Large*

**Wes Majors**

*Harrisburg City Councilman*



**The Future of K-12 Education**

- ◇ Changes should be made to how schools are governed, move away from mayoral appointed boards. The board should be a full-time job and staffed as such.
- ◇ Bring back trades for all students but, trades should be coupled with entrepreneurship and lily-white unions.
- ◇ Every student should be given a laptop to keep.
- ◇ Healthy food options should be included in school lunches; let's bring the farm to table model to our schools
- ◇ We need to demand that public education be treated as a major political issue.
- ◇ Ethnic studies and diversity training should be made compulsory as part of teacher training.
- ◇ Reparations should be paid in the form of funding to HBCU's to educate black aspiring teachers.
- ◇ Diversify the teacher force through measures to make education free for any person of color to go to any institution to become a teacher.
- ◇ Federal funding to address infrastructure issues in all public schools.
- ◇ Accountability for institutions graduating poor quality teachers, this could be in the form of losing accreditation.
- ◇ Monetize public education.
- ◇ Education needs to be made a human rights issue and the portion of the United Nations declaration of human rights that pronounces education as a human right should be ratified.
- ◇ Social services in schools must be provided in all schools.
- ◇ The K-12 curriculum needs to be revised to reflect the fact that we are now a technological society and no longer industrial.
- ◇ Protect, support, and celebrate Black founded and led schools and acknowledge the need for more black male and female educators to educate black and brown children in PA.

**Post Secondary Ed: HBCUs & College Debt**

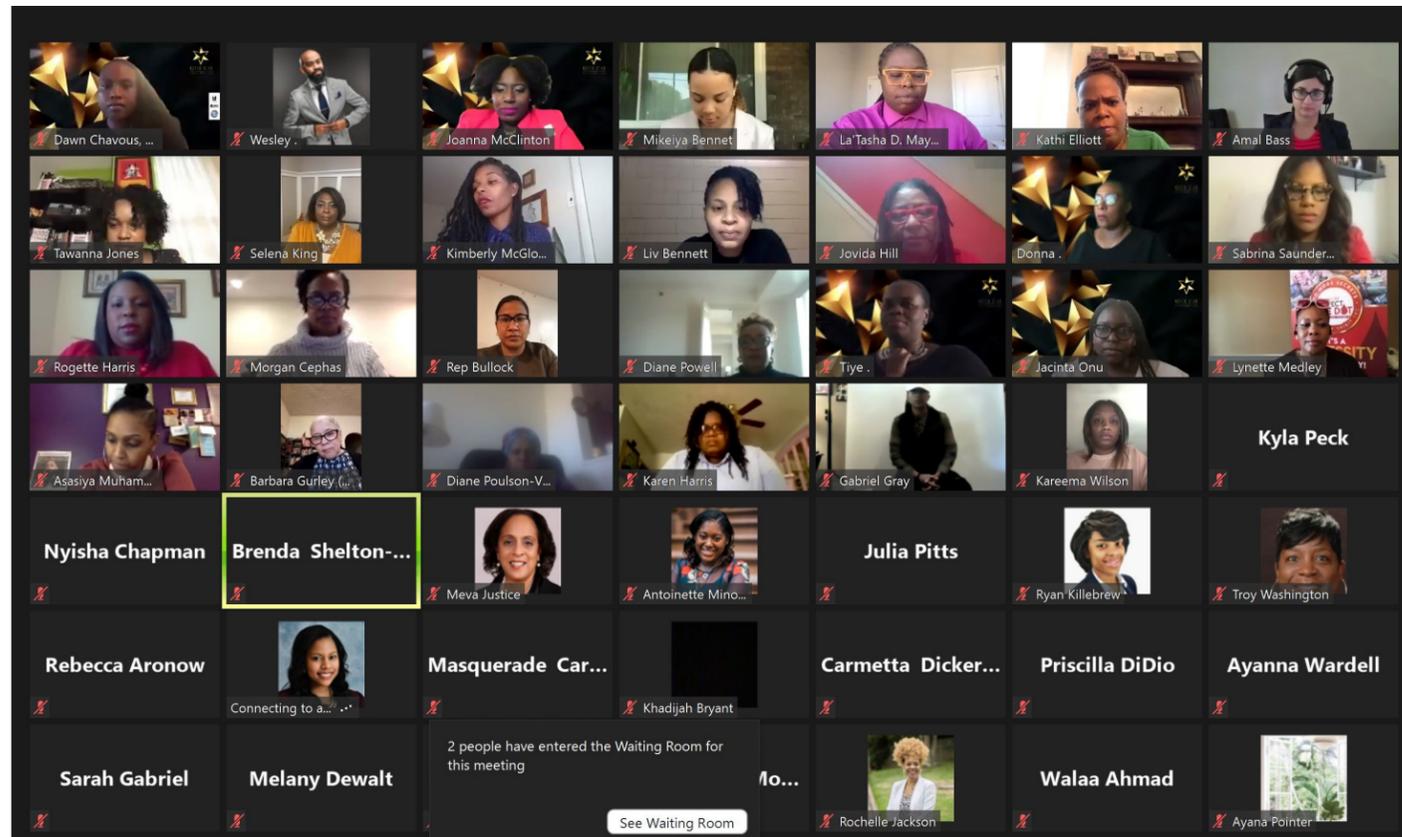
- ◇ HBCUs should be for all African Americans, this is the first step in sweeping educational reform.
- ◇ Inducing social responsibility as tax-paying citizens, how we can have an impact on our institutions.
- ◇ Recruit culturally responsive educators.
- ◇ Quality educational programs that focus on academic achievement and not only athletic achievement.
- ◇ Provide year-round pell grants, because students' financial needs do not end over the holidays.

**The Future of Good Governance**

- ◇ Direct funding should be given to underfunded public schools to get them to a level of equality with well-funded schools in affluent neighborhoods.
- ◇ Title 1 formula should be updated to meet the needs of our time.
- ◇ The focus should shift from data collection to action.

**Work Readiness: Trades, Certifications & Entrepreneurship**

- ◇ Funding for equitable access to education, that recognizes true potential for black children.
- ◇ Equitable funding for dual enrollment/placement/co-op education programs
- ◇ Elected officials should speak with one voice on greater education funding
- ◇ Funding for programs like the Sam Staten, Sr. Apprenticeship program.
- ◇ Ensure the next secretary of education has an education background and understands education well.
- ◇ Ensure we have good leadership at the top
- ◇ Close the digital divide.
- ◇ Funding for Career and Technical Education programs (CTE)
- ◇ Support and communicate to change the perspective that CTE is the old Vocational Technical School
- ◇ Provide funding for labor market research and forecasting for workforce development to realign CTE programs for the jobs of the future.
- ◇ Provide professional development and cultural competency training for counselors to help students identify pathways/pipelines to employment and their future.
- ◇ Invest in ensuring the teacher workforce reflects the population of students served.
- ◇ Provide universal after school programs, localize education and temporarily abolish standardized testing.
- ◇ Provide social economics classes and entrepreneurship classes including financial literacy and soft skills/people skills training.
- ◇ Invest in interdisciplinary teachers.



# Black Women & Girls

## TOPICS DISCUSSED

- ◆ Pay Equity
- ◆ Black Women in Office
- ◆ Maternal & Infant Mortality
- ◆ Black Girls

Black women are impacted by intersectionality - the overlapping experience of discrimination based on gender, race, age, and other factors used to define our identity. Despite this being the case we continue to fight for equality and issues like pay equity, safety, period poverty, trafficking, and maternal mortality to name a few. In PA alone, we have no Black female elected officials in positions higher than a state representative. We have no Black female members of the state senate, congress, US senate or statewide offices. What are we demanding of our next President to ensure inclusion of Black women in all layers of our government and eliminating discrimination of Black women in all areas and public and private sectors?.

### Panelists

**Amal Bass**

*Director of Policy and Advocacy*

**Latifah Fields**

*National Coalition 100 Black Women*

**State Rep. Donna Bullock**

**Jovida Hill**

*Executive Director for the Office of Engagement for Women*

**Nyisha Chapman**

*1st Vice President, Coalition of 100 Black Women, Inc. - Pennsylvania Chapter*

**Diane Powell**

**Selena King**

*Auditor, PA Dept. of the Auditor General*

**Olivia Bennett**

**Rogette Harris,**

*Chairwoman, Dauphin County Democratic Committee*

**La'Tasha D. Mayes**

**Brenda Shelton-Duston**

**Morgan Cephas**

*State Representative*

**Sabrina Saunders**

*President & Chief Executive Officer, Vibrant Pittsburgh & Facilitator*

**Kathi Elliott**

**Lynette Medley**

**Dr. Tawanna Jones Morrison**

**Joanna McClinton**

*Facilitator*

**Dr. Kimberly McGlenn**

*CEO & Founder, Grant Blvd*

**Mikeiya Bennetts**

*Temple University Student*



## PAY EQUITY

Black women are the essential workers in the pandemic but aren't getting paid as such. The recommendations are:

- ◇ a consistent state equal pay for work laws.
- ◇ support pregnant workers' fair act and their seniority on the job.
- ◇ support salary history laws and reduce wage gap
- ◇ advance fair work week, philadelphia is ahead of the curve yet, ensuring its added across the commonwealth and country.

- ◇ increase federal minimum wage not to \$15 but to an actual living wage that women can sustain their families on.
- ◇ expand access to affordable childcare.
- ◇ make post-secondary education more affordable and provide assistance for student loan debt—women have the highest rates when obtaining degrees.
- ◇ put value on women's work—pay for internships and caregiving services.
- ◇ raise the poverty rate.
- ◇ pass legislation that addresses racial and implicit bias.
- ◇ pass the "light your crown" act—black women are discriminated against before we get the job.

## MATERNAL MORTALITY

The recommendations are:

- ◇ health/wellness-wellbeing of mother's and infants.
- ◇ mandatory racial equity and implicit bias training for all infant health professionals and staff.
- ◇ alleviate challenge disparities for women and their children.
- ◇ maternal and child health disparity requirements embedded in insurance value based agreements.
- ◇ right to birth doula and access to representative care—a right to a fully supported birth should not be inaccessible to any birthing person.
- ◇ funding individual strategies to address maternal mortality—support through funding perspectives.
- ◇ invest in community based support resources, so midwives, doulas and home births are normalized.
- ◇ pass the Federal "Mommy Bus" Bill that has been introduced in Congress.



## BLACK WOMEN IN POLITICS—RUNNING FOR OFFICE

The recommendations are:

- ◇ ongoing commitment—continuing to engage and communicate around being an AA girl in government.
- ◇ education is key, doing a better job about the importance of voting and politics. It is imperative that we as black girls be a part of the decisions being made.
- ◇ begin to press all political parties to begin to put forth more black female candidates, there is a great need for more black, female candidates.
- ◇ compile additional resources that are available for AA women, different than what the party offers.
- ◇ Working families need to be able to run for office—some fees need to be removed, most fees are out of the average person's reach.
- ◇ caps on fundraising—legislation would need to be passed.
- ◇ change the culture of donating. learning how and being comfortable in doing so—expanding our network beyond family/friends and trusting one another to use the monies effectively and wisely so that candidates can raise enough to successfully run for office.

## Black Girls

The recommendations are:

- ◇ housing—environmental crisis creates crisis and conditions that black girls often at times have to navigate.
- ◇ lack of access to quality k-12 education, black teachers, guidance counselors and mentors.
- ◇ how poverty affects menstrual supplies and resources—creating intergenerational support and access to the things they need, monthly.
- ◇ slowing down childhood and preparing for college/post-high school and career readiness.
- ◇ making sure they have clear expectations for their career path and themselves while developing inside their own sexual orientations.
- ◇ LBGTQ

# Health & Environment

## DISCUSSION AREAS

- ◆ COVID -19
- ◆ Mental Health
- ◆ Health Disparities
- ◆ Environment

The Black community suffers from many health disparities, lack of access to healthcare, and have been significantly impacted by mental health as well as our current global pandemic due to the coronavirus. In addition, there is a correlation of health disparities in areas that have limited access to clean water and air. How are Black urban and rural neighborhoods impacted by the environment and access to healthcare? What are we going to demand of our new President in order to ensure all counties have clean water, clean air, access to healthcare, COVID-19 testing, mental health services, and the elimination of health disparities that are highly prevalent in our community?

## PANELISTS

### Dr. Ala Stanford

*Black Doctor's COVID-19 Consortium*

### Pastor Marshall Mitchell

*Salem Baptist Church & Black Doctor's COVID-19 Consortium*

### Darisha Parker

*Moderator & Community Activist*

### Lajewel Harrison

### Farida Boyer

### Tracy Smith

### Dr. Sabrina Whitehurst, MD, FACOG

*Division Chief, General OB/GYN, Chairman Geisinger Lewistown Hospital*

### Napoleon Nelson,

*Moderator*

### Dan Williams

*State Representative, 74th Legislative District*

### Malcolm Kenyatta

*State Representative for the 181st*

### Zulene Mayfield

*Environmental Activist*

### Hugh V. Archer, Ph.D., P.E., DEE, F. ASCE

*Mavickar Environmental Consultants*

### Dr. Kimberly McGlenn PhD

*Founder & CEO, Grant Blvd.*



## MENTAL HEALTH

- ◇ Three main themes discussed were increased awareness and education, increased access to mental health care, and an increase in service options specifically for the black community.
- ◇ Increased Awareness & Education
- ◇ Mental Health Services for people transitioning out of prison and back into the community. Should include MH-focused mentorship and mental health training.
- ◇ Public/easily accessible directories of black clinicians and black Mental Health agencies
- ◇ A requirement of insurance companies to provide notification of Mental Health services covered in the insurance plans. Most people do not know what services are available to them outside of annual wellness checks.
- ◇ Merge Mental Health services and awareness with community programs in order to educate members of the community reluctant to enter the MH office space. This addresses the issue with stigma.
- ◇ Increased Access
- ◇ More Mental Health services in the schools. Assessments for each child and 1 on 1 service for students that demonstrate a need.
- ◇ More black therapists to provide culturally competent care
- ◇ Mental Health services in schools to address childhood trauma

## INCREASED SERVICE OPTIONS

- ◇ Increased funding for holistic care options in the Black Community. More Black Americans will access Mental Health care if there are non-medication options
- ◇ Create parity between mental health and physical health reimbursements in order to increase services
- ◇ Services that link D&A services with Mental Health services.
- ◇ Mental Health services for people within the community that have had negative and traumatic interactions with the police.
- ◇ Mental Health services to replace non-violent penalties. Ex. Philadelphia's PASS program. Expansion of this program can reduce recidivism by addressing the behavior and it will decrease pressure on the currently overwhelmed court system.
- ◇ Replace 302 police Mental Health crisis response with a clinician that can properly deescalate.

## HEALTH DISPARITIES

- ◇ Creating policies that encourage health care providers especially Black providers to work in Black neighborhoods, through incentives like student loan reduction to increase access to services by moving them within our communities.
- ◇ Investing in a pool of Black doctors, that we can have more doctors who look like us that can relate to us.
- ◇ Setting up groups that people can go to as a resource to help advocate for them.
- ◇ Some resources should be directed toward those returning from the carceral system to help them access services.
- ◇ Eliminate Co-pays
- ◇ Free dental care
- ◇ Make health and Nutrition a compulsory part of school curriculums.
- ◇ Stricter safeguards to prevent discrimination against those with pre-existing conditions having access to affordable health care.
- ◇ Do not vote on or abolish the Affordable Care Act while we are still in a pandemic.
- ◇ Zoning laws that prevent too many fast-food restaurants from being concentrated in one area.
- ◇ Fund campaigns to encourage African Americans to take part in clinical trials.

## COVID-19

- ◇ Every person who wants a test for the coronavirus should be able to walk into any hospital 24hrs a day and get one. With the CARES Act, the funding and infrastructure are present, so the idea that you need a government-issued ID to get tested or that testing sites close late and do not have weekend hours is hindering access to this crucial service.

## ENVIRONMENT

- ◇ Develop a national panel to define, identify, and address Environmental Injustices.
- ◇ Build a pipeline of activists thru enhanced educational standards, STEM programming, environmental law, PAID internships, etc
- ◇ Equitable funding of green jobs, start-up, and late-stage capital investment.



NORTH STAR  
CONVENTION

*Prepared by:*  
Chavous Consulting, LLC  
*Contact:*  
Dawn Chavous  
info@chavousconsulting.com  
www.chavousconsulting.com