



Charlotte women's basketball coach Tomekia Reed returns to work after harrowing health scare



MECKLENBURG COUNTY

Brooklyn Village, a housing and business development initiative approved by Mecklenburg County commissioners in 2016, has yet to start. The county is suing to fire the developer.

## A once-promising Brooklyn Village union on verge of split

*A decade after deal, Mecklenburg County sues to break with developer*

By Herbert L. White  
herb.l.white@thecharlottepost.com

In 2016, the partnership between Mecklenburg County and BK Partners sparked with promise.

New housing, businesses and amenities would pump new life into a dormant Second Ward neighborhood. The developer would pay homage to the past and provide an economic lifeline to small businesses.

A decade later, the county wants a new developer for Brooklyn Village.

A lawsuit filed last week by Mecklenburg to dissolve its partnership with BK Partners, if successful, would dissolve a decade-long relationship for the 17-acre project of new businesses and housing

to an area that was once a Black neighborhood razed in the 1960s.

Before county commissioners signed off on the Brooklyn Village initiative, Second Ward was a sparse collection of municipal buildings, including the former Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools headquarters, Bob Walton Plaza as well as Marshall Park. The county board chose BK Partners among three Charlotte-based developers for the mixed-use project of office space, hotels, housing and retail.

BK Partners is backed by Black-owned Peebles Corporation of Miami Beach, Florida, whose portfolio includes more than \$8 billion in projects in cities like Miami, Philadelphia and Washington,

D.C.

Brooklyn Village includes a pair of centerpiece parcels: One borders Brooklyn Village Avenue, South McDowell, and South Alexander streets and I-277. The other borders South McDowell, and East Third streets, East Martin Luther King Boulevard and First Baptist Church.

In August 2025, Mecklenburg County told developer R. Donohue Peebles his company was in default of its obligation. A month earlier, Peebles missed the deadline to demolish the

Please see **ONCE-PROMISING** | 2A



Peebles

## Stein vetoes expansive elections overhaul bill

By Christine Zhu  
NC NEWSLINE

North Carolina Democratic Gov. Josh Stein vetoed a controversial elections law bill on Monday, saying the veto was necessary to defend voting rights.

House Bill 958 includes provisions that would reduce early voting periods during primaries and special elections, require state Auditor Dave Boliek to conduct post-election audits of county election systems, and use federal databases with known problems to identify people who have died but remain on the voter rolls.

Republicans said the changes would make elections more secure and more efficient, but Democrats called it a "power grab."

"Our right to vote is precious. It's the fundamental right that underpins every other right that we possess," Stein said during a ceremony at the executive mansion, flanked by Democratic state lawmakers. "That's why I will always protect you and your right

Please see **GOV. JOSH** | 2A



Stein

## Auditor report: Fare-jumping costs CATS millions yearly in lost revenue

By Herbert L. White  
herb.l.white@thecharlottepost.com

Fare-jumping commuters cost Charlotte's transportation authority millions of dollars yearly, according to a state audit.

A report issued by the Office of the State Auditor found the Charlotte Area Transit System loses between \$5 million-\$6.5 million annually to non-ticketed commuters - an estimated 45% of all bus and light rail passengers. An estimated 60% of fare jumpers ride light rail compared to 35% on buses. Penalties for fare jumpers can include citations, fines, or prohibition, but enforcement is lagging, according to the report. Citations fell from 4,763 in 2023 to 2,018 in 2025 while light rail collections amounted to \$750 in fiscal year 2024 and \$550 in 2025.

"The City of Charlotte, CATS, and

the Metropolitan Public Transportation Authority need to take decisive action on public transportation security," state Auditor Dave Boliek said in a statement. "CATS estimates almost half of all riders aren't paying for a ticket. Up to \$6.5 million may be lost annually to fare evasion, but only \$550 in fare evasion fines for the light rail system were collected in State Fiscal Year 2025. The taxpayers of Charlotte pay the bill for CATS, and they're asked to buy tickets to ride the bus or light rail. Moving forward, CATS and the Metropolitan Public Transportation Authority should implement effective measures to stop fare evasion."

Please see **CATS** | 2A



Boliek

## Weigh in on data centers' impact

By Herbert L. White  
herb.l.white@thecharlottepost.com

A public forum on data centers' impact on Charlotte - and its neighborhoods - is scheduled for Aug. 20.

The town hall at Project 658, 3646 Central Ave., is open to the public, but registration is required at [cltgov.me/ajmera](http://cltgov.me/ajmera).

City Council member Dimple Ajmera, who is convening the 6 p.m. forum, said more than 200 people have signed up. City officials and technology representatives will be in attendance to answer questions related to data center proliferation as well as their environmental and economic consequences. An invitation was extended to Duke Energy, Ajmera said, but the Charlotte-based electric and natural gas holding company hasn't responded.

"People have questions," Ajmera said. "This is not about anti-growth or anti-development. This conversation is about who pays, who is benefiting, and where these facilities are located, because we currently do know that the facilities that are being built and have been approved in the crescent area, where minority communities live, and most importantly, we want to make sure that the community gets a voice in this decision."

City council in June adopted a 150-day moratorium on data centers, joining a growing roster of municipalities across North Carolina. Proliferation of such facilities - driven by the need for enhanced artificial intelligence - has sparked public backlash connected to energy and water requirements

Please see **WEIGH** | 2A



Ajmera

## NC judicial sanction legislation rejected

By Clayton Henkel  
NC NEWSLINE

Gov. Josh Stein vetoed House Bill 377 on Monday, saying it would have a "chilling effect" on judicial independence in North Carolina.

The bill, simply titled "2026 Court Changes," would give the state Supreme Court the power to censure, publicly reprimand, suspend or remove judges at its discretion, even if the Judicial Standards Commission hasn't recommended it.

H377 would allow the chief justice of the Supreme Court to suspend a trial court judge without pay while the judge is under investigation, if the Judicial Standards Commission recommends it. That

Please see **NC JUDICIAL** | 2A

the charlotte post FOUNDATION

## POST BEST GALA 2026

**BLACK TIE / FORMAL ATTIRE**  
**RECEPTION & DINNER: 6-10 PM**

**Saturday, October 3, 2026**  
**Hilton Charlotte Uptown**

[thepostfoundation.org/2026PBBE](http://thepostfoundation.org/2026PBBE)  
SPONSORSHIPS • SOUVENIR ADS • QUESTIONS: 704.376.0498

Malcomb Coley  
Luminary

Mary Towe  
Educator of the Year

Maya McClain  
Top Senior

Jade Mungal  
Top Senior Runner Up

**STAY IN TOUCH**  
Snapchat: thecharpost  
X: @thecharpost  
Facebook: The Charlotte Post  
Instagram: @thecharlottepost



#PaperThursday

INSIDE  
Sports 5A  
Life 1B  
A&E 5B  
Classified 4B

Digital edition:  
[www.thecharlottepostnewspaper.com](http://www.thecharlottepostnewspaper.com)  
To subscribe: (704) 376-0496 or online  
<http://tcppc.com/Subscribe>



# Once-promising Brooklyn Village pairing goes under

Continued from page 1A

empty Board of Education building in Second Ward. The building is still standing. Peebles responded the building couldn't be demolished because of asbestos on the site. County officials questioned why Peebles hasn't built anything despite new projects sprouting across the city – including near Brooklyn Village's barren lots.

Mecklenburg isn't the only North Carolina municipality to take Peebles to court. Durham broke off its relationship with Peebles last year when the city and developer couldn't agree to terms on a project downtown.

BK Partners' plan was the most ambitious – and lucrative – of three proposals when Mecklenburg commissioners approved the deal in 2016. Peebles' proposal called for 1,243 residential units, including 107 affordable housing apartments. Two hotels with 280 rooms combined would also be built along with 252,100 square feet in retail space and 680,700 square feet for offices. The developer proposed paying the county \$50 million for the site.

"I think one key to all of this ...is that Peebles is going to pay us over \$50 million and still provide everything we want," commissioner Bill James wrote in a 2016 email. "CitiSculpt (one of three competing bids) will only pay us \$18 to \$23 million and give us basically the exact same thing."

Peebles said at the time: "I think our team offers the broadest benefit to the county, the city and the community as a whole. Unlike our two competitors, we're not seeking any public subsidy or public funds. Both of them are looking for around \$20 million from the county."

Another pledge Peebles made was to in-

volve historically underutilized businesses in the project. His company met with small business owners at participation workshops early in the process and pledged 35% of construction contracts would go to minority, women and small businesses.

"One of our key objectives is to provide access to equal economic opportunities which will result in minorities and women of Charlotte not only witnessing economic expansion but be active participants," he said after earning the contract. "These opportunities will result in future major entrepreneurs who will surpass my success as an entrepreneur."

Conformity would start immediately, Peebles said 10 years ago. The first building's foundation has yet to be laid.

Brooklyn was a pillar of African American community for most of the 20th century. The United House of Prayer For All People – best known for massive parades led by founder Charles "Sweet Daddy" Grace – was based in Second Ward. The neighborhood was home to Second Ward High School, built in 1923 as Charlotte's first high school for Black Students, was located on Second Street at the site where Mecklenburg County Aquatic Center now sits.

When the federal government made billions of dollars available to eradicate substandard housing in the 1960s, the entire neighborhood was razed by 1969, scattering an estimated 10,000 residents. County leaders were keenly aware of the project's significance.

"It's important that we acknowledge the history of Second Ward and reflect it in building a vibrant community," Commissioner Trevor Fuller said in 2016. "We're excited about its potential and it's important that we get this right."

# Weigh in on data centers' impact on Charlotte at Aug. 20 forum

Continued from page 1A

that would drive up costs for consumers as well as potential for environmental disruption.

Another concern is location. In Charlotte, data centers tend to be built closer to lower-income communities of color where real estate tends to be less expensive.

"We are seeing concentration of these data centers in the crescent area, and where they are located (does) matter," Ajmera said. "We cannot repeat a pattern where communities with the least political power carry the greatest infrastructure burden and environmental burdens. I've been doing state of our environment town halls, for many, many years now since I've been on the council. This one is focused on data centers because of the growth of the industry because every neighborhood, regardless of where you live, you should have clean air, clean water, and a good quality of life."

"What we are trying to do is how do we create rules that protects our community, protects our residents, and protects the quality of life for our residents."

Data centers aren't new – they've been around since the dawn of the computer age in the 1940s – and nearly 100 are in operation in North Carolina. But the surge prompted in large part by AI-related industries has led to the planned construction of more than 20 new projects in the last year. Charlotte is taking a go-slower approach as public concerns over costs and resources resonate.

"If you look at where these facilities are located, residents have raised very valid concerns around water, around electricity, and ensuring that there is reliability – especially residents who live nearby – because these facilities, especially the hyperscale facilities can use as much power as thousands of homes, so that's where we have to protect our electric grid," Ajmera said. "We have to protect our natural resources like water. We are already in stage 2 when it comes to water restrictions, and I firmly believe growth should pay its own way, because many of these hyperscale facilities do get sales tax exemptions on the material that they buy to construct millions of square feet facilities."

# NC judicial sanction legislation rejected by gubernatorial veto

Continued from page 1A

is a power no other chief justice in the country has, Stein said.

"Just as the respective leadership in each legislative chamber does not have the power to suspend duly elected legislators, and just as the Governor does not have the power to suspend an elected member of the Council of State, the Chief Justice should not have the power to suspend a trial judge elected by the people," said Stein in a statement.

The governor said North Carolina's judges should be able to do their jobs without fear of reprisal from the chief justice.

"The small role the bill reserves for the Judicial Standards Commission is cold comfort, given that the Chief Justice and legislative leadership control nearly all of its appointments," said Stein.

Sen. Warren Daniel, R-Burke, said in late July that the bill was requested by the North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts and that there were in fact guidelines to provide due process for a suspended judge.

House Speaker Destin Hall said the bill was essential to give the chief justice power over trial court judges.

"NC has a serious issue with judges releasing VIOLENT FELONS," Hall, R-Caldwell, wrote in an Aug. 3 post on social media. "Actions have consequences, and we'll be holding these irresponsible judges accountable."

Senate Democrats argued that the bill would place undue pressure on independent judges to make decisions that they believe the Judicial Standards Commission and the state Supreme Court, both controlled by Republican majorities, would approve of.

Sen. Amy Galey, R-Alamance, said that fear was unfounded and no one was "going to do a witch hunt based on ideology." But Stein said in his statement Monday the Republican-controlled legislature has shown its partisan motives.

"For 13 years, the General Assembly has repeatedly played politics with the judiciary, including taking all four of the non-partisan State Bar's appointments to the Judicial Standards Commission for itself," Stein said. "It needs to stop politicizing our courts."

Recent changes by the General Assembly include an October 2023 provision tucked in the state budget to raise the mandatory retirement age for appellate judges to extend the tenure of Chief Justice Paul Newby.

In 2024, Senate Bill 382 became law over then-Gov. Cooper's veto. S382 required the Governor to fill Supreme Court and Court of Appeals vacancies from a list of three names supplied by the departing judge's party executive committee.

It abolished the North Carolina Courts Commission and gave the chief justice the power to designate the senior resident superior court judge in each district, replacing the seniority rule.

Republican lawmakers also used S382 to eliminate two elected superior court judgeships, including one held by the judge who had ruled against the legislature in a challenge to the voter ID constitutional amendment.

In Monday's statement, Stein said an independent judiciary is critical to protect the rule of law and the rights of all North Carolinians.

The governor is also vetoed House Bill 958, a sweeping election law bill that shortens early voting in primaries from 17 to 10 days and makes multiple changes to elections from registration to ballot-counting.

The earliest the legislature could consider an override of the governor's vetoes is Aug. 31, when they are set to reconvene in Raleigh, but House and Senate leaders have previously said they don't plan to take any more votes until after the November election.



CHARLOTTE AREA TRANSIT SYSTEM

A report by the Office of the State Auditor determined Charlotte Area Transit Authority is losing out on millions of dollars in passenger fares by not enforcing its policy.

# CATS fare-jumping costs millions in revenue

Continued from page 1A

OSA found gaps in how the transit authority enforces prohibition of excluded passengers. CATS, which has a list of such commuters as well as their photos that is accessible to police officers and vehicle operators, enforcement is inconsistent. Although the city and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police have a memorandum of understanding to staff the Metro Transit Unit, only two officers are assigned.

Transit security is handled by Professional Security Services, a private company with a three-year contract.

The transit authority reported improved safety on buses and trains over the first quarter of 2026, which included improved collaboration with CMPD and Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office. In June, city leaders contend the changes have resulted in safer transit assets, with a 69% reduction in crime on the Blue Line, 67% fewer bus operator and passenger assaults and no assaults against operators or passengers that required medical response.

According to the report, CATS confirmed the number of fare-jumping ci-

tations dropped because bus drivers were instructed not to enforce fares to avoid confrontation with passengers and light rail operators don't collect fares.

The report recommends "CATS should install gates or turnstiles to deter non-ticketed passengers, especially at light rail stations."

The state report is a follow-up on a preliminary report issued after the Aug. 2025 stabbing death of Iryna Zarutska on a light rail train. DeCarlos Brown Jr. was charged with murder but found incompetent to stand trial in June.

The report determined nearly \$2 million in unspent appropriations for transit safety equipment. Investigators found the city appropriated \$7.6 million for CATS safety and security projects through fiscal year 2029. CATS had a budget of \$2.2 million to spend in 2025 on safety and security equipment but spent only \$470,242.

OSA reported CATS officials told investigators the money went unspent due to multi-year project overlap, capitalization timing, non-capital items, and active but incomplete projects.

# Gov. Josh Stein vetoes expansive North Carolina elections overhaul

Continued from page 1A

to vote, and that's why I am vetoing this anti-voter law today."

In both chambers of the legislature, only Republicans voted to pass H958. Republicans hold a three-fifths supermajority in the Senate, allowing them to override a gubernatorial veto along party lines. But they don't have a supermajority in the House, so Stein's veto could withstand a legislative challenge unless Democrats or unaffiliated lawmakers vote with GOP lawmakers.

House Republicans plan to try to override the veto, according to Rep. Hugh Blackwell, R-Burke, chair of the House Election Law Committee.

"House Bill 958 continues practical election reforms so we all can have greater confidence that every lawful vote in North Carolina is counted fairly and accurately," Blackwell said in a statement. "Gov. Stein's veto of this legislation puts politics ahead of common sense and the peace of mind voters should have when they cast their ballots."

Republican legislative leaders have said they don't intend to take any further votes this year until after the November election.

Stein and other Democratic leaders accused GOP lawmakers of attempting to stay in power by rewriting election law, instead of appealing to voters by passing legislation to fund education or lower the cost of healthcare.

"The Republican General Assembly simply does not have confidence that it can win elections on their record. They are scared of you, and they are scared of your vote," Stein said. "It is wrong, and I am fed up."

"This bill passed along party lines because it only benefits one party," House Democratic Leader Robert Reives, D-Charlotte, said. "One party controls the rules

by which these elections are run, and now one party controls the state board of elections and its partisan operatives."

Senate Democratic Leader Sydney Batch, D-Wake, criticized members of the GOP for a 2024 measure that stripped power away from the governor under the guise of a Hurricane Helene relief bill.

The plan shifted control of the state's Board of Elections to the state auditor's office, held by a Republican. North Carolina is the only state in the country where the auditor wields this authority.

"This is a party scared of its own voters," Batch said. "Now Republicans face a choice: Side with the voters in North Carolina who have already asked for fair and free elections, or override the governor's veto in yet another disingenuous effort to maintain political power."

State Republicans have also gerrymandered legislative and congressional maps since 2011, ensuring their majorities.

A court ordered the drawing of a non-partisan congressional map for the 2022 elections, which resulted in both parties holding seven of North Carolina's 14 U.S. House seats. After Republicans won a majority on the state Supreme Court in 2022, they approved a new map, which included 10 Republican seats, three for Democrats, and one toss-up.

Following orders from President Donald Trump, Republicans in the General Assembly redrew the maps in 2025 yet again to make the lone toss-up seat, the 1st Congressional District, lean more heavily toward the GOP.



Reives



Batch

Connect with The Post on social media





Concerned Black American Citizens Inc. founder Dawn Paige, right, with Keisha Barnett and Felicia Mullen.

# Genealogy center helps Freedmen descendants

By Freda Freeman

THE TRIANGLE TRIBUNE

DURHAM - Genealogy has the power to heal and restore.

It's why the Center for Freedmen Heritage & Records is helping the descendants of American Freedmen, formerly enslaved people who gained their freedom, document their lineage.

The center was started by Concerned Black American Citizens Inc., a grassroots movement founded in 2019 to educate the public about the history and legacy of American Freedmen. The center, in the Hayti District, is open for scheduled genealogy workshops, but plans its official grand opening later this year.

"This work seeks to restore a critical infrastructure of family and community record keeping that was disrupted by slavery, displacement, segregation, and the dismantling of institutions that once helped Freedmen families establish legal identity, kinship ties and community continuity," CBAC founder Dawn Paige said.

Paige said the center will house the nation's first genealogy hub dedicated to tracing the lineage of Freedmen descendants. People can get help researching genealogical and historical databases and attend lineage workshops on recovering family records and financial literacy.

"The center bridges that gap by guiding descendants through the process of identifying ancestors, reconstructing family lineages, preserving family histories, and documenting an-

cestry. This work strengthens inter-generational connections, supports beneficiary identification and family asset preservation, and creates new pathways to economic opportunity," Paige said.

CBAC is undertaking a special project, Reclaiming Our Legacy, a five-year initiative to identify and document 500 Freedmen families. At the Center for Freedmen Heritage & Records, descendants will have access to the Freedmen's Bureau database which has indexed 2 million records of freed African Americans, and the findings of the national 10 Million Names project, which, to date, has identified 3.5 million emancipated Americans in its mission to reestablish Black families.

"We're using this physical location as a portal where we can connect individuals with all of these records that have now been digitized," Paige said. "The greatest need is not just preserving history; it is helping people use it. The records have been preserved, the names have been recovered, so now our work is to help descendants reclaim their families, their history and the opportunities that come with knowing who they are. Find your true self, be empowered by that, build on that; it's your story."

The center will have three genealogists. Michael Williams, a certified genealogist, Freedmen genealogy specialist and himself a descendant of Stagville, once one of the largest plantations in the state, will be the director.

# Book demand leaves NC libraries with long waitlists

By Kate Denning

CAROLINA PUBLIC PRESS

If you're someone who frequents a North Carolina public library — especially in an urban area like Raleigh or Charlotte — you might be all too familiar with searching the catalog for a buzzy book, only to find the waitlist is hundreds, if not thousands, of people long.

Local library employees say the entire country faces this issue, but North Carolina's booming population and the growing number of library patrons in the state make it especially challenging.

Even worse than the waitlist for physical copies is the one for e-book and audiobook versions. E-content has unique barriers, including costing libraries up to three times the price of a physical book, that make it difficult to keep up with the heightened demand.

Population, library and book usage trends

"Yesteryear," a 2026 novel by a debut author that examines "tradwife" influencer culture on social media, has been a viral sensation since its spring release. As of mid-August, all 232 of Wake County's physical copies are checked out, and more than 1,700 people are on the waitlist between standard and large print copies. At Charlotte Mecklenburg Libraries, 376 print copies are checked out and almost twice as many holds are in place.

If waitlists get so long that the ratio of holds to total copies exceeds a certain threshold, Selection Manager for Wake County Public Libraries Dan Brooks told Carolina Public Press, the libraries decide to purchase additional copies. For children's books, that's about one copy for every five holds, but the ratio is a bit higher for adult titles. Harold Escalante, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library's Assistant Director of Collections and Access, told CPP its ratio for print titles is four to one.

Celebrity book club picks like Jenna Bush Hager's "Read with Jenna" and Reese Witherspoon's "Reese's Book Club" consistently generate long waitlists, especially if they're thrillers, Brooks and Escalante said. Others can go viral any day and take library managers by surprise.

"Some titles, like 'The Correspondent' or 'Yesteryear,' which did end up being one of the book club picks, just sort of build more slowly over time, but then just keep building and building with higher momentum," Brooks said. "We just have to keep buying more copies until we get to that ratio."

WCPL patrons might be familiar with the branch's "Lucky Day Collection." Each

month WCPL chooses four to six books to buy an extra 75 to 125 copies of that aren't used to fill holds. Instead, they are distributed among the 23 locations to be put on the Lucky Day display, available for checkout then and there.

It's a way for readers to get their hands on the most sought after titles without having to wait for their turn on the hold list — and it helps shorten the waitlists, even if by a small margin.

But the e-content waitlists often go above and beyond. In the case of "Yesteryear," more than 5,000 patrons are wait-listed for a copy of one of the 452 e-books or audiobooks in Wake County. In Charlotte, for 585 e-book and audiobooks, there are over 4,500 holds.

With 66 people moving into Wake County per day, the libraries subsequently have new patrons coming in to register for a library card every single day, Brooks said. This heightened demand can be noticed most by the surge in e-content checkouts.

"We've definitely seen a huge increase in our digital e-book and downloadable audiobook usage," Brooks said.

"From 2019 to 2026, it's been a 200% increase. We circulated about 1.1 million in fiscal year 2019, and then over 3.5 million in fiscal year 2026. The whole issue with e-books and long waits and more demand than libraries can satisfy is not unique to Wake. It's a national phenomenon happening."

Through migration alone, 135 people move to the Charlotte region per day on average, with Mecklenburg County leading the pack. Charlotte currently ranks as the United States' 14th-largest city, and it could move up the list if growth trends continue.

Population growth can impact the resources libraries have available, however not every new resident will become a cardholder, Escalante wrote in an email. It's something Charlotte Mecklenburg considers, but it's not always a driving force for purchasing decisions.

While population growth is part of North Carolina's story, President and CEO of the Urban Libraries Council Brooks Rainwater told CPP there's generally been more usage of libraries since the pandemic, so they could still be seeing an increase in patrons even if their area isn't experiencing population changes.

Research the ULC released in 2024 found that while in-person visits were still lower than they were pre-pandemic, they were rising again quickly — responding libraries reported a 24% increase from 2022 to 2023.

# Build it. Fix it. Love it!

Your dream home doesn't have to stay a dream. Whether you're buying your first home, renovating a fixer-upper, or starting fresh with new construction, SouthState is here to help. Our Construction & Renovation Loans make it easier to turn "just a house" into your home.

- Finance new build or renovations
- Options for primary or secondary homes
- Flexible payment solutions while you build

*Ready to get started? Give us a call!*

## SouthState

**866.229.5628**  
**Mortgage@SouthStateBank.com**  
**SouthStateBank.com/CharlottePost**

All loans are subject to credit approval and program guidelines. SouthState Bank N.A. NMLS ID # 403455. Member FDIC. Equal Housing Lender.

The Charlotte Post

The Voice of the Black Community

Gerald O. Johnson | CEO/PUBLISHER

gerald.johnson@thecharlottepost.com

André P. Johnson | CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

andre.johnson@thecharlottepost.com

Herbert L. White | EDITOR IN CHIEF

herb.white@thecharlottepost.com

Published weekly by The Charlotte Post Publishing Company Inc., 5118 Princess Street, Charlotte, NC 28269 (USPS #965500). Subscription is \$65 per year. Periodicals postage paid at Charlotte, NC. Postmaster: Send address changes to The Charlotte Post, PO Box 30144, Charlotte, NC 28230

Has courage skipped this generation?

While searching for some memorabilia recently I stumbled across a large 15x22 inch envelope which was labeled “North Carolina Documents 1584-1868.”

It was so intriguing that I consumed most of an afternoon reading its contents.

Inside the package were 13 historical documents published in 1985 by the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources’ Division of Archives and History. The fascinating contents included both facsimiles of the original documents, as well as typewritten translations of the hard-to-real Olde English penmanship. The first was the 1584 charter given by Queen Elizabeth I to Walter Raleigh to explore our lands. Next was a 1660 deed from King Charles II to Nathaniel Batts for property along the Pasquotank River, given when the Lords Proprietors had title to the southeastern areas of North and South Carolina. The 1669 Fundamental (first) Constitution of the Carolinas spelled out the government guidelines from the Lords Proprietors.

Further documents included the minutes from the Tryon County (now Gaston) Committee of Safety in 1775, detailing colonists’ protestations over taxes and edicts from England, as well as a copy of the 1776 Halifax Resolves, in which North Carolina delegates to the Continental Congress were instructed to vote for independence from the “Mother Country.”

The packet continued with the 1776 Constitution, supposedly written by Englishman John Locke; the Secession Ordinance of 1861; the Constitutional Revision of 1835; and the revised Constitution of 1868, in the Reconstruction era following the Civil War.

As I read these 13 documents, I was constantly reminded how our North Carolina ancestors pursued freedom by risking their own fortunes and found myself constantly astounded by their incomparable courage in risking all to attain it.

My thoughts shifted to today and considered some of the things currently experienced. It prompted me to wonder why we don’t see similar levels of courage evidenced now. Let’s cite a few examples.

The White House Correspondents Association dinner is usually an event where the press corps and the president are jocular, poking fun at each other, but there was nothing playful at the recent event. The American President insulted and attacked the press, singling out individuals with demeaning name-calling. It was distasteful, mean-spirited and offensive. Where was the courage of those correspondents present?

Why did they just sit silently and take this churlish behavior? Why didn’t they arise en masse and walk out? That would have been the courageous thing to do. Yes, the President is due respect but there was nothing respectful in his behavior. It did not deserve homage, and a mass exodus would have emphatically told him so.

Turning to North Carolina, where is the courageous outrage over the wholesale disenfranchisement of voters wreaked by blatant gerrymandering and obvious disregard of the rights of voters we’ve seen in recent legislation? After fighting so long and hard to gain the right to vote what would our founders say about those obviously tampering with election laws? Why are so many silent?

What would these patriot founders, who back in 1789 recognized the value of education by founding The University of North Carolina, say about the deliberate and destructive dismantling of our state’s k-12 public education system? They would likely be outraged by such tepid response.

Further, our founders deliberately and with careful forethought constructed our system of government to include three separate branches. It is noted they wanted our legislature (Assembly) to have more powers than either the executive (Governor) or judicial branches, but they never envisioned the Assembly would attempt to take virtually absolute powers from the executive branch or ignore rulings of the courts.

We are witnessing a massive power grab by a small minority of our populous. Why aren’t patriotic North Carolinians revolting over these actions?

Many of those perpetrating these policies profess to being Christians. They want to publish the Ten Commandments in every schoolhouse. They want to tell women how to treat their own bodies, tell folks how to dress, how to refer to themselves and want to enforce their version of Christianity. But they seem to ignore the teachings of Jesus about feeding the poor, giving to those with less, tending the sick and loving our neighbors. And where are courageous souls when our legislature wants to cut taxes to the bone, ignoring infrastructure, healthcare and many other needs?

Tom Campbell is a Hall of Fame North Carolina broadcaster and columnist who has covered North Carolina public policy issues since 1965.

NC farmworkers deserve to be seen

The volleyball net was tied to two wooden posts with baling twine and the ball was half-flat — but none of that mattered to me.

For an hour, the crew of farmworkers I’d come to visit with Student Action with Farmworkers forgot about the heat and the 12-hour days topping tobacco plants ahead of them. One man played in work boots and a pair of shorts printed with the American flag. He spiked, he laughed, he argued a call at the line.

Together, we found joy, not hardship, in a place built to ensure no one ever sees either.

Most of us will never see one of North Carolina’s more than 1,000 farm-

worker camps, let alone meet the people who live in them. A study of labor camps in eastern North Carolina found that more than a third were hidden, deliberately set back from the road, tucked behind tree lines, or built where no paved road reaches them.

Health workers, legal aid attorneys, and outreach teams like the one I worked on as part of an internship this past summer, often search for camps the way you’d search for something someone doesn’t want found. For the men and women who live there, this means no visitors, no neighbors, no one who would notice if something went wrong.

These are workers who enter the United States legally to work on farms as part of the H-2A temporary agricultural worker program. Each year, thousands of H-2A workers travel to North Carolina to

harvest tobacco, sweet potatoes, cucumbers, and other crops. They are key to sustaining the state’s multibillion-dollar agriculture industry. They return for seasonal work year after year, leaving behind spouses, children, parents, and communities, living for months in isolated labor camps.

In 2024, José Arturo González Mendoza, 30, died in the heat at Barnes Farming in Nash County. While an autopsy later cast doubt on whether the heat was totally to blame for Mendoza’s death, it exposed the conditions the farmworkers endured, including not being given cups to easily drink water, according to the News & Observer.

As one worker said to me after our volleyball game, “Aunque estoy en el país más libre, no soy libre.” Even though I am in the freest country, I am not

free.

He said it quietly, as if he were stating a simple fact. I found his words difficult to reconcile. How can someone in the country, so often described as the land of the free, still feel that freedom remains out of reach?

Isolation is not the only difficulty these workers face. Wages that were already thin have gotten thinner: a recent federal wage rule cuts what NC farmworkers are guaranteed to earn, and workers feel it. “El sueño americano está muerto,” one man said to me. The American Dream is dead.

Another put it this way: “Uno no gana aquí, ni en México.” You don’t win here, nor in Mexico.

Yet they continue to come.

Joaquin Villagran-Hernandez is a first-generation Mexican American raised in Greene County, N.C.

FOODLION

Clip coupons  
picked just for you

BackCouponsFilter

Search Coupons

217 Coupons



SAVE \$1.25

Off Your Purchase

Off TWO (2) Bulk Asparagus (16 oz)

Clip



SAVE 80¢

Taste of Inspirations

Off ONE (1) Taste of Inspirations Deli Sliced Cheese (8 oz)

Clip

SAVE 40¢



CAROLINA PANTHERS

Carolina Panthers running back Miles Davis is looking for a roster spot among a corps that includes Chuba Hubbard, Jonathon Brooks, A.J. Dillon and Trevor Etienne.

# Miles Davis auditions for NFL gig

Panthers rookie running back faces long odds to make the roster, but he’s making an impression

By Jeff Hawkins  
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

Carolina Panthers offensive coordinator Brad Idzik called for a Miles Davis encore.

Moments after darting downfield for a 26-yard gain to fuel the Panthers’ 33-30 walk-off win against Arizona at the Pro Football Hall of Fame Game, Idzik, who has assumed play-calling responsibilities, recalled hearing an instant debate over his headset.

Did Davis deserve a set break? Idzik decided to keep him on stage. “No, no, let’s get him another touch,” Idzik said.

As Haynes King orchestrated the 13-play, game-winning drive, Davis didn’t get another chance to solo, but the undrafted running back supported the offense’s rhythm capped by King’s 5-yard run as time expired.

“It was cool,” Davis said after Sunday’s practice. “I feel like it was a great scene. It helped us (backups) build confidence.”

**Making an impression**  
Signed by Carolina on May 18, Davis started low on the depth chart, evidenced by his fourth-quarter presence during the preseason opener. Davis made the most of the gig.

With the Panthers protecting a 24-23 lead with 10:13 in the fourth quarter, Idzik made Davis a headliner. On the series’ first play, he gained 5 yards. On the second snap, he earned four more.

On third-and-one, Davis went 36 yards, putting the Panthers in field goal range. Idzik kept Davis in and the former college wide receiver displayed his hands, hauling in a 5-yard pass.

Three plays later, Ryan Fitzgerald’s field goal extended the Panthers’ lead to four with 6:53 to go.

Davis was just warming up. After the Cardinals scored to go up 30-27, Davis sparked the Panthers’ final

drive by hauling in an 8-yard pass and, on the next play, running up the middle for 8 yards, pushing the Panthers past midfield with 57 seconds remaining.

Davis did miss his final note, however. On the next snap, his catch netted a 4-yard loss.

King took over, improvising a 26-yard run on third-and-14 as well as the game-winning score. Davis was open in the flat.

“He got it done,” Davis said of King. “Big Haynes. He got it done. That’s all that matters, man.”

Please see **MILES** | 6A

# Legette banishing ‘ghosts’ to resuscitate contributor role

By Jeff Hawkins  
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

Carolina Panthers WR Xavier Legette banishing ‘ghosts’

Xavier Legette bumped past cornerback Corey Thornton at the line of scrimmage and broke toward the sideline for an athletic reception as Thornton tumbled to the ground.

Later in the practice, Legette worked

his way between rookie cornerback Will Lee III and safety Lathan Ransom to grab a pass, remaining alert to get both feet in bounds.

A year ago, he might have failed to run the route at the correct depth.

Or landed out of bounds. Or dropped the pass.

Questions about Legette’s future with the Carolina Panthers dogged the 2024



Legette

first-round draft pick throughout the winter.

Since the start of the offseason training activities and the first weeks of camp, Legette, who often works out three to four times daily, displayed a sense of professional maturity and better on-field

awareness.

Legette admitted to being haunted by what he described as previously playing “too loose.”

**Making most of chance**  
A staunch supporter despite a string of mental lapses last season, Panthers coach Dave Canales noticed a difference.

Please see **XAVIER** | 6A

# 49ers’ Reed on health scare: ‘Don’t let me die’



CHARLOTTE ATHLETICS

Charlotte women’s basketball coach spent nearly two months in intensive care and three months on medical leave after a digestive issue led to complications that included kidney failure and collapsed lungs.

By Cameron Williams  
cameron.williams@thecharlottepost.com

Tomekia Reed is a walking miracle.

In April, Charlotte athletics announced Reed — the 49ers women’s basketball coach — was going on an undisclosed medical leave of absence. There was no timetable given for her return.

Reed returned to work on July 14 and posted a video in early August describing a part of her health journey on her social media.

“It all just came out of nowhere,” Reed said. “I had been having stomach issues since 2016. When I got to Charlotte it became a lot worse, but I just thought it was stress. I thought it was due to me just wanting to be so successful here at a new level. I thought, ‘Oh it will go away.’ I just kept saying that. Then one night not too long after the first round of the conference tournament, I ate a piece of brisket, and it wouldn’t move. It just got stuck.”

The meal was at 11:30 p.m. but Reed felt she needed to go to the hospital.

“I told my son and we rushed to the emergency room,” she said. “When we got there, my stomach just started swelling

Please see **CHARLOTTE** | 6A

# CIAA and Baltimore happily married

The CIAA basketball tournament is probably never leaving Baltimore. Or returning to the South.

Just as well. Why give your hard-earned money to folks trying to take away all your civil rights?

The conference office and Visit Baltimore announced late last week that February’s week-long basketball tournament generated \$33.6 million, a record in the event’s five-year run so far. Over 33,000 fans attended CFG Bank Arena from Feb. 24 to March 1, and 8,200 attended Championship Saturday, a 36% increase from 2025.

I can’t confirm but if I were a betting woman, I’d say Winston-Salem State women’s historic season had something to do with it.

“The city is an active partner in the success of this tournament, success that exposes more people to our outstanding institutions and more visitors to this great city. We are grateful for the growth we’ve accomplished and can’t wait to return next year and for many years to come,” Commissioner Jacqie McWilliams Parker said.

What began as a pandemic-induced online event in 2021, in a city that really had no clue

Please see **CONFERENCE** | 6A



BONITTA  
BEST

# Parker McQuarrie named Golden Bulls’ season-opening QB

By Herbert L. White  
herb.l.white@thecharlottepost.com

Parker McQuarrie is Johnson C. Smith’s opening day quarterback.

McQuarrie, a junior transfer from New Haven beat out a pair of transfers in Damien Mazil (Wagner) and Josh Jackson (Central Connecticut State), a decision Golden Bulls coach Maurice Flowers made ahead of his self-imposed Aug. 18 deadline. McQuarrie’s grasp of the offense and execution during preseason camp stood out in a crowded group of contenders.

“[It’s] his consistency with

everything,” Flowers said. “It’s not that Damien wasn’t consistent, but with Parker, some of the things that he was doing, he was taking things immediately from the meeting room to the field and making checks and things like that. We just felt it was better to do it right now, rather than to wait. Now we can start just gaining some continuity with the first team, knowing who’s going with them all the time.”



McQuarrie

The Golden Bulls, ranked No. 8 in the preseason boxtorow.com preseason Black college poll, open August. 29 at Benedict.

McQuarrie, a four-star recruit at St. Paul’s High in Weare, New Hampshire in 2020, spent two years at UCLA without playing. The 6-7, 235-pounder completed 19-of-47 passes (40.4%) at Independence (Kansas) Community College in 2022 before a couple of seasons as a backup at New Haven, a Di-



Flowers

vision I FCS program. Although McQuarrie’s playing time is limited, Flowers believes he can succeed at Division II Smith, which won the CIAA title and earned a berth in the national playoffs with a school-record 10-2 campaign.

“What we say is if you’ve got a quarterback, you’ve got a shot,” Flowers said. “The last two years we’ve had an All-CIAA quarterback in ’24, All-CIAA quarterback in ’25. Even with the strength we have in the offensive line and the running back position, we have a really good corps of receivers

Please see **MCQUARRIE** | 6A

# Miles Davis auditions for a spot on the roster

Continued from page 5A

**Show on the road**  
During his professional debut, Davis finished with a team-high 53 yards rushing on four carries and caught all three targets for 9 yards.  
Davis' preseason tour continues at Jacksonville. As a backup, he will need to earn more snaps to impress coaches.  
"Miles has done a great job," Idzik said. "He picked up [offensive schemes] really fast. He does a really good job of catching the ball out of the backfield and (has an) understanding of what we're coaching."  
"He's one of those bright-eyed guys." Idzik quickly noticed Davis' persona. The top four running backs appear set with Chuba Hubbard, Jonathon Brooks, Trevor Etienne and A.J. Dillon. Davis isn't distracted from his goal.  
"He comes in the room and he's always smiling, happy to be here," Idzik said. "But you can also coach him hard. And he puts in the work to make sure

he's making the corrections he needs to make. That came to life in the game. He had an explosive run and you challenge him to stay on the ball."  
After transferring to Utah State for his final season following four at Brigham Young, Davis gained 1,000 all-purpose yards, earning 2025 second-team All-Mountain West and Academic All-Mountain West honors. He rushed for 731 yards on 131 carries and eight touchdowns along with 201 yards on 28 receptions and three TDs. He also compiled 68 kickoff yards.  
A 2019 three-star receiver recruit from Las Vegas, Davis also lettered in basketball and track and field, earning a share of a 4x200 relay state title.  
By switching to running back at BYU, Davis discovered his niche.  
"My NFL experience has been pretty good, learning from the vets," he said. "I love it. These guys took a chance on me."

# Xavier Legette renews focus

Continued from page 5A

"He's really attacked that part of his game and that's something that I've seen him really improve on Canales said. "What I've seen him do is just make great plays on the boundary ... just some of those spatial plays where he can go attack the ball, find a way to get his feet down."  
"He looks explosive."  
The Panthers, who are out to repeat as NFC South champ, need Legette's big-play potential. Demoted from WR2 in favor of Jalen Coker last fall, Legette entered the offseason as the third option, but after the addition of rookie Chris Brazzell II, most league insiders slotted Legette behind the third-round pick.  
Some listed Legette as a trade candidate. Others reported Dan Morgan would (should?) cut his first draft pick as a general manager.  
Among his most egregious mental errors last season was one that developed in a loss at Arizona when he walked back to the line of scrimmage, costing the Panthers a key possession.  
"I just can't do stuff like that," Legette said. "I've got ghosts."  
During that Week 2 outing, Legette experienced one of the worst receiving efforts in NFL history. Ending with minus-2 receiving yards on eight targets, he became the second player in NFL history to have negative yardage on at least eight targets. Kansas City Chiefs running back Jamaal Charles collected minus-6 yards on eight targets in 2013.  
As the Panthers mounted a second-half push for the division crown, Legette's role decreased. During the Week 18 loss to the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, he garnered a 31.4% snap share, a career low. For the season, his production dipped to 35 catches for 363 yards and three touchdowns.  
"I had a couple mishaps where I

would step on the line and I was out of bounds last year," he said.  
**Back with new focus**  
Following the NFC Wild Card loss to the Los Angeles Rams at Bank of America Stadium, in which Legette recorded one catch for 8 yards on four targets, he retreated home to Mullins, S.C., for rest and mental rehabilitation.  
"I learned a lot," Legette said. "Stuff like [the effort against Arizona] can get you benched and sidelined and stuff like that, so I just can't do stuff like that."  
As part of his new post-practice routine, Legette often works with a JUGS machine on sideline catches.  
Legette didn't enjoy many opportunities to display his improved focus in Saturday's preseason game at Buffalo.  
After Dave Canales said Legette likely would not dress, Legette ended up competing with the first unit for the first three series. He was not targeted.  
On the third series, Legette stepped up to execute an open-field block on a screen pass to Coker that would have picked up a first down if not for a penalty that wiped out the play.  
The Panthers play at the Jacksonville Jaguars (1-0) Friday. The teams are scheduled for a joint practice Wednesday. Both represent opportunities for Legette to continue growing into his role.

In the offseason, Legette benefited from a series of throwing sessions with quarterback Bryce Young and several teammates, in Arizona and California.  
"We just spent that time together and I'm talking to (Young) a little more," Legette said. "I'm just honed into the details. Everything that I was dealing with last year that I put on tape that was bad. I had never done any of that."  
Despite last season's struggles, Legette insisted: "I ain't never lost my confidence in any way."

# McQuarrie earns QB1

Continued from page 5A

also, and we've got to get them to play good football to keep teams from stacking the box and things like that. Just keeping us able to play balanced football, we need a quarterback that could make sure that we do that."  
As part of his research on McQuarrie, Flowers reached out to Pep Hamilton, a West Charlotte High graduate and former Michigan associate head coach and passing game coordinator who recruited McQuarrie. Although Michigan lost out to UCLA, Hamilton, who has been an offensive coordinator at FBS programs as well as NFL teams, praised McQuarry's physical attributes and footwork.  
"He's definitely not going

to be called a dual threat quarterback, but he has really good athleticism," Flowers said. "When we were with Parker and started communicating, the first thing I did, we talked to Pep, and Pep said the thing he found with Parker when they were recruiting was he was a much better athlete than they thought. Yes, he is a pocket passer. He's 6-7, 235 pounds, but he does move well."  
"Our plan is not to use him as a runner very much."  
Or an every-down passer. With four offensive line starters returning - including three preseason All-CIAA picks - along with 2025 all-conference receiver Brian Lane and 1,000-yard tailback Bobby Smith,

Flowers expects to dictate tempo with a balanced attack that racked up a school record 33.5 points per game in 2025. When the situation calls, McQuarrie has the arm strength to stretch defenses vertically or squeeze passes into tight windows.  
"As I as I look at it, we're not looking for a quarterback to come in and [throw] the ball 40 to 50 times," Flowers said. "The biggest thing is the quarterbacks that came in, Parker and Damian, and [third stringer] Josh Jackson, they were introduced to their new best friends - that's a good defense and a good running game - so when you have those things, you don't have to have a lot of pressure on you."

# Conference initiatives unveiled

Continued from page 5A

what it was doing, the tourney has come a long way. Still, not everything is a bed of roses.  
If you missed HBCU Gameday's series on the conference as a whole, you'll want to find its archives. Great investigative reporting. I'm surprised creator Steven Gaither is still allowed in the building. You know how Black folks hate for other Black folks to air their laundry, even if it is dirty.  
**HBC4Us commitment**  
The four commissioners representing the four NCAA HBCU conferences - CIAA, SIAC, MEAC and SWAC - reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening HBCU athletics at their summer meeting in Washington, D.C.  
It's been a year since they collaborated to create the "HBC4Us" brand after the 2024 presidential election. Now, it's time to get to work.  
The four outlined several key initiatives for the new academic year.  
· Celebrate student athlete excellence.  
One thing that came out of last year's collaboration was the introduction of the Black College Football Poll. The preseason FCS and Division II polls were released in early July, while the FCS and Division II preseason all-conference teams are on the way. (Disclosure: I am a pollster). Plans in-

clude an annual HBCU Athlete of the Year Award for women and men.  
· Expand professional and educational opportunities. The commissioners stated they plan to build meaningful career opportunities for student-athletes through partnerships with the HBCU NBA All Star Experience, Legacy Bowl and Black College Football Hall of Fame Game.  
· Advance women's flag football. Is there any sport hotter than women's flag, whether on the high school, college or professional level? The four want to showcase the sport while creating competitive opportunities for female student-athletes, including an HBC4Us flag football event. On Thursday, the MEAC announced that Mississippi Valley State and Gardner-Webb were joining the conference as associate members in women's flag.  
· Highlight HBCU football. The season opens with the MEAC/SWAC Challenge on Aug. 29, followed by the CIAA/SIAC Black College Football Hall of Fame Classic on Sept. 6.  
The four said they wanted to emphasize the "importance of beginning the football season by celebrating two of college football's premiere HBCU events."  
And a little rivalry to go along with it.  
*Bonitta Best is sports editor at The Triangle Tribune in Durham.*

# Charlotte 49ers coach Tomekia Reed glad to be back on the job

Continued from page 5A

and swelling. I remember in the emergency room, I was on the floor in the fetal position and telling and screaming at the nurses just, 'Please don't let me die, don't let me die.' I never knew how afraid I was of dying 'til I was in that moment. It just escalated so fast."  
Reed's digestive system shut down, which led to further complications including kidney failure and both lungs collapsing.  
"I called my coaches because I don't have family here in Charlotte," she said. "Just my cousin who lives with me. She was asleep at the time. I called all my coaches on my staff and they were asleep. They were away because it was after the tournament. So, for almost a day nobody knew where I was. I was already medically induced in a coma."  
When Reed's cousin awoke, she checked on her whereabouts and started calling around to several hospitals until locating her.  
"They told her, 'You need to get up here now,'" Reed said. "Our doctors here at Charlotte helped Reagan [Hill] and my cousin figure out where I was. That was the only information they were able to share, like this is the hospital she is in, and this is the room number. Then after that information was out Chancellor [Sharon] Gaber made a call to the highest administration at the hospital just to make sure things remained private and that I was taken good care of and to make sure the family was comfortable."  
Reed went through four surgeries and for a time her condition was unstable.  
"On my third surgery my heart was all out of whack, and they thought they were going to lose me," she said. "Then I had my fourth surgery on the fifth day I was

there and they cut me wide open from the middle of my body and just watched my organs just to see how things would turn."  
Reed said she is thankful for the team of nurses and doctors who saved her life.  
"When I was admitted into the hospital, I had a nurse named Tim - he was my ICU nurse. I was told that Tim had so much attention to the small details. He was just so locked in because there was a lot that needed to be done with very quick decisions. I met the doctor who did my incision. I met the doctor who did the first surgery. She actually did another procedure for me after I got out of the hospital."  
"She leaned over my shoulder and said, 'Tomekia, I don't mean to sound rude or disrespectful, but we did not think you were going to make it. She wasn't the only doctor who had told me that. ... But I just really thought that I was in really good hands because as soon as I got to that hospital they went straight to work and didn't let a second go by."  
Reed spent nearly two months in intensive care, including times where she was intubated and placed on a ventilator. In her lowest moments she leaned on her faith.  
"There was a moment where I was ready to give up," Reed recalled. "It had gotten so rough where I can remember saying, 'Lord, if you're ready, I am ready.' I really just couldn't focus on anything but me at the time."  
"They had me on medication, but they would bring me off of it sometimes to see how my body was responding. When they would do that, when I would close my eyes, I would see a white light over to the left. I was thinking, 'OK, am I going this way?' I would see black figures walk past me and look down at me. I would

open my eyes to see if there was a light over there and there was nothing there. That is where my faith kicked in."  
Reed recalled praying that she wasn't ready yet and God revealing to her these figures were watching over and protecting her.  
While Reed was on leave, associate head coach LaShonda Cousin was named interim head coach to recruit and lead summer workouts.  
"Coach Cousin did a great job," Reed said. "She has been with me now for nine years. It feels good as a coach to see what she is picking up and what she is able to do. She ran this program; she delegated to the coaches. They all ran this program at a very elite pace. ... They did a good job in recruiting by selling me as a head coach even when I wasn't there. They sold the vision of the program. Coach Cousin is also the recruiting coordinator, so she was putting together recruiting plans. It was just nonstop, so I am extremely proud of her because she didn't seem fearful or afraid. She just jumped right in and got it done."  
When Reed got to a point where she was ready to re-join the team, she called every player after and announced the season's slogan: "It's personal."  
"[They] were so excited," she said. "All they could talk about was the coaches, what they have done and what they sold. All of the new players talked about how they were ready to come in and contribute to this program and how they could contribute to us being successful."  
"They understand the battle that I went through and I don't necessarily lead with that, but sometimes during the summer I would talk about it, and the players were very receptive. ... There was just a lot of joy."

# A&T hires Louis-Verrett as director

By Herbert L. White  
herb.l.white@thecharlottepost.com  
North Carolina A&T is turning to a familiar face as athletics director.

Katreshia Louis-Verrett, Alabama-Birmingham's deputy athletics director, is returning to Greensboro as the Aggies' top athletics administrator. She starts on Sept. 1.  
Louis-Verrett, who succeeds Earl Hilton, was

A&T's associate athletics director from 2011-17, where she was responsible for compliance and human resources.  
"I am humbled, honored and excited to serve North Carolina A&T State during this transformative period for college athletics," Louis-Verrett said in a statement. "I look forward to supporting and expanding the

reach of this university's historic mission of academic excellence and supporting the performance of our student-athletes, coaches and staff, as well as taking advantage of new opportunities for growth and success."  
Over 20 years as an administrator, Louis-Verrett worked five years as assistant athletics director at Georgia Tech as well as NCAA committees that helped shape oversight of collegiate athletics nationally.  
"At North Carolina A&T, our commitment to student success is our No. 1 priority, and that certainly includes the success of our student athletes," Chancellor James R. Martin II said. "Katreshia is equally passionate about that commitment, as well as ensuring that our athletics teams and student athletes have the resources, guidance and support to succeed in com-

petition.  
"She is fiercely competitive herself and will expect excellence from our coaches, staff and student athletes."  
Louis-Verrett takes over an Aggies program in transition. Football and men's basketball are struggling to make an impact after three years in the Coastal Athletic Conference. The track and field programs are coming off a strong season in which the men had the best finish ever for a Division I historically Black college at the NCAA championships.  
The college sports landscape is also shifting with Division I schools now sharing athletics-generated revenue directly with student athletes, and the cap per school is rising to \$21.3 million. Louis-Verrett's experience in Title IX and name, image and likeness regulation will also be used at A&T.

## Follow us on social media



@thecharpost



The Charlotte Post



@thecharlottepost