

THOMAS Continued from Front Page

Customarily, those currently serving in these important roles would continue in that capacity until a committee chair has been named by the new mayor, so that the city's business continues without a disparate impact and is not stifled.

That has not happened. As a matter of fact, Mayor Whitmire states that he has made plans to make his committee chair appointments by the end of February, according to his spokesperson, Mary Benton, who recently served as the Director of Communications under Mayor Sylvester Turner's administration.

So, that brings us to the issue that has concerned many in the community, as it relates to understanding the way the situation between Mayor Whitmire and Council Member Thomas has been played out by several in the mainstream media, calling her actions "unauthorized" and such.

Council Member Thomas vehemently states that these are false narratives and far from the case. She was just doing her job, as she has done every month for four consecutive years.

The Forward Times caught up with Council Member Thomas to gain a clearer understanding of what truly went on relative to the situation between her and this process, as well as why she felt the need to educate the public on this matter.

FORWARD TIMES: Has the new mayoral administration appointed a Chair of the Housing and Community Affairs Committee? If so, who were you replaced by?

CM THOMAS: The Administration has not appointed anyone to any committees to date.

FORWARD TIMES: Were your actions standard and customary in your role and responsibility as the Chair of the Housing and Community Affairs Committee?

CM THOMAS: During my last term (2020-2024), I met with the former Mayor on January 9, 2020, and was appointed Chair of the Housing and Community Affairs Committee and held my first Special Called Meeting regarding 9% Tax Credits on February 3, 2020. I expected to follow the same format to ensure this process was not interrupted during the transition of a new Administration and the quick turnaround. Apparently, the work will be initiated through his Administration.

FORWARD TIMES: As the committee chair, did you believe it was important to call the meeting until the new committee chairs were announced by the new mayor?

CM THOMAS: Absolutely. We are talking about a public hearing – especially when the process and narrative around housing are often contentious and unclear. Recent reports have already spotlighted Houston as an unaffordable city, and when we have real estate developers and stakeholders intentionally focusing on creating housing inventory in our communities, it would only be prudent to keep the same schedule and pace.

FORWARD TIMES: What was your primary reason for issuing a public statement?

CM THOMAS: *The Houston Chronicle* led with such an aggressive headline, painting me as the 'out-of-line' Black woman for clicks and shares rather than leading with a story to elevate the importance of affordable housing in Houston, especially since the Administration led with that as a campaign talking point. I wanted to share my perspective with Black media to offer a balanced perspective and encourage folks to pay attention and participate in what's happening at City Hall.

FORWARD TIMES: How will this issue impact affordable housing in the city?

CM THOMAS: After the recent reports, more people are paying attention, but now it's time for a more elevated conversation. Let me also add that African Americans are paying nearly 46% of their income on housing and are more likely to be house-poor while not generating the same income as their white peers. What's important to underscore as it relates to the 9% tax applications that center the public hearing is that we are not talking about police, fire, and teachers --- we are talking about the CAN that provides care to your grandparent, we are talking about the paraprofessionals in schools and hospitals that provide front line service to your children and patients. We are talking about law school students pursuing their degrees and must focus on school full-time.

FORWARD TIMES: What do you want the community to know/do about this issue and should citizens be concerned about it?

CM THOMAS: I want the community to know that I operate at the highest level of integrity and principle any time my name is involved because I represent more than myself. I represent you and your issues with fidelity. You can participate in this process by engaging with real estate developers, sharing your concerns, and/or supporting projects. As for the public hearing that is currently scheduled, I hope folks understand how important the process is and how transparency is the name of the game to ensure that Houstonians know what Housing options are available to them. We have to do a better job of painting the picture of why we must invest in housing inventory that creates options for people who choose to work, live, and play in our city.

Forward Times readers, as far as this council agenda item is concerned, a vote on this item is scheduled on the council agenda for February 14th (Valentine's Day). If the item is tagged on February 14th (which means a council member can delay the matter for a period of one week, according to the City of Houston's Code of Ordinances), a vote on this

item would be rescheduled to appear on the February 21st council agenda for consideration and possible action.

For more information and to find out how this may impact you as a resident of the City of Houston, please contact your district or at-large council members and get engaged in the process.

TRAUMA CURE Continued from Front Page



Dr. Alaina Curry (center) and team

- Listen and look with suspended judgement
- Observe the emotions of all involved parties
- Validate different perspectives
- Express yourself skillfully

Empathy means stepping outside your own viewpoint to imagine someone else's world through their experience. It's at the heart of Dr. Curry's Empathy Skills Practice™, a unique methodology designed to activate the Prefrontal Cortex (PFC), the most evolved part of the human brain. "The PFC, your brain's 'CEO', can overrule and tame the input of the traumatized primitive brain programming, helping one to slow down enough to engage the parts of the brain that can see the short- and long-term goals," she writes. "ESP™ helps you guide your body (including your words) towards more effective behaviors, leading to better overall outcomes."

Dr. Curry emphasizes that empathy is an essential function of the human experience: "To lack empathy is to have an emotional, psychological and spiritual blindness. It is to operate in a state of disconnectedness from reality. It is a delusional state (meaning a fixed, false belief that does not respond to clear evidence to the contrary)."

Module 3 focuses on trauma, defined as any event (usually negative) that changes the way you see yourself, others and the world. It can affect both physical and psychological well-being and even relationships. There are many faces of trauma, and it can take many different forms. In one of the more eye-opening moments of the conference, Dr. Curry presented a list of traumatic events or circumstances and asked participants to identify how many applied to them:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Verbal/emotional abuse
- Bullying and intimidation
- Climate-related disasters (fires, floods, hurricanes, etc.)
- Hunger or food insecurity
- Religious trauma
- War (military combat or secondary exposure)
- Grief
- Gun violence
- Medical issues/illness
- Parental illness/caregiver struggles

Many of these traumas disproportionately affect Black people. Feeding America, a nonprofit network of more than 200 food banks, determined that Black communities face hunger at more than twice the rate of their White counterparts.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is most often associated with military service, specifically combat. And a series of reports revealed that Black Vietnam veterans had higher rates of PTSD, in part because they were more likely to be in combat than their white counterparts. (Yet they were more likely to be denied for disability benefits.)

But PTSD can also apply in other contexts, including sexual assault and gun violence. And it can even be experienced in response to racial trauma (police brutality, racial profiling, and racially charged violence). Partly because of these factors, Black people have been shown to experience a higher lifetime prevalence of PTSD in comparison to other ethnicities. And the independent nonprofit Everytown for Gun Safety uncovered unsettling data about the disproportionate impact of gun violence on Black people.

As one of the most traumatized groups in history, it is vital that we as Black people recognize our trauma to better access and maximize opportunities for healing. One of the most commonly recognized misconceptions discovered during the webinar is the notion that "Black people don't go to therapy" or shouldn't trust therapy. Dr. Curry stressed the need to move past these limits and evolve into a higher self. Emotions are a kind of communication system, she taught us; we can minimize and push them down, but we do so at our own peril.

CLASSIFIEDS

PUBLIC NOTICE

Anyone knowing the whereabouts of ALVINEKKA FREEMONT last known address is 12345 BOB WHITE DRIVE APT 803, HOUSTON, TX 77035, please contact Attorney Kourtnee Jones at 318-801-2572.

NOTICE TO PROPOSERS

The Houston Independent School District Purchasing Services Department located at 4400 West 18th Street, Houston, TX 77092 is soliciting Request for Proposals (RFP) via the District's electronic bidding portal. Proposers may login to view specifications and submit their responses at the following link <https://houstonisd.ionwave.net/Login.aspx> until 2:00 p.m. (CST) Tuesday, February 20, 2024, for the following solicitation:

RFP 24-01-03 District-wide Copier, Duplicator and Printer Lease

A pre-proposal conference via Microsoft Teams will be held in conjunction with this RFP. Information regarding dates, times, and instructions to receive a link to join the meeting can be located within the electronic bidding portal under the "Event Details" tab specific to this solicitation.

NOTICE BY PUBLICATION

A Complaint for Third-Party Legal and Physical Custody of a Minor Child and Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) was filed with the Circuit Court for Montgomery County, Maryland on March 1st, 2023. The Complaint alleges, in substance: that the Plaintiff, Hector Salvador Espana Garcia, lives in Maryland, USA, with the Minor Child, Angel Daniel Salguero Perez; that Angel has resided with the Plaintiff, his maternal uncle, for more than six (6) months; that under Maryland law, Defendant #1, Benigna Perez Ramos, who is Angel's biological mother, neglected Angel; Defendant #2, Daniel Salguero Morales, who is Angel's biological father, abandoned Angel; that it is not in Angel's best interest to return to Guatemala; and therefore reunification with both of his parents is not viable. Plaintiff seeks Legal and Physical Custody of the Minor Child based on these allegations.

It is this 21st day of November 2023, ORDERED, that the Plaintiff cause a copy of this Notice to be published once a week, on Wednesday, for three consecutive weeks in the *Houston Forward Times*, a newspaper of general circulation published in Houston, Texas; publication to be completed by November 22, 2024; Defendant must file a response on or before April 2, 2024; Defendant is warned that failure to file a response within the time allowed may result in a default judgment or the granting of the relief sought.

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Karen A. Bushell
Karen A. Bushell
Clerk of the Circuit Court for
Montgomery County, Maryland

HOUSTON-GALVESTON AREA COUNCIL

Request for Proposal – Houston-Galveston Area Council – Public Services – Electric Vehicle Charging Equipment and Related Services – EV08-24

H-GAC is soliciting responses for selecting qualified manufacturers, dealers, distributors, and service providers for electric vehicle (EV) charging equipment and related services to make these types of products and services available to Customers of the HGACBuy Cooperative Purchasing Program under blanket type contracts.

To view the solicitation documents, visit <https://www.hgacbuy.org/bid-notices> or txsmartbuy.com/esbd.

Response Deadline: March 7, 2024 @ 12:00 P.M. CST

HELP WANTED

TEAM LEAD
Schlumberger Technology Corporation is seeking a Team Lead, in Houston, TX, to lead a small team of tech Cloud Software Eng & Sustaining staff focused on a subsystem or sub-element of a lgr product cloud software dev or tech dev project. Min BS, or forgn ed equiv, in CS or a closely-related IT field + 2 yrs of post-bacc exp as an Analytics Eng. For complete req's, visit <https://careers.slb.com/>, Job ID: 3567

HELP WANTED

Sr. Process Engineer (Houston, TX)
Req'd to dvlp each prjcts scope & process simulations for each prjct assigned. Req'd to draft block flow diagrams, PFDs & P&IDs for each prjct as well as perform equipment & relief valve sizing per prjct. Req'd to participate in facilitate PHA & HAZOP studies as well as perform hydraulic analysis on assigned prjct. Work w/ multidisciplinary teams & prvd updates to prjct mgrs as well as attending client meetings to discuss process dsgr. Req's a master's degree in chemical eng'g w/ 1-yr relevant work exp. Please mail resumes to HPF Consultants Inc. at 3106 N. Big Spring St., Midland ,TX 79705

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

THE HARRIS CENTER For MENTAL HEALTH And IDD will be accepting responses to a Request for Proposal for the following service:

6168 Supportive Living Apartments- Property Management Agent Services

Specifications may be secured from The Harris Center's, Purchasing Department, via The Harris Center's website www.theharriscenter.org or the Electronic State Business Dailey Site <https://portal.cpa.state.tx.us/> beginning Tuesday, February 13, 2024. The deadline for prospective vendors to submit questions to this RFP is Wednesday, February 21, 2024. Responses to the Request for Proposal (RFP) must be submitted to Purchasing Department by **10:00 a.m., on Wednesday, March 6, 2024, delivered to 9401 Southwest Freeway, Houston, Texas 77074 in a sealed envelope marked "RFP-6168 Supportive Living Apartments-Property Management Agent Services- DO NOT OPEN UNTIL WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6, 2024 @ 10:00 A.M."** Any questions pertaining to this request for proposal should be addressed in writing to Sharon Brauner cc: Nina Cook via email to Sharon.brauner@theharriscenter.org cc: Nina.cook@theharriscenter.org. THE HARRIS CENTER reserves the rights to reject any and/or all responses to the Request for Proposal deemed to be in its best interests, to waive formalities and reasonable irregularities in submitted documents and are not obligated to accept all responses to the Request for Proposal.