

NC health officials back mental health first aid training at college campuses

By Skye Crawford
NC HEALTH NEWS

When she was growing up in rural southeastern North Carolina, Alicia Freeman saw people whose mental health and substance use concerns went untreated because her area had very few resources to help them.

Freeman, who’s been at UNC Chapel Hill since 2019, said watching her community members struggle is part of why she now works to help people cope with mental illness.

She’s part of the UNC School of Social Work’s Mental Health First Aid Program, which started in 2015 as a pilot, organizes and leads training sessions that teach participants how to recognize and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges.

At the time, state officials were promoting the methodology as a cost-effective way to reach young people with mental health help.

This year, UNC’s mental health first aid program will get funding from the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services; the money will allow it to expand to more college and university campuses.

In a Sept. 9 news release, the department said the North Carolina chapter of the National Alliance of Mental Illness would also be partnering with them to “market and promote the training opportunities on UNC system schools and state community college campuses.”

Educators, clinicians and state officials have overwhelmingly supported the expansion of the program, saying that mental health among college students and young adults has become an increasing concern in recent years.

Jennifer Rothman, director of youth and young adult initiatives at NAMI, said that 75 percent of all lifetime mental illness begins by age 24. Additionally, she said, 68 percent of students say mental health issues hurt their academic performance.

“Our rates of suicide for some populations in North Carolina continue to climb, and that’s a real

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Spot warning signs of gum disease

SPECIAL TO THE POST

Just as a home relies on a strong foundation, teeth depend on healthy gums for support and stability.

While many people prioritize routine visits to the orthodontist, gum health is equally important, making a visit to a periodontist a valuable step in maintaining overall oral health.

Mia L. Geisinger, DDS, professor in the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Dentistry, says periodontal disease, commonly referred to as “gum disease,” is one of the most overlooked preventable diseases that can occur.

“Individuals often overlook signs of the earliest form of periodontal disease — gingivitis,” Geisinger said. “Left untreated, gingivitis can often progress to periodontitis, a disease impacting the supporting structures of the teeth that ultimately can lead to tooth loss.”

Geisinger recommends paying attention to several indicators of gum health to help prevent oral health problems.

My gums are irritated and inflamed. Why?

Gum irritation can come from a variety of factors. Gingival tissue can be scratched or irritated by food, incorrect brushing or flossing technique, acid exposure, or burns.

“Most superficial injuries will heal within a few days to two weeks,” Geisinger said. “If discomfort, redness or bleeding persist for longer than that, seeking care with a dental healthcare professional is critical to determine the underlying cause.”

Swelling, sensitivity, and changes in shape or texture can all point to underlying conditions when these factors appear for an extended period.

“Gingival swelling often results in rounded gingival margins and a more edematous, or squishy, texture to the gum tissues, as these can all be signs of

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« RIDES »

Ford Expedition Tremor edition is built for outdoor attitude and interior comforts

By Winfred Cross
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

Ford redesigned the Expedition in 2025 and gave it a well needed makeover, fixing almost every complaint customers lodged.

There wasn’t a need to change much for 2026 but there are a few trim lines to explore. The Tremor version is certainly worth taking a look.

The Tremor version is much more expensive but for various reasons. Any Expedition with four-wheel drive is capable of doing some off-road work, but the Tremor is actually equipped to do a lot in the woods. It has a total of 440 horsepower and 510 pounds-feet of torque. 4WD is standard as are the

massive 33-inch all-terrain tires. The suspension is raised and more suited to the outdoors. An electronic locking rear differential adds to the vehicle’s out-back worthiness as well as driving modes that include a rock crawl setting.

The Tremor also has distinct badging and some orange-bronze interior and exterior accents. The grille is blacked out with a touch of bronze accents.

If you think the Tremor interior has been stripped of comfort to match its outdoors attitude, you would be wrong. Last year’s redesign with luxury touches is present. My test vehicle’s interior felt more plush than spartan. There was plenty of leather and sur-

faces which had vinyl for more durability felt like leather.

The gauge cluster is part of a 24-inch curved screen that’s on top of the dashboard, A 13.2-inch touch screen sits lower and allows you to change widgets on the larger screen. This smaller screen also houses controls for Apple CarPlay, Android Audio and Ford’s infotainment system. Both screens are bright and have crisp graphics.

Like the Expedition I drove earlier this year, the interior is a breath of fresh air. It’s modern and easily accessible. The interior is one of the most comfortable places I’ve been in a long time. All the seats are



FORD MOTOR COMPANY

The 2026 Ford Expedition Tremor edition.

great – even the third row. Everyone will have copious room no matter their size. The third row is easy to get in and out of and there is a good bit of room behind

that seat. The second-row big cupholders, air vents, USB ports and dual arm rests.

Getting into truck-based SUVs can be a problem be-

cause of the ride height. My Tremor had side steps for easy entry. My vehicle measured 209.9 inches long, 94.6 inches wide (in-

Please see **FORD** | 3B



UNC MEDIA HUB

Churches in North Carolina’s rural communities struggle to attract and retain preachers, who are more likely to seek better-paying work and larger congregations in cities.

North Carolina has a rural pastor shortage

Away from urban centers, churches struggle to lure preachers

By Abby Miss
UNC MEDIA HUB

When Pastor Jay Meadows first arrived at Duke Memorial Baptist Church in the unincorporated community of Justice, North Carolina, members of his new congregation greeted him with a sign on the parsonage door.

“Welcome to God’s Country,” the sign read.

Two decades later, Meadows has a little experience knowing what God’s Country can look like. After leading rural congregations in Justice, Baxley, Ga. and Canton, N.C., he now serves as the senior pastor at First Baptist Church in Mount Airy.

With a population of approximately 10,000, Mount Airy is the largest town he has ever served. But Meadows didn’t set out to dedicate his life to rural ministry, at least not initially.

Though he grew up in a fairly large town in Georgia, attended Mercer University and Duke Divinity School, and worked as a youth pastor in Durham, he has always felt called to places with a slower pace, where he could connect with his community, raise a family and still make time for himself in the outdoors.

When given the opportunity to lead a large congregation outside of Atlanta, Meadows turned it down. Just two years after being called to Baxley, he wasn’t willing to pack up and move on.

He always told people he wanted to live somewhere that reminded him of the “Andy Griffith Show,” where you could walk down the street and know the names of neighbors passing by. He wasn’t aware that Mount Airy was the setting of the popular show before he first visited but instantly felt at

home among the town’s Mayberry charm.

Mount Airy is located in Surry County, in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. As of July 2025, the county’s population was estimated to be approximately 72,000, per the United States Census Bureau.

Surry is one of the 78 rural counties as classified by the NC Rural Center. The center categorizes a county as rural if its population density is fewer than 250 people per square mile.

In these rural counties, churches are often bastions of the community, connecting its citizens and providing important social functions. However, they also face aging membership and transportation barriers, among other constraints.

Critically, these churches often

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Rural county residents fight gas pipeline

By Fred Clasen-Kelly
KFF HEALTH NEWS

Despite being in one of the nation’s fastest-growing states, rural Chatham County, population of roughly 85,000 people, is still brimming with red foxes, coyotes, white-tailed deer, and wild turkeys.

But in recent months, Enbridge Gas North Carolina’s proposed plans for a natural gas pipeline have exposed how population growth, here and across the nation, is driving a divide between wealthy newcomers and longtime residents.

Chatham has grown into one of North Carolina’s most affluent counties, fueled by an influx of new residents in its northeastern corner. Yet the pipeline would run from Moncure to Siler City, two communities where the per capita income is roughly \$25,000 a year, or about half the income typical for the region.

And it’s raising familiar concerns. A 2020 report from the Chatham County Public Health Department stated that “unjust, unfair, and uneven distribution of social and economic resources” in the county, including exposure to environmental hazards, limited people’s “ability to achieve optimal health.”

In September, the Chatham County Board of Commissioners unanimously voted to oppose the project, saying that “protecting public health, safety, environmental resources, and private property rights remains a priority.” The resolution states that the proposed pipeline could affect areas occupied by vulnerable, low-income residents. Under state law, Enbridge could still attempt to take land through eminent domain, and low-income communities affected would have fewer resources available to fight



FRED CLASEN-KELLY | KFF HEALTH NEWS

Enbridge Gas has promised to prioritize safety during the construction and operation of a proposed natural gas pipeline in Chatham County, North Carolina. But residents point to other communities in which Enbridge has operated – in Michigan, Illinois, and Kentucky – where government reports say oil spills and a natural gas pipeline rupture led to evacuations, injuries, and at least one death.

back.

The state Department of Environmental Quality typically would review applications for permits to build a natural gas pipeline. That department has not yet received a permit

application for the pipeline, said Onotse Omoyeni, senior press secretary for the office of Gov. Josh Stein. The North Carolina Utilities Commission declined to comment.

Please see **CHATHAM** | 2B

North Carolina has a rural pastor shortage

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struggle to recruit and retain ministers, leading to a “drought” among rural pastors. In many of these communities, there’s a persistent disconnect between the number of available ministers and the number of open ministry positions.

Sponsored by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, the NC Baptist Job Board publicly lists three current ministerial openings in Mount Airy and the surrounding area. Haymore Memorial Baptist Church in Mount Airy, Fairview Baptist Church in Dobson and Jessup Grove Baptist Church in Pilot Mountain all have confirmed vacancies for senior or lead pastors.

All three churches are located within 14 miles of Mount Airy’s town center. This cluster of confirmed vacancies only considers Baptist churches across the state and doesn’t indicate that all rural churches are experiencing vacancies, or that no pastors are interested in pursuing careers in rural ministry. Rather, the shortage of rural pastors speaks to larger issues within the church, Meadows said.

“I think people don’t know what to do with the church, or they don’t want the church to be part of their lives,” he said. “So, people are not being called out from the church to serve the church.”

Meadows indicated that, at First Baptist, hiring support staff has been especially difficult. Though the church has historically employed three ordained ministers, bringing a “professional” to a rural congregation has become nearly impossible.

Most of the candidates they’ve interviewed, Meadows said, have taken positions in bigger cities, such as Washington D.C, Atlanta, Charlotte or Raleigh.

Alex Martin, the senior pastor at Calvary Baptist Church in Mount Airy, suggested that ordained ministers who attended urban, progressive seminaries might not be interested in pursuing ministry in more conservative, rural communities. He noted that change comes slowly, if at all, in these churches, and that they often lack the “broader cultural opportunities” that can be found in an urban environment.

“I think in a way, that maybe some of the issues are deeper than that,” Martin said. “They’re kind of about cultural divides that just happen to

split out that way in terms of the way a lot of communities are structured.”

In the absence of ordained ministers, the church is often staffed by local people. First Baptist’s minister of music, Cheryl Hicks, worked as a band director and school administrator for 25 years before serving the church in her retirement.

Pastors who are retired, semi-retired, or approaching retirement are also working in these rural communities, largely because they can afford to. These pastors often make concessions to support smaller churches that might not be able to maintain a full-time professional minister.

“I think the smaller churches that are just holding on by their fingernails are finding that a retired or semi-retired pastor is the way to go,” Beth Brittain, the associate pastor at First Baptist, said.

Meadows said that most rural churches, which lack the budget to pay their staff comfortable salaries, are often apologetic about what they can offer candidates. He predicts it will only get worse due to rural health-care disparities and the rising cost of health insurance.

But money is tight across the board. Churches with aging congregations depend on older people to support the church financially, but an increasing number of these members are relying on social security to make ends meet. Younger families, if they’re coming into the church at all, often can’t contribute as much financially, Meadows said.

Despite these challenges, the goals of ministry for these pastors remain the same. In these tight-knit parishes, service to the community, no matter how small, is a top priority.

“For what it’s worth, in my opinion, we’ve got to get out of the walls of the church and out there,” Brittain said. “Not necessarily preaching with our words, but with our actions. We need to be helping people with what their needs are.”

With this philosophy in mind, every Thursday, First Baptist serves between 350 and 400 meals to community members in need. Brittain says these evenings are where she often sees ministry take shape.

“Is it going to bring money and members of the church? Probably not, she said. “But last time I read (the Bible), Jesus worked in small groups.”



STOCK PHOTO

Teeth depend on healthy gums for support and stability, so awareness of gingivitis is important to addressing potential trouble.

How to spot and treat the warnings of gum disease

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gingivitis or periodontitis,” Geisinger said.

Why are my gums bleeding?

Bleeding during delivery of oral home care, like brushing and flossing, is a common indicator of deteriorating gum health.

Geisinger says gums should not bleed when touched or manipulated, even with firm pressure.

“Think about a firm handshake,” Geisinger said. “It may be uncomfortable, but it should not make your hands bleed.”

Spontaneous bleeding or persistent bleeding when touched is a sign that gum tissue should be evaluated by a dental professional to determine the cause and appropriate treatment. Bleeding gums during oral hygiene or dental visits can range from a need for improved oral home care habits to more serious conditions that require diagnosis and treatment by a periodontist.

Why do I have bad breath?

Geisinger says halitosis, or bad breath, can be a sign of gum disease or other serious oral or systemic conditions and should be mentioned to an oral health provider.

“Ongoing bad breath is associated with gum disease, alongside untreated tooth decay, dry mouth [xerostomia], tonsil stones and other oral conditions,” Geisinger said. “It may also be associated with systemic conditions like gastro-esophageal reflux, uncontrolled diabetes mellitus or other concerns.”

What does the color of my gums say about health?

Notable changes in gingival tissue color can be a sign of a serious gum health issue. While a dental visit or procedure can notably result in a temporary change in color, drastic color change that is recognizable to the naked eye should be cause for concern.

“Changes in color, specifically red or white colorations of the gum tissues, can be signs of disease and should be evaluated by a dental healthcare professional,” Geisinger said. “There are also reasons that dark spots might appear after dental care, including impregnation of metal into the gingival tissues, which can cause a black or blue coloration, often resembling a tattoo.”

Similar to how skin on the body can contain hyperpigmentation and freckles,

dark spots on the gingival tissue can be normal. For people of color or those with more melanin in the skin, melanin in the gingival tissue is expected. However, melanin levels can decrease noticeability with subtle shifts in color, and this serves as another reason that Geisinger encourages everyone to proactively schedule comprehensive oral exams, including gingival measurements and assessments.

“The American Academy of Periodontology recommends that all adults receive a comprehensive periodontal examination, including a full-mouth periodontal charting, each year,” Geisinger said. “This type of examination allows your dentist to track changes in gum health over time and intervention at the earliest possible time point.”

Geisinger says that, because gum disease often does not cause significant pain until it is very severe, a pinkish color in the sink while performing oral hygiene, indicating blood in saliva, is one of the most important warning signs.

Does a sweet tooth hurt the gums?

Increased consumption of sweets and candy is often associated with cavities and poor oral health. As the holiday season approaches, many parents may have questions about the effects of sugar on dental health.

Research shows that highly acidic candies, as well as sticky or gummy varieties, can negatively affect oral health by increasing the risk of tooth decay and enamel erosion. However, enjoying sweet treats in moderation is unlikely to pose an immediate threat to gum health.

“We know that elevated blood sugar levels over long periods increase the risk of developing periodontitis and may increase periodontal disease severity in patients with established disease,” Geisinger said. “However, current literature does not suggest that a single exposure of candy can negatively impact gum health.”

Geisinger recommends that parents encourage good oral hygiene practices to ensure optimal oral health.

“For Halloween, it may be best to avoid snacking on candy throughout the day; though enjoying sweet treats in moderation should be fine for this time of year without the immediate fear of gingival decay.”

Chatham residents fight gas pipeline

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Enbridge says the 12-inch-diameter pipeline is needed to meet growing energy demands in the area, including Chatham, where the population has soared 21% since 2016, as well as neighboring Lee County.

Yet the proposed pipeline has set off protests at public meetings and attracted hundreds of people to a Facebook group to express their opposition, many of them small farmers, retirees, or their relatives. They argue the pipeline would pose an environmental threat to wells used for drinking water and expose people in less affluent areas to toxic pollutants that could increase the risks of cancer, preterm births, and asthma — all for the benefit of people who live nowhere near the proposed route.

“Nobody wants to be next to a pipeline,” Dorasue Burns Christian, a retired dental hygienist, told KFF Health News. She said the proposed route cuts across the roughly 22-acre farm where she has lived for more than 50 years. “I’m stressed and I can’t sleep at night. I have been pushed as far as I can be pushed.”

Enbridge Gas North Carolina is a subsidiary of the Canadian energy company Enbridge. Residents point to other communities in which Enbridge has operated — such as Marshall, Michigan; Romeoville, Illinois; and Danville, Kentucky — where oil spills and a natural gas pipeline rupture led to evacuations, injuries, and at least one death.

Enbridge declined an interview request to answer questions about the location of the North Carolina pipeline and the company’s safety record. In a statement, spokesperson Persida Montanez said the pipeline is needed to accommodate population and business growth in Chatham and neighboring Lee County.

A company website says safety will be prioritized during construction and operation, including monitoring, maintenance, and compliance with regulatory rules.

Many residents believe the company is attempting to profit from a proposed data center, which many also oppose. The company website says that Enbridge does not intend to use the pipeline for that purpose and that serving a data center would require a pipeline at least twice the size of the one planned for Chatham.

The pipeline would connect to existing natural gas infrastructure in Siler City and near Moncure, the company said.

Still, pipeline opponents say they are fed up.

“They chose this route because they probably thought people would not fight

back,” said Amanda Clark, a protest organizer who grew up in Chatham. Her family roots in the county date to the 1700s. “In rural communities, we are seen as disposable.”

‘Collateral damage’

Chatham County’s fight comes amid a construction boom in the natural gas pipeline industry and the Trump administration’s promises of “American energy dominance.”

The U.S. produces more natural gas than any other country, about as much as China, Russia, and Iran combined.

Research shows natural gas pipeline leaks are concentrated in low-income and minority communities where people experience higher rates of poverty and physical disabilities and have fewer means to respond to crises.

Nationwide, there were nearly 2,600 pipeline incidents from 2010 to 2021 that were serious enough that they were required to be reported to the federal government, including fires and explosions that killed 122 people and injured more than 600.

In 2019, one person died and six were injured in Kentucky when an Enbridge natural gas pipeline ruptured, according to a federal government report.

Enbridge reached a \$177 million settlement with the federal government after the 2010 oil spills in Michigan and Illinois. In the Michigan spill, a pipeline discharged 1 million gallons of oil into Talmadge Creek, in one of the largest inland oil spills in U.S. history.

“No Pipeline. No Compromise,” read the red T-shirts worn by some of the more than 300 people who attended a Chatham County Board of Commissioners meeting in Pittsboro, North Carolina, in early August. Outside the building, they displayed signs that said “People NOT Pipelines” and “Save Our Farms.”

Under North Carolina law, private utilities and pipeline companies can obtain property easements, which give them the right of way to construct, operate, and maintain pipelines without outright taking ownership.

Enbridge will propose the final route for the pipeline based on field surveys, environmental studies, and engineering analysis, Montanez said. “The utility is also focused on delivering safe, reliable natural gas service that supports long-term economic vitality,” Montanez said.

Some residents, like Clark, argue that while the pipeline would power more housing and business development in wealthier parts of Chatham, it would create a public health risk in rural, poorer areas.

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Officials back mental health first aid training on campuses

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concern for us,” said Kelly Crosbie, assistant secretary for mental health, developmental disabilities and substance use services at NCDHHS. “One high-risk group in particular is young people.”

Suicide is the third leading cause of death for youth ages 10-18 and the second leading cause for those ages 19-34, according to the N.C. Suicide Prevention Action Plan.

“Suicide is an epidemic,” Crosbie said. “It’s a public health emergency.”

Concern for college student mental health grows
In calendar years 2022 and 2023, 12 N.C. State University students died by suicide — seven in 2022 and five in 2023, according to public records obtained in 2024 by the student newspaper, Technician.

NC Health News submitted a public records request on Aug. 24 to N.C. State University requesting the number of student deaths by suicide in the calendar years 2024, 2025 and 2026 to date. Despite multiple follow-ups, the request has not yet been fulfilled.

Three students at UNC Chapel Hill died by suicide in one semester in 2021.

As previously reported by The News & Observer, neither UNC nor N.C. State tracks the exact number of students who die while at the institution in the public record.

In response to the public attention on the campus suicides in 2022-23, both universities have invested in responding to mental health crises on campus.

In November 2022, N.C. State established a mental health task force to “make short- and long-term curricular and co-curricular recommendations to help improve student mental health at NC State,” then-Vice Chancellor Doneka Scott wrote in a letter to the student body.

Each semester since fall 2022, N.C. State has held at least one Wellness Day — a mental health care-oriented day off from classes in which no assignments are due and students are encouraged to participate in wellness events around campus. The administration also asks that instructors not schedule tests or assignments due the day after.

N.C. State spokesperson Lauren Barker said that temporary mental health task force recommended the university join the JED Campus network, a program of the Jed Foundation that focuses on mental health in high schools and colleges. JED Campus is a four-year program that guides and works with schools to improve mental health outcomes on campus.

“We joined [JED Campus] in fall 2023, and the task force’s recommendations informed the strategic plan developed with JED, which now guides our work in areas such as identifying and responding to at-risk students, policies and procedures, social connectedness and prevention,” Barker said in an email to NC Health News.

The 2023 JED Campus Impact Report found that universities and colleges who participated in its program saw decreased suicide ideation, planning and attempts among students.

Learning to ask

Since 2022, UNC has trained more than 1,600 students, staff and faculty in mental health first aid, the National Council for Mental Wellbeing reports. Through their partnership with NCDHHS, UNC hopes to train at least 600 people in the next year.

Paul Lanier, a professor in the School of Social Work, is principal investigator of the mental health first aid program. He said the program’s success is reflected in its evolution from a pilot program within his

school to an initiative visible across campus.

“I can walk around campus and see signs on people’s doors like ‘I’m a Mental Health First-Aider’ all over,” Lanier said. “It feels like we’re coming from a small pilot to a larger, campus-wide movement.”

Freeman said that some of the first participants in the training program were those working in library and facility services, as they were likely to see students in moments of distress.

“A lot of them work third shift and a lot of the time students [that are struggling] may just be randomly in different areas of campus,” Freeman said.

UNC requires all bachelor of nursing students to participate in the training, which has an online and two-day in-person component.

Mia Spencer, a graduate of UNC, is now pursuing an accelerated bachelor of nursing degree. She had gone through emergency medical technician training, but she said the mental health first aid course was more in-depth.

“Especially if I hadn’t done EMT training before this, I would have definitely found it helpful,” Spencer said. “I remember being surprised when I first learned that you’re supposed to specifically ask people [if they are contemplating suicide] and what their plan is.”

Spreading the word

Freeman said the training-based program is a site of the National Council for Mental Wellbeing’s Mental Health First Aid initiative, part of a behavioral health springboard initiative initially funded by a federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration grant.

There’s also state money, but until this July, North Carolina had not passed a state budget since 2023. As a result, Lanier said institutions had to make difficult decisions about which programs to fund.

“The challenges with a state budget not being passed really impacted our program because our program is not required for graduation. It’s not curriculum credit,” Freeman said. “We got down to the bare bones, and we were able to hold on to [the program], but we did lose quite a few staff in the process.”

Now, Freeman said the program is able to hire more staff — including a part-time outreach specialist and a full-time training coordinator — to expand the program.

Sara Newhan, youth initiatives outreach coordinator for NAMI North Carolina, will work with UNC and schools that serve young adults across the state to bring mental health first aid training to campus.

Newhan and Rothman, director of youth initiatives at NAMI, said young adults today talk more openly about mental health struggles than they may have in the past.

“But that doesn’t always mean they’re getting the treatment or the help that they need,” Rothman said.

Newhan also works with universities, community colleges and high schools to establish student-led NAMI On Campus clubs.

Newhan said NAMI NC has struggled to reach students in middle and high schools, which is why training young adults in mental health first aid is important.

“It’s a great basic but really informative, to-the-point course that gives you a general idea of how to take care of your mental health, what signs to look out for, how to reach out and get help,” Newhan said. “I think those are just really important foundational things to teach the students so that they can become trained to become trainers themselves.”

« BLACK BRILLIANCE »



FILE PHOTO

Reginald Lewis’ acquisition of TLC Beatrice International in 1987 was the largest offshore leveraged buyout in U.S. business history.

Reginald Lewis was master of spectacular wheeling, dealing

ENCYCLOPEDIA.COM

For some time before his death in 1993, Reginald F. Lewis (1942-1993) was the most prominent Black businessman in America.

Lewis was the owner of TLC Beatrice International, a \$500 million European conglomerate in food processing and distribution. His purchase of Beatrice International in 1987— a billion-dollar deal — was the largest offshore leveraged buyout in the history of American business. That spectacular coup came only months after Lewis reaped a 90-to-1 return on the sale of the McCall Pattern Company, a firm he had owned since 1984.

Lewis, a Harvard-educated entrepreneur with a history of success on Wall Street, was hailed in the pages of Black Enterprise magazine as “one of the most celebrated businessmen of 1987,” a man who “defines a new generation of black entrepreneurs...that receive four stars for their boldness and daring.”

From the time of his purchase of McCall onward, the Baltimore-born investor found himself the subject of intense scrutiny as the first black to enter the high-stakes world of billion-dollar business takeovers. Lewis was never comfortable with the idea that he was a role model.

As he put it in Fortune magazine: “It’s tough enough to operate without the added pressure that if I make a mistake, I let down 30 million people. I think of myself as an American of African descent who’s committed to what he is doing. If

that work is an inspiration and helps others of my ethnic background, or any other, I’m delighted. But I don’t want it to seep into decisions of how we evaluate our business.”

Lewis also told the New York Times: “I’m very proud of the accomplishments of African Americans, and I’m delighted that people feel [my] accomplishment adds to that list. But to dwell on race — to see that as something that becomes part of my persona — is a mistake, and I do everything I can to discourage it.”

A head for business

Lewis’ penchant for profit-making began in his childhood. Family members and friends recalled him as an enterprising, hard-working youngster with a good head for business. He was born in 1942 in a working-class Baltimore neighborhood and grew up with three brothers and two sisters.

Both of his parents worked: his mother as a postal clerk and his stepfather as a teacher. Lewis himself went to work at the age of eight, delivering newspapers. Fortune reported that as a child Lewis kept his earnings hidden in a tin can known as “Reggie’s Hidden Treasure.”

One day his grandmother chose a present for him to give his mother, but Lewis would have no part of it—the gift’s cost would have consumed all of his savings. A less expensive alternative was negotiated. Lewis’ mother told Fortune: “[Reginald] wasn’t cheap. But he was always thinking. He knew exactly what he had. He would never wipe himself out.”

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Ford Expedition Tremor edition built for outdoor attitude, interior comforts

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cluding mirrors) and 78 inches high.

A 10-speed transmission sends power to the rear wheels but AWD is standard on the Tremor The suspension is fully independent but tuned for rugged terrain. I found the ride to be a bit rough. Those huge tires are far louder than the tires on the Platinum version but that’s to be expected.

The Tremor is louder on the road and a little less comfortable than the other versions but it isn’t uncomfortable. This could still be someone’s every-day driver. The Expedition is surprisingly quick – quicker than General Motors V8 powered competitors. The Expedition can reach 60 miles per hour in 5.5 seconds. That feature is helpful when passing on the open highway.

The Expedition is big, wide and tall but drives more like a mid-size SUV. You can guide It gently around corners without a lot of drams. It you want something a little more adventurous, may I suggest the Tremor package which is more off-road tuned and sporty. This Platinum version should satisfy everyone else.

The Tremor version of the Expedition starts at \$81,000. That comes with a load of standard equipment that includes: AWD, leather seats, massaging front seats that are ventilated heated and cooled; heated second row seats, ambient lighting, 10-speaker Bang & Olufsen audio system and USB ports in rear. That’s a huge chunk of change but the Expedition pushes all the right buttons.

The price is about the same as the competition similarly equipped. That does include Blue Cruise which means this big thing will drive itself if you need that.

Pros:

- Stylish exterior
- Cavernous, well-appointed interior
- Powerful, twin-turbo V6 engine
- Ridiculous amount of standard equipment
- Useful tech
- Built for the outback
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Cons:

- Harsher ride than non-Tremor models
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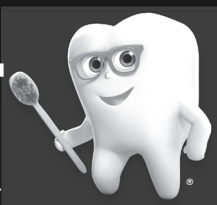
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LEGAL NOTICES

NORTH CAROLINA IN THE GENERAL COURT OF
GUILFORD COUNTY JUSTICE
DISTRICT COURT DIVISION
26 JT 000298-400

IN THE MATTER OF:
L.M.E.

A male juvenile, born April 22, 2022
in Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina.

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION

TO: The UNKNOWN putative father of the juvenile,
Respondent Father

TAKE NOTICE that a Petition seeking to terminate the parental rights of the UNKNOWN FATHER of the above juvenile L.M.E. was filed on August 31, 2026, with the Clerk of Superior Court, District Court - Juvenile Division, Greensboro, Guilford Co., NC. The mother's name is Kerstin Avery Parrish.

You must answer this Petition within 30 days of **October 8, 2026**, exclusive of that date. Upon your failure to answer the Petition within time prescribed, your parental rights to the juvenile(s) shall be terminated. You are entitled to attend any hearing affecting your rights. You are entitled to appointed counsel if you cannot afford to hire one; however, you must call the Juvenile Clerk at (336) 412-7555 immediately to request a court appointed attorney. The next hearing is scheduled to be heard on October 13, 2026, or as soon thereafter as the matter can be heard.

This the 8th day of October, 2026.

Heather D. Deal, Sr. Deputy County Attorney
P.O. Box 3427, Greensboro, NC 27402

thecharlottepost.com

LEGAL NOTICES

STATE OF INDIANA) IN THE MARION SUPERIOR
COURT
)SS:

COUNTY OF) CAUSE 49D15-2606-JC-005665
MARION NUMBER:

IN THE MATTER OF: **SUMMONS FOR SERVICE BY
WM - DOB 9/21/2008 PUBLICATION & NOTICE OF
A CHILD ALLEGED TO BE CHILD IN NEED OF SERVICES
A CHILD IN NEED OF HEARING
SERVICES**

TO: Santos Rene Medrano and
Any Unknown Alleged Father
Whereabouts unknown

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN to the above noted parent whose whereabouts are unknown, as well as Any Unknown Alleged Fathers, whose whereabouts are also unknown, that the Indiana Department of Child Services has filed its Verified Petition Alleging the child to be in Need of Services, in accordance with I.C. 31-34-9-3, and that an adjudication hearing has been scheduled with the Court.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that a hearing has been scheduled regarding these matters in the Marion Superior Court a(n) Trial Hearing on 12/2/2026 at 9:30 AM.

• Pursuant to Administrative Rule 14, arrangements have been made for you to participate in this hearing by phone or video. You will receive instructions prior to the hearing instructing you on how to participate in the hearing. It is your responsibility to provide your Family Case Manager with a working phone number. **YOU ARE HEREBY COMMANDED** to participate telephonically or by video for this hearing. You should not appear in person.

This hearing is being held virtually. DO NOT appear in person. To appear virtually, go to www.webex.com to enter your meeting number and password or use the toll-free number below to join by phone. Please join the hearing five (5) minutes before your hearing is scheduled to begin. You will be admitted to the hearing room once the Court is ready to begin. Meeting number (access code): 2337 174 8252 Meeting password: 49Judge15 (48583431 from phones) Join by phone: 1-844-992-4726, PIN 48583431.

At said hearing, the Court will consider the Petition and evidence thereon and will render its decision as to whether the above named minor child is child in need of services and shall enter adjudication accordingly. Your failure to participate after lawful notice will be deemed as your default and waiver to be present at said hearing.

UPON ENTRY OF SAID ADJUDICATION, A DISPOSITIONAL HEARING will be held in which the Court will consider (1) Alternatives for the care, treatment, or rehabilitation for the child; (2) The necessity, nature, and extent of your participation in the program of care, treatment, or rehabilitation for the child; and (3) Your financial responsibility for any services provided for the parent, guardian or custodian of the child including child support.

YOU MUST RESPOND by appearing virtually or by an attorney within thirty (30) days after the last publication of this notice, and in the event you fail to do so, an adjudication on said petition, judgment by default may be entered against you, or the court may proceed in your absence, without further notice.

Clerk

John Martin, 37489-49
Attorney, Indiana Department of Child Services
3838 Madison Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46227

Run date: 10/22/26

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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2026 PAGE 5B



ASHLEY MAHONEY

Former Charlotte Post reporter Ashley Mahoney made her debut as an author with "Historic Maps of Charlotte: A History of the Queen City in Rare Maps" published by Reedy Press.

Post alum makes her debut as a book author

By Cameron Williams
cameron.williams@thecharlottepost.com

Ashley Mahoney always wanted to be a published author.

Mahoney, a former Post reporter, released her first book, "Historic Maps of Charlotte: A History of the Queen City in Rare Maps" published by Reedy Press.

"I am not a Charlotte native. I feel like we've got to cover that from the jump," said Mahoney, who is a reporter at Axios Charlotte, "but, I have called Charlotte home for over a decade. I love the city dearly. I love the city's history. I studied English and history many moons ago in school, and an opportunity presented itself where a friend of mine published a book for Reedy Press — my publisher as well — and they said, 'Hey, we are starting this new series about different cities and their history, specifically focused on maps. That seemed like the ideal opportunity to put my love of history and love of the city to good use. So, I described this as a love letter to Charlotte.'"

The book can be purchased at Troubadour Booksellers and Park Road Books in Charlotte as well as Belmont Bookshop. You can order copies online at reedypress.com.

Journalists are accustomed to turning stories around in relatively quick fashion. Mahoney found writing a book is different.

"The process would start every weekday morning at 5 a.m. and I would try to work on it until I started my day job

Please see **POST** | 6B

Diddy moved to new prison for excessive lockup living

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — Sean "Diddy" Combs has been moved to a federal prison in Pennsylvania after reports that the hip-hop mogul was living the high life and was injured in a fight at his New Jersey lockup, a person familiar with the matter told The Associated Press on Friday.

The federal Bureau of Prisons is transferring Combs, 56, from FCI Dix to FCI Allenwood Low, a low-security facility south of Williamsport and about 155 miles west of New York City, the person said. The person was not authorized to speak publicly and did so on condition of anonymity.

The Bureau of Prisons confirmed the move but provided no further details. The agency said it does not discuss conditions of confinement for anyone in its custody, including reasons for transfer, for privacy, safety, and security reasons.

"Decisions about inmate placement are made by the BOP, and we are not in a position to speak to the circumstances surrounding this transfer," said Combs' spokesperson, Juda Engelmayer. "Sean remains focused on moving forward, and we hope that his time at the new facility will be productive and without unnecessary disruption."

Combs is serving a four-year, two-month sentence for his conviction last

Please see **DIDDY** | 6B

« ON THE MARQUEE »



NIGHT OF ARTISTIC RENEWAL

A Night of Artistic Renewal celebrates its fifth anniversary with "Hope, Healing & Triumph" Nov. 1 at Booth Playhouse. The multidisciplinary production includes music, dance, performance poetry, storytelling and visual art.

Día de Muertos Festival celebrates Mexican culture

22nd annual showcase at Camp North End includes Catrina Parade

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

The latest events, productions and exhibits in Charlotte and beyond: Nov. 1

The Latin American Coalition and Levine Museum of the New South sponsor the 22nd annual *Día de Muertos Festival* at Camp North End, 300 Camp Road, 12-6 p.m.

The celebration of Mexican culture and traditions through art, music, food and community for the first time, the Catrina Parade is open to anyone who wants to participate. Community members are invited to arrive in *Día de Muertos*-inspired makeup and costume and join the procession, departing from the Ford Building at 4 p.m.

The altar exhibition is also open to community participation, with individuals, groups and organizations invited to apply to create an ofrenda honoring loved ones who have died. Altars, traditionally decorated with photos, candles, flowers, food and mementos, are a central part of *Día de Muertos*. More information and an application can be found on diademuertoscslt.org.

There is also an expanded Kids Zone at the Camp North End green

area with face painting, a bounce house and other children's activities.

A Night of Artistic Renewal celebrates its fifth anniversary with *Hope, Healing & Triumph* at Booth Playhouse at Blumenthal Arts, 3:30 p.m. Theater lobby opens at 2:30 p.m.

Tickets available at: blumenthalarts.org/events/detail/a-night-of-artistic-renewal-hope-healing-triumph

Produced and hosted by performance poet, author, and arts advocate Dionne Hunter, the multidisciplinary production includes music, dance, performance poetry, visual art, song, and storytelling.

The performance poetry company includes Boris "Bluz" Rogers; Ed Mabrey; and Junious "Jay" Ward.

Musical artists include Adayla Turner, Enacense, Mason "Quill" Parker, saxophonist Bryan Patterson Jr., and violinist Marcus R. Pyle. Ballroom dancers Robert Fitzgerald and Takeila Fox will perform alongside Charlotte Ballet dancers Raven Barkley and Maurice Mouzon Jr.

"A Room of Her Own," Queen City Art Gallery, 4237 Raleigh St., Suite 5.

A month-long celebration of women, creativity, healing, storytelling, and the power of making space. The exhibition opening is 3-7 p.m.

Curated by Carolyn Faulkner and Ida Mae Irby, "A Room of Her Own" brings together artists and community members for an immersive exhibition and series of participatory arts experiences designed to inspire connection, reflection, creativity, and conversation.

Event dates and times: Mixed Media & Found Things with Ellen Frances Johnson, Nov. 4, 5-7 p.m.

Stitching Therapy: The Science of Crochet for Health and Wellbeing with guest facilitator Dr. Portia M. York, Nov. 5, 6-8 p.m.

Positive affirmation totes with Carolyn Faulkner, Nov. 7, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

Beginning violin experience and workshop (youth) with Susan Shoemaker, Nov. 7, 4-6 p.m.

Earring painting workshop with Carolyn Faulkner, Nov. 11, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

Please see **HISTORIC** | 6B

The Harlem Renaissance gets its cultural due

By Dwight Brown

NATIONAL NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

Once Upon a Time in Harlem
4 stars
Read the room.

Intellectuals, artists, politicians, librarians and others gather in 1972 at an NYC brownstone owned by Duke Ellington. They discuss politics, history, and culture—the past, present and future—as they relate to the Harlem Renaissance. Hard to gauge who's the most intelligent, expressive or aware in the bunch.

They all give as good as they get, each expressing their personal views, experiences and observations at a scholarly level generally reserved for Ph.D.s.

Race and other issues facing the African American community get an intense examination that's filtered through the prism of the 1920s Renaissance. At this gathering, filmmaker William Greaves captured the profound conversations. After Greaves died in 2014, his son David took on the project.

Working with co-director and producer Liani Greaves and editors Anne de Mare and Lynn True, he brought his father's dream project to completion.

Harlem's who's who share anecdotes and memories in a perceptive, head-spinning informal roundtable. Voices rise, not in anger but to emphasize points. Greaves' original 16mm camerawork is so inviting that audiences feel like welcome guests, privileged to listen as they absorb the conversations. Viewers will likely feel honored to be in the company of showman Eubie Blake, artist Romare Bearden, Ida Mae Cullen (widow of Harlem Renaissance poet Countee Cullen) and photographer James Van Der Zee, among others. Revelations flow for a captivating 100 minutes.

One of the most astonishing stories belongs to actor Leigh Whipper, who was in his 90s at the time. Remarkably alert, he recalls working in minstrel shows, vaudeville and drama before helping establish the groundbreaking



TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

A scene from "Once Upon A Time in Harlem," which premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival.

Negro Actors Guild. Another unforgettable moment comes when an attendee reveals that his mother was a slave. A hush falls over the room—and will fall over theater audiences, too—as the gathering's enormity becomes evident. Wisdom about Marcus Garvey's Back-to-Africa movement and whether to use the terms Negro, Black or African American are debated.

Also of note are playwright Regina Andrews's recollections of writers who found refuge in the 135th Street Branch of the New York Public Library, where she was a librarian. The 135th became the first NYPL branch with an integrated staff and housed the Division of Negro Literature, History and Prints, established in 1925.

Grainy footage takes you back 50 years. Black-and-white photos, archival images and paintings transport viewers to the heart of the 1920s Harlem Renaissance, when a burst of creativity in art, music and literature both reflected and helped reshape American culture.

Like they were piecing together a quilt, the directors, producers and editors clipped a three-hour gathering down to a 100-minute theatrical movie that preserves the original footage as a

cultural touchstone. One with a rhythm as steady as a bass in a jazz trio. Toward the end, when the pace flickers a bit and momentum wanes, another stream of thought saves the day, and length issues disappear. Composer Tamar-kali finds the right music to bridge the gaps between the '20s, '70s and present day. The music and sounds envelop you.

A son's determination to fulfill his father's artistic vision is a product of tenacity and focus. Completing the project was a gargantuan undertaking that had eluded others. Capturing the spirit of that day in a way that appeals to current adult viewers is a testament to good instincts in documentary filmmaking. What's been left on the cutting room floor is not missed. What's on screen is so relevant today in the most casual yet deliberate ways.

For those curious about the Harlem Renaissance and its creators, including legends like Zora Neale Hurston and Langston Hughes, this immersive film offers a rewarding journey through a cultural revolution that rejuvenated a neighborhood and influenced future generations. It will appeal to audiences

Please see **HARLEM** | 6B

Post alum Mahoney makes debut as author

Continued from page 5B

as a journalist,” she said. “Then, as soon as the day job came to an end, I’d pick back up and then work on it again until about 10 or 11 o’clock at night. That was the process on repeat for a very long time.”

Mahoney said she spent hours at the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library’s Carolina Room researching resources. She also spent time utilizing archives at UNC Charlotte as well as connections developed during seven years at The Post to chronicle Charlotte’s Black history.

“One of my early interviews was with Miss Mattie Marshall when I started at The Post, and she is just such a big champion of the neighborhood and community that she calls home,” Mahoney said. “A lot of that helps enhance my understanding and knowledge. Not only ‘yes, this is a historic community, but this is a community that is still very near and dear to the people who live there, who champion it.’ So, Washington Heights is another chapter in here.”

“We also explored, of course, Johnson C. Smith [University] and Carver College. Carver College was brand new for me. Carver College became part of the eventual Central Piedmont Community College family, if you will, but initially, it started as a junior college for Black veterans post-World War II. It operated out of Second Ward High School, but there’s a lot you can ask my husband for the amount of time and attention and care that I tried to give to Charlotte’s Black history in this process of just saying like it needs to be in here.”

Mahoney credited Post Editor-in-Chief Herb White for his guidance throughout this process. White, Mahoney said, hired her as a freelance reporter right out of college and in her words “took time to nurture a young journalist.”

“[White] was kind enough to write

the foreword to this book, and his imparting years and years of knowledge not only about the craft that we do as journalists, but also about the city’s history,” she said. “We sat next to each other at the Panthers playoff game earlier this year, and I’m just sitting there yammering off all of my dreams and ideas for this book. And he, in his sage wisdom, is like, ‘Yes, and don’t forget to look into this,’ so he’s just a tremendous resource.”

Mahoney, who has been at Axios Charlotte since 2021, is applying those lessons in online publishing.

“Everything is about smart brevity, so it’s more of that 300- to 500-word story range, and trying to get people the information as quickly as possible,” she said. “And I love that. There’s definitely a time and a place for that, and sometimes there’s a time and a place to let your hair down and dive into a little bit more long form. The target range for each essay in the book was about 800 words, so not terribly longer, but there’s a lot you can do with those extra 300 words.”

Mahoney said there is a lot more history that can be shared, and if all goes to plan there’ll be more books. Right now, she is elated that a long-time dream has become reality.

“It’s been a dream of mine forever to write my own book and see my name in print,” she said, “not only as a journalist, but also as a published author of a book, and that’s a very gratifying feeling. I was talking with a friend earlier today. I’m like, ‘I’m so happy I could cry.’ So it’s just been a long, long process. There’ve been countless people who’ve been supportive and encouraging, amazing people like Herb who took the time to nurture a young journalist fresh out of college and kind of send her on her way and say, ‘fly, baby bird, fly.’ So, it’s just very gratifying to see it all come and come to fruition.”

« OUT & ABOUT »

PHOTOS BY DANIEL COSTON | THE CHARLOTTE POST



Funk legend George Clinton (right), a Kannapolis native, and go-go music pioneer Gregory "Sugar Bear" Elliott of Experience Unlimited and Red Springs, N.C., were among the honorees at the North Carolina Music Hall Of Fame induction ceremony Oct. 15 in Mooresville.



Oscar and Heidi Groomes enjoyed the Ties & Tails gala, benefiting the Humane Society Of Charlotte, at the Revelry on Oct. 17.



Natalie Frazier-Allen and Alicia Quarles hosted the Shine gala benefiting the Arts Empowerment Project, at the Mint Museum of Oct. 14.

Historic Rosedale dedicates Legacy Memorial Garden

Continued from page 5B

Paper quilting collage with Ida Mae Irby, Nov. 11, 5-7 p.m.

Snack & Relaxing: Earring painting workshop with Carolyn Faulkner, Nov. 28, 12-2 p.m.

Closing reception and artists’ talk with guest speaker Barbara Saul (Reiki & Enhance Your Creativity) Nov. 29, 2-5 p.m.

On the Net: queencityart.org

Nov. 7

Historic Rosedale dedicates the African American Legacy Memorial Garden, 1-3 p.m.

The memorial garden honors the lives and legacy of people who were enslaved at the former plantation and their descendants after emancipation. The public is invited to the free dedication, which will include an invocation, music and an orientation of the garden’s symbolism.

The guest speaker will be Lawana Holland-Moore, director of grantee impact and engagement at the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund at the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Advance registration is suggested at historicrosedale.org.

Nov. 12

Best-selling author Walter Mosley is among the literary heavyweights high-

lighting Verse & Vino, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Foundation’s top fundraiser.

The showcase at Charlotte Convention Center’s Crown Ballroom includes authors Lucy Foley, R.F. Kuang and Isaac Fitzgerald. Library advocates and book lovers will gather to raise a glass to the joy of reading, the library system’s impact and the larger community. Proceeds fund library foundation initiatives.

Tickets are available at foundation.cmlibrary.org/verse-vino.

Nov. 14

Boney James, Knight Theater, 7:30 p.m.

The contemporary jazz artist is live in Charlotte for one night only. The concert includes an intimate show of with classic favorites and live music magic. Tickets: blumenthalarts.org.

Dec. 19

Jodeci closes its 35-city U.S. tour celebrating the 35th anniversary of the R&B group’s No. 1 debut album, *Forever My Lady* at Owens Auditorium. The group, which got its start in Charlotte in the late 1980s, has sold over 20 million albums sold, five No. 1 singles, three No. 1 albums, and including Soul Train Awards and Billboard Music awards.



James

Harlem Renaissance gets its cultural due

Continued from page 5B

in theaters or in PBS-style programming, where history is examined and appreciated.

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Diddy moved due to luxurious lockup

Continued from page 5B

year on prostitution-related charges for transporting people across state lines for sexual encounters. The case featured harrowing testimony about violence and sex parties he called “freak-offs.” It was a forceful reckoning for one of music and entertainment’s most influential figures.

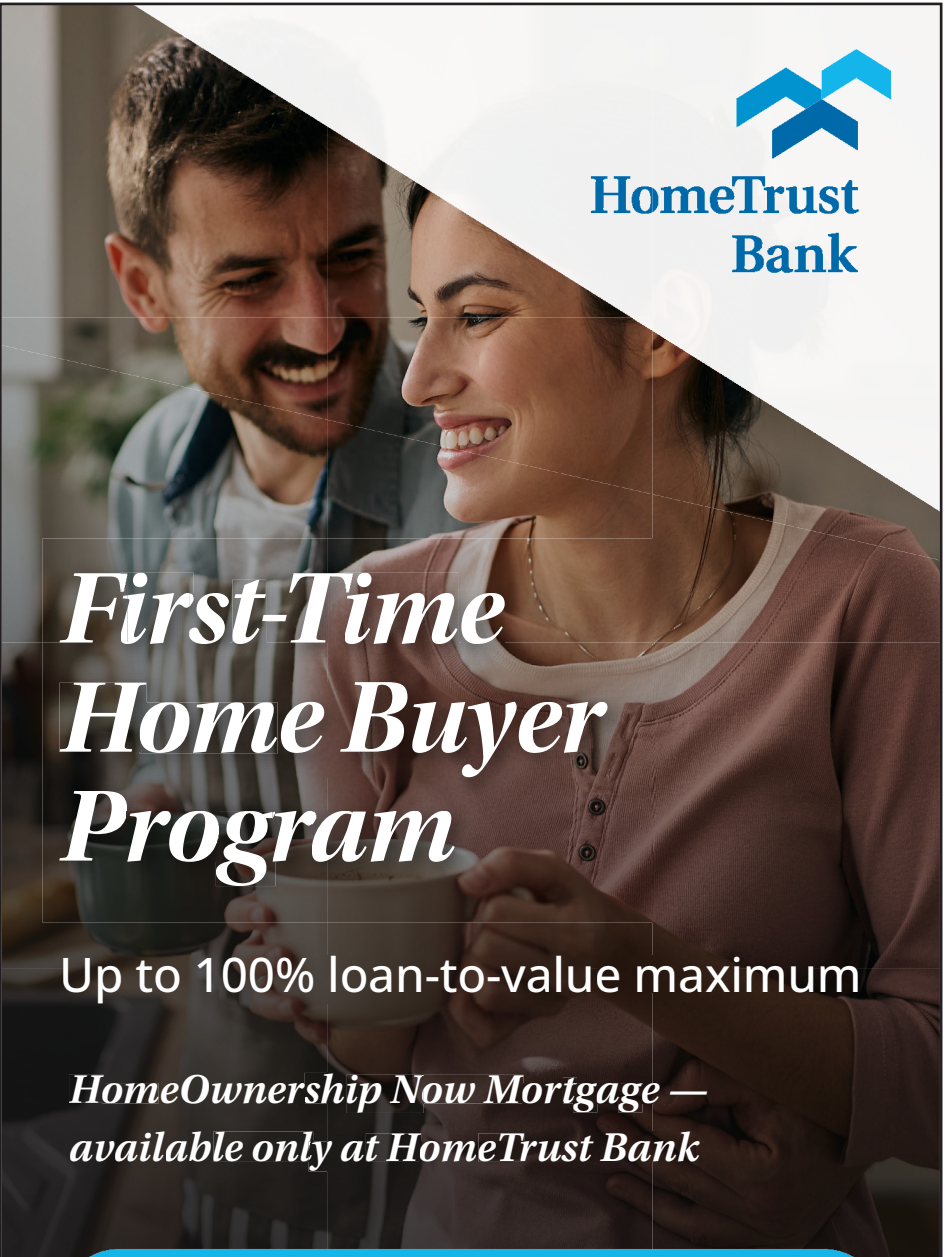
Last month, NBC News reported that Combs was continuing to enjoy aspects of his millionaire lifestyle at FCI Fort Dix, smuggling in Hennessy, having fellow inmates cook, clean, make his bed and give him massages, and using a contraband cellphone to view social media and an ex-girlfriend’s nude selfies.

TMZ reported last week that Combs was injured in a fight with another inmate at Fort Dix and had to be taken out of the

prison for treatment. In a rare rebuttal, the Bureau of Prisons refuted TMZ’s report, telling the AP: “The story you are referring to is false and did not happen.”

In the wake of the NBC report, Combs was placed in the prison’s special housing unit, a heavily secured part of the facility away from the general population, for inmates with disciplinary issues or security concerns. He has also been docked 41 days of good-conduct credit, pushing his release date back to March 2, 2028, according to the person familiar with the matter.

In April, the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals heard arguments in Combs’ bid to overturn his conviction and sentence, which his lawyers argued was too harsh. The court has yet to rule.



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