

LET THE TRUTH BE TOLD™



A Quarterly Publication

WELCOME to the third edition of **Let The Truth Be Told**. The Management Team thanks everyone who has read each edition. In addition, we are uplifted by the responses and feedback we are receiving. We hope you will share **Let The Truth Be Told** with friends, family members, church members, colleagues and other networks.

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Our feature article **“The Emmett Till Antilynching Law: A Legislative Milestone for African Americans”** discusses the passage of the Emmett Till Antilynching Act, which was signed into law by President Joseph Biden in March 2022, making lynching a hate crime. Named after Emmett Till, the 14-year-old African American youth who was murdered in Mississippi in 1955, the Act is the last leg in a 100-year struggle to outlaw lynching in America. The article discusses the meaning of the Act in 2022 and its relevance to African Americans’ on-going battle for liberation and equality.

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Juneteenth and Memorial Day are holidays which will occur after the May edition launches, nevertheless, Michael Simzak’s article on **Juneteenth** and Toni Barrett’s article on **Dr. Luna I. Mishoe, Tuskegee Airman**, will highlight and explain the significance of Juneteenth to the African American Experience and in honor of Memorial Day, will discuss the role of the Tuskegee Airmen who defended America during the World War II.

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We conclude this edition with **There is More to the Story**. Here we feature an article written about **NASA engineer and astronaut, Leland Melvin**. At Tufts University School of Engineering’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Colloquium, he shared advice on how to thrive as a professional.

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Believing that a youth perspective is essential to the newsletter’s mission, we are pleased that **Kassidy Baptiste, a Junior at Ursuline Academy**, Wilmington, Delaware, accepted our invitation to contribute to this edition. Her article titled **“Illusion”** expresses her point of view about the positive and negative aspects of education for students. Ms. Baptiste’s article is followed by Jalyn Powell’s commentary regarding the **Black Student Summit**, held on April 9th at the Chase Field House and co-sponsored by United Way of Delaware and the Delaware Racial Collaborative.

Let The Truth Be Told (TM) is a quarterly newsletter.

Let the Truth Be Told is intended to give African Americans the opportunity to speak “truth to power” through media such as commentary, poems, history and art, among others, which will be provided by parents, teachers, children, ministers, historians, and other citizens. This platform aims to transform our words into empowered activism.

We are seeking contributors to **Let the Truth Be Told**. If you feel you have something to say but do not believe you write well enough, don't let that stop you. Please submit what you want to say and you will be given support which will lead to your voice being heard. Let the Truth Be Told!

Submissions are reviewed by the editorial board and may be edited for brevity and clarification. We regret we cannot return any unsolicited articles, photos or other materials.

Let The Truth Be Told Editorial Board

- **Toni A. Barrett**
- **Debra A. O'Neal**
- **Dr. Marlene A. Saunders**
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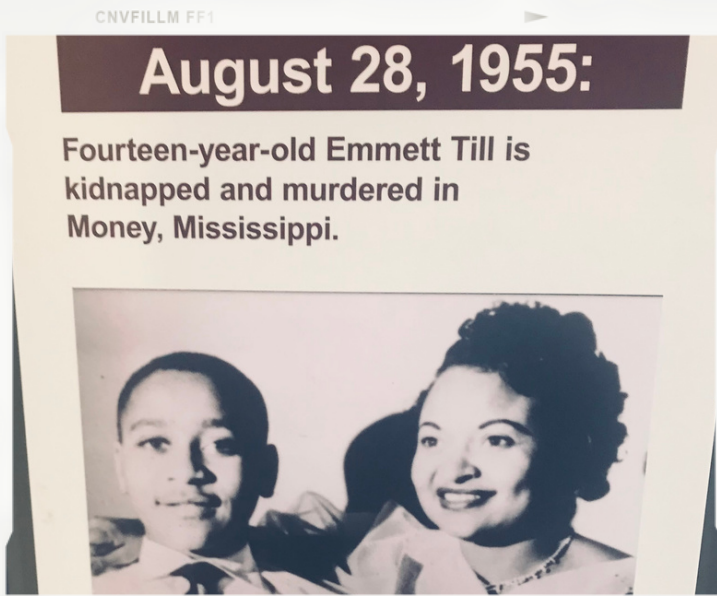
THE EMMETT TILL ANTILYNCHING ACT: A LEGISLATIVE MILESTONE FOR AFRICAN AMERICANS

BY DR. MARLENE A. SAUNDERS

On March 29, 2022, President Joe Biden signed the Emmett Till Antilynching Act (H.R. 55), a landmark bill that makes lynching a federal hate crime. Emmett Till

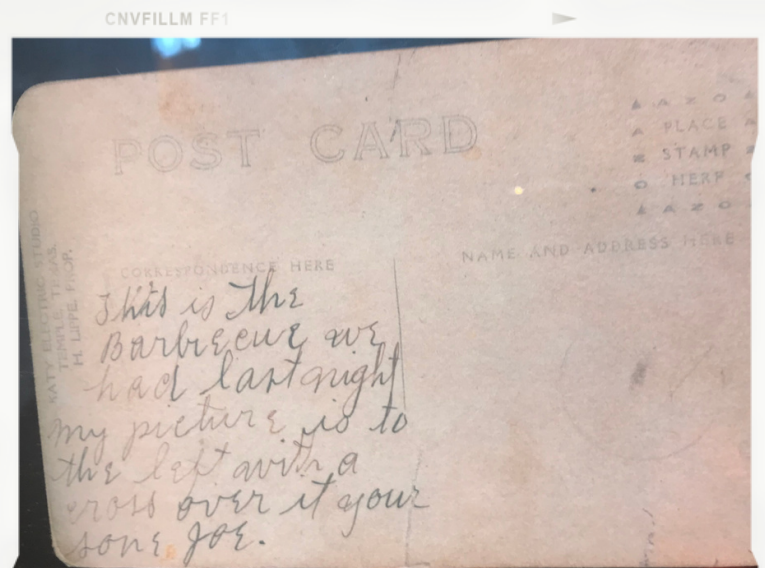
that escalated into large-scale violence targeting the entire African American community; and (6) lynchings of sharecroppers, ministers, and community leaders who resisted mistreatment, most common between 1915 and 1940.

For many Americans, public acts of torture where Black men and women are hanged from a tree for all to see, are regarded as past atrocities to be forgiven and forgotten. After all, in 2005, the Senate passed a resolution apologizing for the Senate's failure over a 122-year period to enact anti-lynching legislation as a federal



was beaten and mutilated before he was shot in the head and his body submerged in the Tallahatchie River in 1955. He was 14 years old. With these facts in mind, some people might ask, "Is an anti-lynching law really necessary in 2022?" Others might say, "It's about time."

By the end of the nineteenth century, lynching in the South was an instrument of racial control that terrorized and targeted African Americans and their communities. Although the situations of the thousands of African Americans lynched between 1877 and 1950 varied in a number of ways, invariably, the lynchings can be grouped as one or more of the following: (1) lynchings that resulted from a wildly distorted fear of interracial sex; (2) lynchings in response to casual social transgressions; (3) lynchings based on allegations of serious violent crime; (4) public spectacle lynchings; (5) lynchings

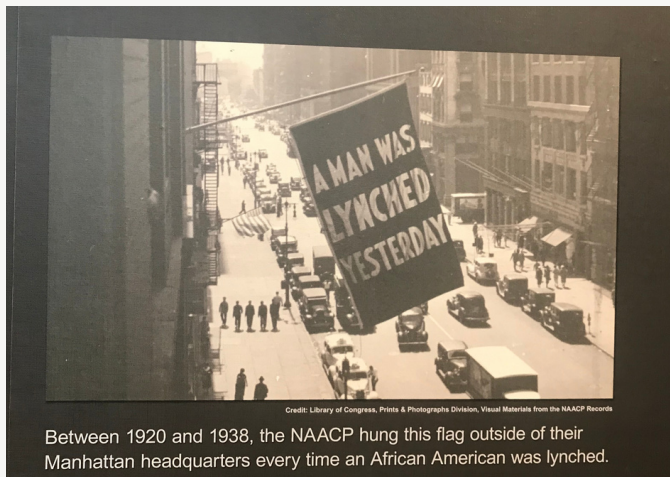


July 29, 1915
Temple, Texas

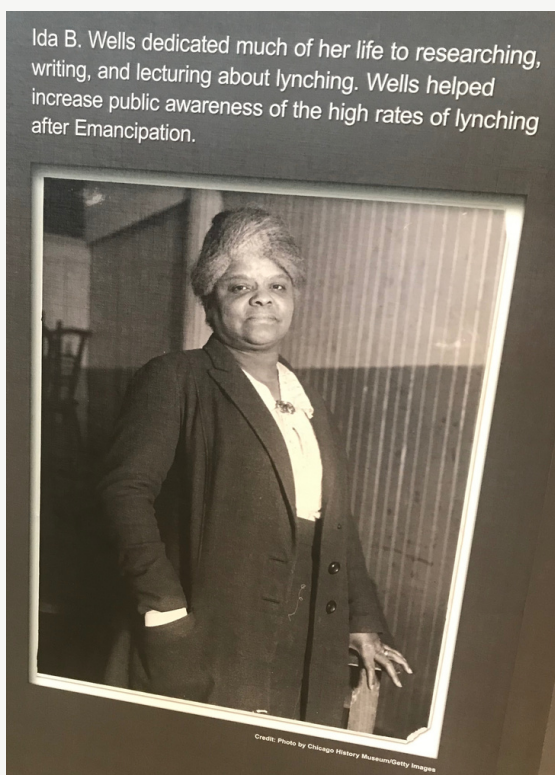
"This is the barbecue we had last night. My picture is to the left with a cross over it. Your son, Joe."

The front side of this postcard shows Will Stanley, who had been accused of murder. He was burned alive and then hung. When people attended lynchings they would often send postcards, photos, and even victims' hair and clothing to their friends and family.

crime. Senator Mary Landrieu stated, “There may be no other injustice in American history for which the Senate so uniquely bears responsibility.”



The research I completed to write this piece included reviewing historical documents describing the earliest efforts to get the federal government to enact a law outlawing lynching and selectively reading the writings of Ida B. Wells Barnett, our most prolific antilynching advocate. While speaking to an audience in Chicago in 1900, Wells Barnett said, “Our country’s national crime is lynching. In addition, while researching, I carefully listened to the comments of her great granddaughter, Michelle Duster, and Vice President Kamala Harris during the signing ceremony at the White House.



Following my investigation, one thought that came to my mind was this one: 'the history of lynching haunts America like a relentless hound dog. But if history is not ignored, it allows us to see that the past is impacting our lives today. In the case of lynching, relying on history to understand and abate lynching in all its forms provides solutions which will help America prevent history from repeating itself.' These realities explain why the Emmett Till Antilynching Act is necessary in 2022.

The powerful remarks of President Biden and Michelle Duster, along with the penetrating historical and contemporary contexts regarding lynching, provided Vice President Harris the ability to demonstrate that this brutal form of inhumanity has a unique presentation today. Wells-Barnett’s (1886-1927) exhaustive chronicle of names, dates, locations and “excuses” for lynching, presidential support for the Dyer [Anti-Lynching] Bill in 1923, strong repudiation of lynching by the Black and white press and the House of Representatives’ 2022 Committee on the Judiciary Report clearly establish that federal protection against lynching was necessary and has been necessary since the first anti-lynching bill was introduced on February 21, 1900 when George Henry White of North Carolina, the only African American in Congress, submitted H.R. 6963.

lynching activists.

Black leaders like Ida B. Wells advocated for federal anti-lynching laws and urged the Black community to fight back. Though resistance often led to more lynchings, many Black people defended themselves against unprovoked violence.



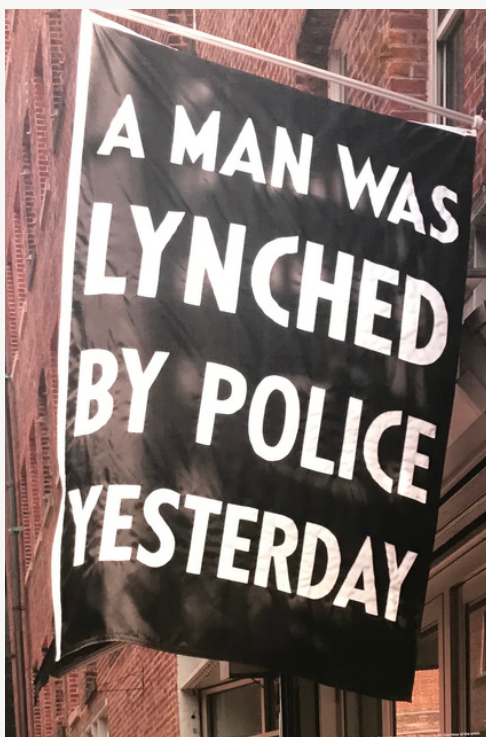
Black activists confronted racial violence with marches and mass protests against lynchings. Here, demonstrators in Washington, DC stand with nooses around their necks in reaction to the failure of a crime conference to discuss lynching in the 1930s.

Modern Day Lynching

Does H.R. 55 address “modern day lynching”? Jill Collen Jefferson, a lawyer and founder of Julian, a civil rights organization, has reported eight suspected hangings of African American men and teenagers in Mississippi between 2001 and 2015. While reporting the last lynching occurred in 1981, she also asserts, “Lynchings in Mississippi never stopped. The evil bastards just stopped taking photographs and passing them around like baseball cards...When authorities arrive on the scene of a hanging, it’s treated as a suicide almost immediately.”

Under the Emmett Till Antilynching Act, the Department of Justice can investigate and appropriately prosecute the individuals responsible for the deaths described above. Similarly, the persons responsible for the racially motivated murders of James Byrd, Jr. in 1998 (dragged to death behind a car), James Craig Anderson in 2011 (beaten and run over with a truck), the nine individuals shot to death at the Emanuel African American Methodist Church in Charleston, South Carolina in 2015, and Ahmaud Abernathy in 2020 could have been prosecuted under Emmett Till Antilynching Act had it existed.

In other words, the Emmett Till Antilynching Act allows the federal government to respond to the ways lynching has changed, or “shape shifted.” This is the term the former General Secretary of the Friends Committee on Legislation, Diane Randell, uses to describe the current forms of lynching. She specifically stated, “Lynchings still exist today when police use lethal force



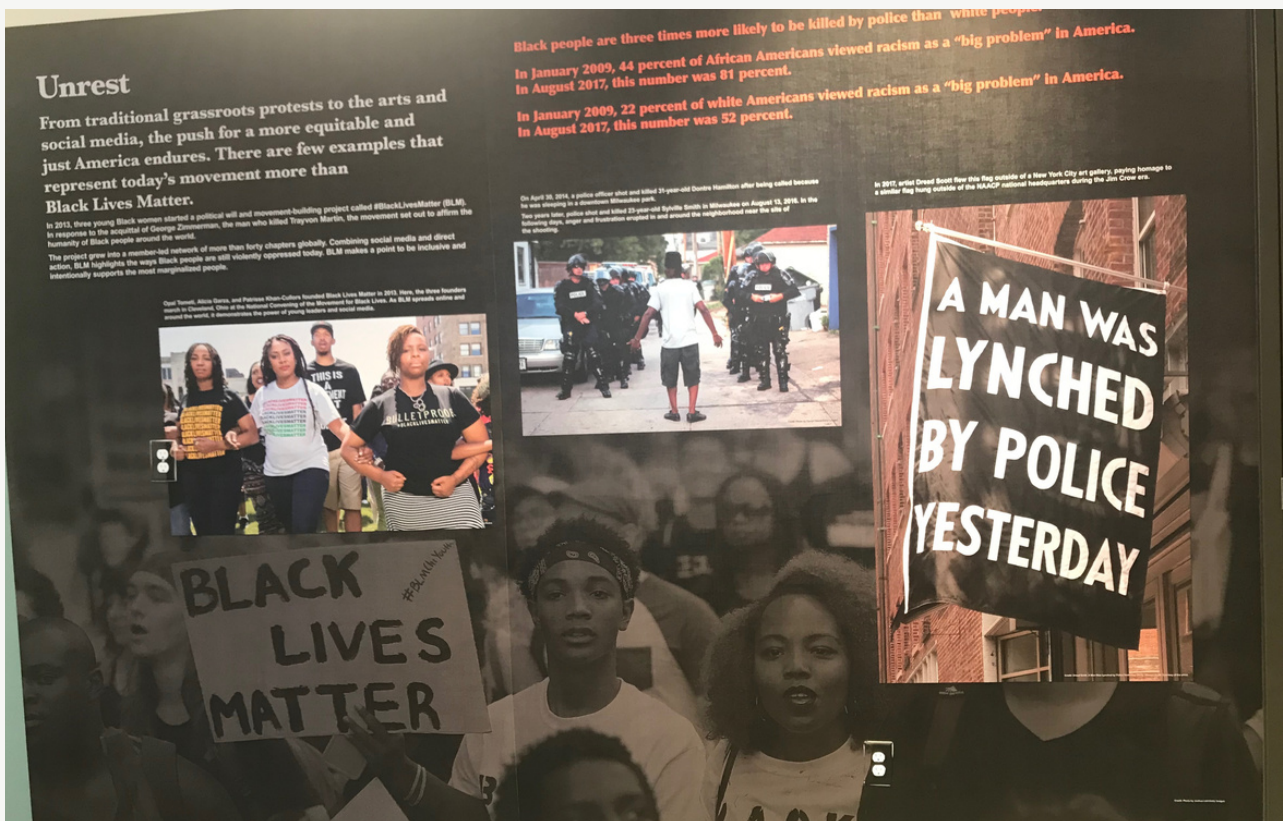
to harass, harm, and kill Black people. Lynchings have shape shifted when African Americans, like Breonna Taylor, are shot to death by police while sleeping in her bed. Lynching still exist today when 28% of those killed by police in 2020 are Black people, despite being only 13% of the population.” This term correctly illuminates the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People’s updated definition of lynching which is “the public killing of an individual who has not received...”

due process under the law. This definition removes the two-faced rationales that once blocked passage of an anti-lynching law, including, infringement on states’ rights, demographics and/or citizenship of the victims, and applicability of constitutional amendments.

For those who say the Emmett Till Anti-lynching Law does nothing to change the status of Black people in American society, I suggest you look to Moses Wright for a lesson about how African Americans should think about themselves with respect to innate inferiority of the African American.

Rev. Mosses Wright was Emmett Till’s great uncle. While in open court, standing before an intimidating, all-white jury in the deep south, he said the words, “Thar he” and courageously identified the two men who tortured and killed his nephew.

Living among dangerous and violent white supremacists, Rev. Wright understood how white people defined the Black person’s place in society. Though disinherited by white society of civil rights and human dignity, in the words of Howard Thurman (1949/1967), Rev. Wright was filled with, “The awareness



of being a child of God [that] tends to stabilize the ego and results in a new courage, fearlessness, and power.” Indeed his assessment of “who I am” represented Ida B. Wells Barnett, Mamie Till Mobley’s (Emmett Till’s mother), Bobby Rush (U. S. Representative who sponsored H.R. 55 and former Black Panther) and all the anti-lynching crusaders’ uncompromising resolve regarding the equal status of Black people. African Americans today must think and act accordingly. The work and sacrifices of our champions for justice are too significant to think or behave otherwise.

As in the past, bi-partisan political support and advocacy from diverse individuals was necessary to gain passage of the Emmett Till Antilynching Act. I make this point to stress the importance of political engagement, including voting by African Americans. Secondly, with national and local legislators in office who support the federal government’s responsibility to protect all citizens, backed by H.R. 55, African Americans can expect to see reductions in lynchings, as well as increases in the number of investigations, by the Department of Justice, of situations involving lynching and hate crimes, as defined by H.R.55.

Passage of the Emmett Till Antilynching Act has provided African Americans another blueprint for seeking the changes we seek.

Thank you, Ancestors.

The images used throughout this article were taken April 2022 by Debra O’Neal while visiting the America’s Black Holocaust Museum, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. For more information about the museum visit <https://www.abhmuseum.org>.

Juneteenth?

By Michael Simzak

On June 17, 2021, President Joe Biden signed the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act which officially made one of the oldest continually recognized American celebrations an official federal holiday. Juneteenth (also known as Jubilee Day, Emancipation Day, and Black Independence Day) commemorates June 19, 1865, when Union General Gordon Granger signed and announced General Order Number 3 for the District of Texas, which officially enforced the Emancipation Proclamation and freed the slaves in the final and most western of the Confederate States. On its surface, Juneteenth commemorates a day that should be celebrated and remembered because it symbolizes the end of slavery in America and by extension, the end of the Civil War because the western most and most remote state in the Confederacy was now fully under Union control. However, like most things symbolic, the truth is more complicated than the narrative.

On January 1, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation and declared all slaves free in the Confederate States still in rebellion against the United States of America.



Lincoln, a trained lawyer, was painfully exacting in his detailing of the precise areas where the order applied, going as far as to detail the counties and parishes where the order did not apply. Prior to issuing the preliminary proclamation in September 1862, Lincoln said in a letter to Horace Greeley, the editor of the New York Tribune:

“My Paramount objective in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not to either save or to destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave I would do it, and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would do that. What I do about slavery, and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps to save the Union; and what I forbear, I forbear because I do not believe it would help to save the Union”.

He was, in fact, able to do the latter, freeing some of the slaves while leaving others in bondage.

Juneteenth? continued

Lincoln was keenly aware that he did not have the power to free all the slaves by Executive Order, but Article II, section 2 of the Constitution gave him a certain power as the Commander in Chief of the United States military, which enabled him to sanction an enemy combatant by depriving them of Serbian property they may deem necessary to their war effort. It is the same power that President George W Bush used to freeze Saddam Hussein's bank account prior to Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003, and the same power President Joe Biden has used to freeze the funds of Vladimir Putin and certain Russian oligarchs during the invasion of Ukraine. Lincoln was also aware that slavery was still legal in Maryland, West Virginia and Delaware which had not joined the Confederacy but were in close proximity to Washington, DC. Lincoln was keen to avoid upsetting the balance in the border states which could have resulted in the nation's capital being surrounded by states loyal to the Confederate States of America.

In freeing slaves only in areas of the Confederacy deemed to be in rebellion against the Union (New Orleans and most of Tennessee were among the area exempted because they were both mostly under Union control at the time), Lincoln was exercising his Executive Power and taking a large step toward ending slavery. He was also making laws for an area whose people were actively fighting a war to preserve slavery and to resist federal authority, meaning the slaves covered by the Emancipation Proclamation were the least likely to actually be affected by it because this required the presence and willingness of the Union Army to enforce it. In the immediate aftermath of the Emancipation Proclamation, the Confederacy passed their own laws which maintained that any slave caught escaping or acting in a state of freedom would immediately be returned to slavery. Any African American

caught taking up arms against the Confederacy would be executed and any white officer caught in command of African American soldiers would similarly be executed. To be sure, many slaves took the opportunity to escape slavery following the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation, but it is also necessary to acknowledge the fact that many more remained in bondage despite being freed. It is that second fact that makes Juneteenth even possible. Because Texas was the Confederate State furthest from Washington DC, the westernmost, and largest state of the Confederacy, it was the last Confederate State to be brought fully under Union control and the last state where the Emancipation Proclamation was officially announced and enforced. June 19, 1865, two months after the end of the Civil War and over two years after the Emancipation Proclamation was actually issued, the remaining slaves in Texas were freed, and they celebrated.

Those slaves celebrated their freedom and now we celebrate, but what do we actually celebrate on Juneteenth. As previously mentioned, The Emancipation Proclamation did not free all the slaves in the United States and Juneteenth does not recognize the liberation of the final slaves in the United States either. Although Missouri, Maryland, and West Virginia took steps to abolish slavery in the aftermath of the end of the Civil War, slavery in Delaware and Kentucky was only ended by the ratification of the 13th Amendment in December of 1865. Furthermore, slavery in the Indian Territories that were loyal to the Confederacy was not abolished until 1866. Lincoln fought hard for the passage of the 13th Amendment to provide a constitutional backing for the abolition of slavery because he was aware that a Southern sympathetic Supreme Court could overturn the

Juneteenth? continued

Emancipation Proclamation and a future Congress could pass a law that reinstated slavery without a constitutional amendment. However, so much of the practice of abolition required the enforcement of the Union Army.

Reconstruction is often considered a failure because once the Union Army withdrew from the former Confederate States, any gains made by the former slaves were erased and a rigid racial hierarchy was refined by the institutions of segregation made possible by black codes and Jim Crow laws. During Reconstruction, African American's made up a sizable proportion of Federal, State and Local elected officials. Following the end of Reconstruction and the withdrawal of Federal Troops, an African American would not be elected to Federal office in a former Confederate state for over 70 years. On January 16, 1865, General William Tecumseh Sherman issued Special Field Order 15 which confiscated 400,000 acres of land in Florida, South Carolina, and Georgia that was to be divided in to 40-acre parcels and settled by 18,000 formerly enslaved families. Special Field Order Number 15 also provided for the use of certain demilitarized equipment, including mules, be provided to those families to develop the land (40 Acres and a Mule). By the end of reconstruction, all of that land had been reclaimed and most of those families were forced into sharecropping, a state of slavery in

everything but name. Throughout Reconstruction, African Americans were able to participate in the political, educational, and economics spheres with an influence that has not been seen since. Reconstruction's greatest failing is that it was unable to solidify these gains as permanent.

So, what is Juneteenth? What are we celebrating? What is its legacy? Like so many things, **the truth is complicated**. It is the recognition of the beginning of the end of slavery, while requiring the acknowledgement that it is not Black Independence Day because it was not the end of slavery. It is the celebration of the Emancipation Proclamation with the understanding of what the Emancipation Proclamation actually did, what it was meant to do, and how it functioned in reality. Juneteenth is the celebration of the end of bondage, the appreciation of the complicated legacy of Emancipation and Reconstruction, and the reconciliation of the journey yet to come.

Michael Simzak is an Historian and Educator of US History. He holds a BA in Classics from Howard University and a MA in History from Villanova University.

Images courtesy of the National Museum African American History and Culture Juneteenth Social Media Toolkit
<https://nmaahc.si.edu/juneteenth>



Illusions

Life and the perspective of the youth mind: Draining pressure of life, friends and school

By Kassidy Baptiste

School is the first and most stressful factor in a young person's life.

It has a wide scale effect on a person's life and development.

The system shapes and/or disposes students to craft a product that will be useful to society. The institution's deceit is that college determines one's success or happiness.

The forced relationships and teachings seclude the mind from adventure, self-discovery and learning the ability to practice self-control. School is the place young people spend most of their time and it is dreadful for most.

Twentieth century schools lack the resources and techniques to attend to a huge variety of students. One system is expected to work for millions of different people. It is an outdated industry that is programing the minds of the young.

We, the students, do realize the role and intention of school, although school overlooks explaining that detail. Unfortunately, we are manipulated into thinking we cannot make changes to the system.

Teens are undermined by adults who lead the institutions because they have been groomed or directed to be a certain way. We, the students, are being shaped for the workforce that will keep the country running, but is that enough?

Industrialization has a deep history and impact on our country and has deep roots in the construction of our nation. It is good for building a robust economy and a nation that is strong, but the balance of building a nation that is a home and a space to live life is equally important. Looking for positive values and possibilities should be the exception and a guide to be a better world.

Mental health is neglected in individual human development.

So are skills that could create indescribable advancement in our world.

Every day I come to school uneager to learn what is forced down my throat for the purpose of taking an exam to analyze my intelligence in an insufficient way.

What is the meaningful purpose of 18 years and 180 days, or more, in an institution that is deficient?

I ask my peers if they are happy and every time the answer is the same, "I wish I was not here" or "I'm getting by".

The first deep conversation I had with a group of students, I found that I barely had anything in common with them...on the surface. It was about not being able to live life. Feeling caged, like an animal or a criminal.

One day, after picking up my 5-year-old cousin, I asked her, "How was your day?" Her response amazed me. It was the same answer as my own, but better. She explained it as "boring, repetitive with nothing engaging." Yes, they do crafts and play, but it is always the same, the same time, the same cycle for 180 days.

Sometimes, I think about the possibilities, if I stepped out of the cycle, I also think of the consequences that come along with my individualism and curiosity.

In my junior year of high school, I attempted to create an advocacy group that would take charge of changing the process, even though I believe the structure of work from school prevents such thoughts and activities.

College is a big milestone in a person's life, which comes from society's emphasis on the college experience. Although there are millions of researchers who have proven a college education is not as important in the real world, it is an expectation and pressure put on children who cannot even make a decision about what to eat.

I take college preparatory classes during the week and on weekends from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. Although it is an improvement and ten times more beneficial than school, I still ponder about the fact that my life has been zeroed down to nothing but that one aspect of workforce life.

As an African American female, I am faced with many adversities and college prep is at the top of the list.

The importance of financial support to not only prevent debt, but to make it possible to attend the school. My participation in minority programs is for the assistance it provides me which offers me a slightly better chance to access these essential opportunities.

Although the negative impact school has on students has been uncovered by the media, it is still neglected. With dramatic changes in our world, our education and perspective of the world must also evolve. Implementing innovative modifications, not only the traditional accustomed changes for comfort is essential. To maintain persistent growth, prosperity, stability and balance, the world must continue changing for the purpose of preserving tradition and comfort, not just to acknowledge and nurture young minds, but also to overcome human ignorance and encourage tolerance for the betterment of the race as a whole.

Black Student Summit

By Jalyn Powell

On Saturday April 9th, in collaboration with the Youth and Young Adult Leadership workstream, we hosted Delaware's FIRST annual Black Student Summit! This was a single day event held at the Chase Fieldhouse to connect and uplift members of Black Student Unions & Associations, Advisors, School administrators and allies that support them as they fight for equity and justice. However, this event would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of our student leaders who worked tirelessly to ensure the event was a success. From organizing the agenda to stuffing bags and moving chairs the night before, the students had all boots on the ground until the very end. This was simply the result of their vision. About 180 students, senior administrators and advisors from Delaware and surrounding areas gathered together to become better changemakers in the fight for justice. Each student was either a member of a black student union within their school or interested in joining one.

The event opened with a presentation from our special guest, Skye Jackson. Jackson is one of three students who helped spur the ["Black At" Instagram movement](#) at their high schools. Through this work she quickly realized the need for a space on a national level where Black students and allies could share stories, learn from national Black leaders, and create positive change for Black students on school campuses across the U.S. Jackson gave a rousing speech setting the tone for the rest of the day.

Our student leaders saw an opportunity to empower the student voice which, from their experience, has been overpowered and

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discouraged at times. As a result, they chose to address the issue by educating students on how to effect positive change. Students were able to choose two workshops to attend from the following: BLACK@: How to Start & Sustain a Black Student Union at Your School, SAY IT LOUD: Activism After High School Panel, VOTE & BE HEARD: Voting Workshop 101 and PASSION & PURPOSE: Finding Your Passion in Social Justice Panel. The students felt this should be an inclusive event so they went to the drawing board to brainstorm how to engage the adult mentors. The students wrapped up with a panel discussion entitled: BLACK. EDUCATED. UNAPOLOGETIC. This panel discussion featured student leaders of Black Student Unions/Associations from public, private and vo-tech high schools in Delaware and special guest moderator, Skye Jackson.

The event included growth opportunities for all, including senior administrators and advisors, through these learning spaces: BSU ADVISORS' WORKSHOP: Cultivating the Voice & Vision of Black Student Leaders, SENIOR ADMINISTRATORS' WORKSHOP: Courageous Leadership and SENIOR ADMINISTRATORS' & BSU ADVISORS' WORKSHOP: Amplify Black Youth Voices: A Conversation on Race in Schools. Advisors learned how to generate

Summit continued

student interest, intentionally select & groom student leaders, plan engaging meetings & programming, advocate for students, and build community within the whole school & community.

This event gave us hope for the future. The amount of momentum and engagement from students and advisors was unexplainable. Students are already looking forward to the next one. Students are now moving with intention to serve their communities and get more involved in their schools. Advisors are better prepared to work with student leaders and support them through their journey in ways that amplify their voice and not suppress it. Our young leaders have worked to elevate, advocate and advance change in diversity, inclusion and justice alongside other students, teachers, school staff, family and allies.

Facilitators included: Taria Pritchett, English Teacher & Advisor of the Black Student Union

@ Mount Pleasant High School in Wilmington, DE, Evelyn Brady, Tariah Hyland- Student/Advocate, Coby Owens- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Dr. Loni Tabb, Shyanne Miller- Metropolitan Wilmington Urban League, Representative Madinah Anton-Wilson and Haneef Salaam.

Our next steps are to establish a communications network for BSUs/BSAs across the state, create a support space for current BSU/BSA's to keep them empowered and help mentor and guide students who are interested in starting a BSU/BSA at their school.

Black Student Summit planning committee members from left to right:

Aakhai Hollis,

Kassidy Baptiste,

Simone Minor,

Hannah Carter,

Kenny Norwood,

Elise Sampson,

Nysier Judkins



Special thanks to all of our volunteers, United Way of Delaware and our sponsors: Bloom Energy, Children and Families First, City of Wilmington City Council, Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Delaware Department of Education, OutLoud, LLC., and Wilmington Community Advisory Council.

We Are Not Disordered

By Lisa R Savage, LCSW

Black people are trying to survive in a disordered world. The stress and strain of racism and racialized trauma are real and impactful.

The Family and Children's Trust Fund of Virginia defines race-based trauma as, **"the stressful impact or emotional pain of one's experience with racism and discrimination. Common traumatic stress reactions that reflect racial trauma include increased vigilance and suspicion, increased sensitivity to threat, sense of a foreshortened future, and maladaptive responses to stress such as aggression or substance use, racial trauma including increased vigilance and suspicion, increased sensitivity to threat, sense of a foreshortened future, and maladaptive responses to stress such as aggression or substance use"**

It's often said that Black communities avoid seeking mental health care because of the stigma. It's important to contextualize the experience of Black people and mental illness.

In 1851, an American physician, Samuel Cartwright, theorized that slave life was so pleasant that only the mentally ill would seek to escape.

In Cartwright's article— **"Diseases and Peculiarities of the Negro Race"** he wrote, **"DRAPETOMANIA, OR THE DISEASE CAUSING NEGROES TO RUN AWAY. It is unknown to our medical authorities, although its diagnostic symptom, the absconding from service, is well known to our planters and overseers...**

In noticing a disease not heretofore classed among the long list of maladies that man is subject to, it was necessary to have a new term to express it. In most cases, the cause that induces the negro to run away from service is as much a disease of the mind as any other species of mental alienation, and much more

curable, as a general rule. With the advantages of proper medical advice, strictly followed, this troublesome practice that many negroes have of running away, can be almost entirely prevented, although the slaves be located on the borders of a free state, within a stone's throw of the abolitionists."

The cure for "drapetomania" was beating or cutting off toes. So, almost from the beginning of Black people being brought to America, objectification, gas-lighting, and pathologizing became how white people sought to control and disempower. Though slavery ended hundreds of years ago, the systems of oppression remain in place and continue to have devastating effects on the Black mind and body. Some would argue that Black people should get over it. Unfortunately, this assertion lacks a deeper understanding of how the vestiges of racism continue to do harm and contribute to the racialized trauma in Black youth and adults.

Studies have shown that Black and Brown children experience their first incident of racism at a very young age. The source of racism can be a friend, adult, teacher, or another person of influence in the child's life. Children often internalize these negative experiences, and they become fertile space for trauma to set in. Usually, it's not a single episode of racism that causes the negative impact of racism. Instead, it's the cumulative effect of ongoing racism. Black people do not experience racism in single episodes, instead, racism is a constant and continuous experience. The continual exposure to hate, subtle comments, and systemic racism ultimately takes a toll. While it is hard to quantify the toll of racism, research shows how deleterious it is to mental and physical well-being.

Black people must learn how to perform mental gymnastics early on. It's hard to 'show up' and be

who we are based on cultural influences. Therefore, at a very young age, Black people must learn how to code-switch in white settings to be accepted. We understand how to turn down our 'Blackness' to fit in and be perceived to be just like the dominant group. In some cases, we conform by dressing in ways to fit the Eurocentric notion of professionalism. White people do not have to second-guess their every action, style of dress, or deny parts of themselves because they represent the standard by which minoritized groups are judged. Recently, Delaware adopted the "Crown Act", which provides legal protection against discrimination against Black hair. Discrimination based on how a person's hair grows is an absurd notion.

Imagine the daily messages of not fitting in, not being good enough, and being perceived to be less than our white counterparts. If these messages go unprocessed, they manifest mentally, physically, and emotionally. The result of these daily assaults is brutal. Therefore, if we assess the impact of structural racism, it becomes easier to see the cruel and lasting effects of racism. It is crucial to point out that educational or social status is not a protective factor against racism or racial trauma. This is especially true for Black males. Often their presence is perceived to be threatening, dangerous, and inferior. For example, Shervin Assari, University of Michigan, did a study in 2017 that showed Black males from higher economic backgrounds were more likely to struggle with depression. Over the years, we've seen a rise in suicide rates among Black youth. It is incumbent upon parents, educators, policymakers, and healthcare professionals to understand racialized trauma. Parents need to assess the impact of this and other trauma and how it plays out in their mental well-being and that of their children.



Post Traumatic Slavery Syndrome - Dr. Joy DeGruy

The Body Keeps Score - Bessel van der Kolk

Resource - www.cliniciansofcolor.org

Lisa R. Savage, LCSW

Found and CEO of the Center for Child Development

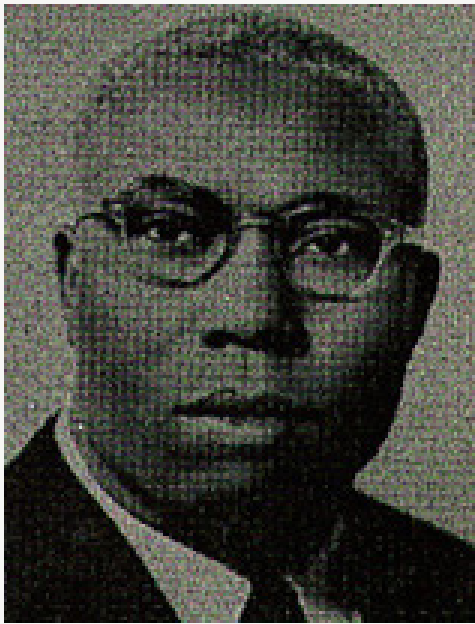
IN HONOR OF

Memorial Day



Spotlight on Dr. Luna Mishoe
Member of the Original Tuskegee Airmen
And
President of Delaware State University

by Toni A. Barrett



http://www.math.buffalo.edu/mad/PEEPS/mishoe_lunai.html

Dr. Luna Isaac Mishoe was born in Horry County, South Carolina on January 5, 1917, to Henry Mishoe and Martha Ellen Oliver-Mishoe. He is most noted for his service as President of Delaware State University from 1960-1987, however, prior to his service as an academic president, he served as a Tuskegee Airman from 1942-1945.

He served as an academic professor of mathematics and physics at Kittrell College in North Carolina and after his tenure there he became a Tuskegee Airman and fought during World War II. In his capacity as an airman, he was a Photographic Intelligence and Communications officer for the all-Black Army Air Force 99th Squadron, the legendary Tuskegee Airmen Squadron which served in the World War II European Theater of Operations.

Few people know about this chapter in Dr. Mishoe's life, including his family until it was unearthed by the son of two alumni of Delaware State University, Andre Swygert, who held an interest in the Tuskegee Airmen and their history. During his research, Andre Swygert discovered Dr. Luna Mishoe and his role in this legendary unit.

Dr. Luna died in January 1989 of cancer. As we approach Memorial Day, let us remember this great man and all of the African American men and women who have served our country, often under adverse and racist conditions.



<https://www.desu.edu/news/2016/12/dr-luna-mishoe-honored-original-tuskegee-airmen>



The Tuskegee Airmen were a group of African American Pilots and Airmen. Founded in 1941, this group of courageous men fought for the United States in World War II. They formed the 332nd Fighter Group and the 477th Bombardment Group of the US Army Air Forces.

Some Facts About the TUSKEGEE AIRMAN

Prior to the Tuskegee Airmen, no African American had been a United States Military Pilot.

During WWII, the American military was racially segregated and African Americans were still subject to Jim Crow laws. Although the Tuskegee Airmen were considered an elite group of men, they were still segregated from their white counterparts and officers.



Often the Tuskegee Airmen served as escorts for heavy bombers and had a very successful record. These airmen were known as "Red Tails"

In 1944, the first African American 332nd Squadron was sent overseas under the command of Benjamin O Davis.



996 pilots made up the Tuskegee Airmen. They were educated at Tuskegee Institute (now Tuskegee University) located in Tuskegee Alabama.

The Tuskegee Airmen made approximately 1,578 combat missions, 179 bomber Escort Missions, destroyed 112 enemy aircraft in the air and 150 on the ground



The War Department policies mandated the separation of African Americans into separate military units, but were still staffed with white officers

Segregation in the military ended in 1948, under President Harry S. Truman and Tuskegee Airmen were in high demand in the United States Air Force



In 2008, all remaining Airmen were invited to the inauguration of Barack Obama.

After the war, Tuskegee Airmen went on to become aviators, doctors, lawyers, educators and politicians as well as other professions



In 2007 the Tuskegee Airmen were collectively awarded a Congressional of Honor



The last remaining Tuskegee Airman died on January 16, 2022



<https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/2902500/tuskegee-airman-charles-mcgee-dies-at-102/>

Alpha Alpha Mu Omega Celebrates Harriet Tubman's 200th Birthday

By Tohi Barrett



The Ladies of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Alpha Alpha Mu Omega Chapter recently took part in a global walk for Harriet Tubman entitled, "A Moving Tribute -Harriet Tubman's 200th Birthday ", honoring the legacy of this most important freedom fighter. As you know, Harriet Tubman was an American abolitionist instrumental in escaping slavery and subsequently rescuing approximately 70 additional slaves and leading them to freedom through the underground railroad.

Alpha Alpha Mu Omega partnered with Girltrek, which is a national organization designed to encourage Black women to live healthier lives through movement. Girltrek believes if Harriet Tubman could walk her way to freedom, "we can walk our way to better health". Thursday March 10, donned in pink and green, the sorority's colors, members of Alpha Alpha Mu Omega Chapter could be seen walking all over Sussex County alone and in small groups. One teacher in the chapter organized her students to walk around their school's track four times, while others walked on the beach and throughout their neighborhoods. Pictures of chapter members walking were posted on the chapter's social media pages.

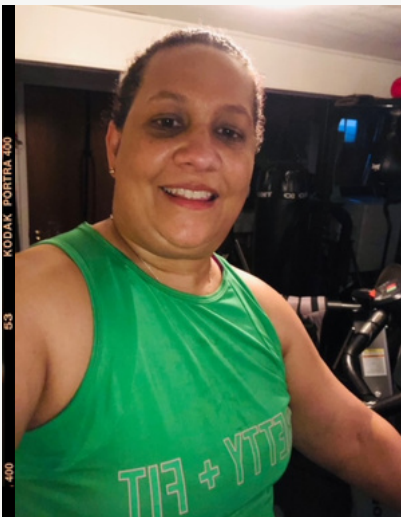
Many members of Alpha Alpha Mu Omega plan to continue with the idea of walking for health by initiating an April challenge of pledging to walk 30 minutes per day. Here's to Harriet Tubman on the occasion of her 200th birthday and to the inspiration she has given to all of us.



Marlene Saunders, Toni Barrett and Shorel Clark

Melissa White

Donya Maul



Dara Savage



Marlene Saunders, Toni Barrett and Shorel Clark

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated® (AKA) is an international service organization that was founded on the campus of Howard University in Washington, DC in 1908. It is the oldest Greek-lettered organization established by African-American, college-educated women. Alpha Kappa Alpha is comprised of nearly 300,000 members in 1,024 graduate and undergraduate chapters in the United States, Liberia, the Bahamas, the US Virgin Islands, Germany, South Korea, Bermuda, Japan, Canada, South Africa, and the United Arab Emirates. Led by International President Glenda Baskin Glover, Alpha Kappa Alpha is often hailed as "America's premier Greek-letter organization for African-American women." For more information on Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and its programs, visit www.aka1908.com.

THERE'S MORE to the Story

Leland Melvin: Seek Diversity, New Perspectives, and People Who Believe in You

At the School of Engineering's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Colloquium, the NASA engineer and astronaut shared advice on how to thrive as a professional



"This moon stuff—whatever," said Leland Melvin, here inset in a Zoom screen. "I wanted to be a tennis player." In his talk, Melvin showed photos of tennis greats Althea Gibson and Arthur Ashe, both with instructor Robert Johnson, who were inspirations.

by Amy Rosenberg
March 1, 2022

Leland Melvin likes to joke about his career trajectory: "I did what every former NFL player does—they go work for NASA, right?"

Maybe not, but that path made sense for Melvin. With an undergraduate degree in chemistry, he was drafted out of college to play football with the Detroit Lions and the Dallas Cowboys.

During training camp, he pursued postgraduate studies in engineering. Then, sidelined by an injury, Melvin left the NFL, earned a master's degree, and clinched a job at NASA building temperature and hydrogen sensors for aerospace vehicles. Later, he worked as an astronaut on board the space shuttle Atlantis.

Melvin's joke raises a serious point—entrenched stereotypes make people feel surprised to hear that a Black football player is also an accomplished engineer and astronaut.

During a talk he gave for the Tufts School of Engineering's Spring 2022 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Colloquium Series, Melvin reflected upon that point and the stereotypes. He also discussed his formative years, including describing key moments that allowed him to flourish, and he offered advice for aspiring engineers: "Have that fire, that grit, that determination, that resilience ... but make sure you have people around you that give you belief [in yourself] when you don't have it."

Tufts President Anthony Monaco introduced Melvin, noting that his 2017 memoir *Chasing Space* and his frequent public talks have been "inspiring audiences across the globe to follow their passions, forge their own paths, and pursue careers in STEM fields."

Scheduled to take place in person, on campus, Melvin's talk was moved to a virtual setting when a snowstorm interrupted plans for the event. Here are four key takeaways from the colloquium.

The best solutions come from the most diverse teams. As a field, engineering must strive to build teams made up of many different perspectives, Melvin said. "I think it's really important, as we look at solving problems as engineers, that we bring all of the diversity—not just color, but I mean diversity of mindset, of experiences... that we bring all these things into play." "As you go on your journey to become astronauts or whatever you desire to be," he told the audience, "bring all of [your unique] flavor, that culture, all that sauce—whatever you have—into the solution process, because it makes the solution even better."

Find your Man (or Woman) in the Yellow Hat. Melvin harkened back to his childhood, when he loved reading books from the renowned children's series Curious George. George had one thing in addition to curiosity, Melvin said: "He also had the Man in the Yellow Hat, who had his back. No matter what happened, no matter what trouble he got in, he always had that Man in the Yellow Hat. Who is your Man (or Woman) in the Yellow Hat at Tufts University? Who is that person there to help you on your journey when you don't think you can do it?"

Melvin's own yellow-hat wearers believed in him when he didn't believe in himself, he said. He included among these his high school football coach, a former head of NASA, and a NASA surgeon. Without the coach, Melvin would have quit before proving himself and earning a full college scholarship. Without his colleagues, who helped him overcome an on-the-job injury that left him partially deaf, Melvin would never have made it to space.

Listen to everyone. When the February 2003 Space Shuttle Columbia disaster occurred, Melvin was working in NASA's education department. The Columbia crew were friends and colleagues of his, and their loss was deeply personal to him. What struck Melvin most about the event was the fact that it was preventable. There had been "an engineer who actually said, 'I think I saw something,'" when a piece of foam broke off during the shuttle's launch, endangering its re-entry. If others had listened to the engineer, Melvin suggested, the mission might have been aborted in time. The lesson? "As you go through your engineering journey, make sure that you listen to every single person. Listen to everyone, because that little bit of information might be the key to you solving the problem."

Find a way to see things differently. For Melvin, working with a diverse crew aboard the International Space Station (ISS) was a life-changing experience, because it allowed him to see humanity as interconnected.

As an example, Melvin recalled sharing a meal with the others on his team on board the ISS. That team comprised one African-American astronaut and an Asian-American astronaut; astronauts from France, Germany, and Russia; and the first female commander of a space shuttle.

As the shuttle flew over Melvin's hometown of Lynchburg, Virginia, and then over Paris and close to Moscow, Melvin was struck by the thought of his and his colleagues' families all eating different meals in different places, at the same time that their team was eating in space.

A new perspective suddenly clicked into place. It was "the overview effect," he explained, "where the brain cognitively shifts and changes the way you see yourself and how you fit, not just into the world, but into the planet, into the universe. And it changes you. It fundamentally changes you."

That perspective has shaped all of his work and decision making since.

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<https://now.tufts.edu/2022/03/01/leland-melvin-see-diversity-new-perspectives-and-people-who-believe-you>

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