

## LOCAL / REGIONAL

**Foster Care Conference to be Held on May 14th**

CHATTANOOGA, TENN. — Local families have the chance to learn more about foster care, and helping vulnerable children at a conference hosted by Tennessee Kids Belong on Saturday, May 14th from 9:00 a.m. – 3 p.m. at Ridgedale Baptist located at 1831 Hickory Valley Rd, Chattanooga, TN 37421. Registration is available at [www.tnkidsbelong.org/events](http://www.tnkidsbelong.org/events). A light breakfast and lunch are included.

Right now, the need to recruit and support existing foster families is at an all-time high. TKB is hosting a conference to help bring awareness of the needs and support options. Attendees will hear from many of the organizations serving the TN Valley Region and participate in breakout sessions including topics such as trauma tips, foster youth and foster parent panel, and other current needs in our county.

The goal is for attendees to leave feeling better equipped, supported, and connected to the resources in TN Valley!

The target audience for the conference is prospective and active foster parents in the TN Valley region which includes counties as follows, Hamilton, Bradley, Polk, Bradley, Marion, Sequatchie, Rhea, Meigs and McMinn

The conference is in partnership with the Department of Children's Services, Chambliss Center for Children, Camelot, Omni Visions and Centerstone.

Tennessee Kids Belong equips the community to dramatically improve the experience and outcomes for children in foster care. We are not a licensed foster care agency.

**Republican Primary Forum**

CHATTANOOGA, TN— Hamilton County Mayoral candidates Sabrena Smedley and Weston Wamp will meet for a Republican Primary forum, which will be aired for public viewing on WTCI - PBS and WUTC 88.1, Thursday, April 14 at 8:00 p.m. EST, a non-profit coalition announced today. All candidates who qualified to be on the ballot in the Republican primary were invited to participate.

Partnering organizations include the Chattanooga Area Chamber of Commerce, Chattanooga 2.0, the Community Foundation of Greater Chattanooga, the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, the United Way of Greater Chattanooga, and Venture Forward. WTCI-PBS and WUTC are presenting media partners.

The Republican Primary forum will be moderated by Ray Bassett, host of Scenic Roots on WUTC 88.1 FM. After brief introductory statements are made by each candidate, the debate will follow a standard format in which candidates will have up to two minutes to respond to questions, followed by up to one minute of response from the opposing candidate.

"At the Foundation, we believe that creating opportunities for sharing information and building relationships is as crucial as our monetary investments in the community," says Dwayne Marshall, Community Foundation VP of Community Investment. "We are excited to work with our partners to create space for shared learning and informed decision-making this May and August as part of the Hamilton County government election cycle."

Viewers and listeners should expect candid discussions about the candidates' experiences, priorities, and opportunities for the future of Hamilton County. The focus will remain on substantial issues and solutions for the community.

"WTCI understands the value of an informed community. It is mission-focused work. A candidate forum is an opportunity for those on the ballot to communicate their vision for our community. Working with our partners, it is imperative that we offer multiple platforms for this important programming," says Bob Culkeen, president and CEO of WTCI-PBS.

The candidates will respond to questions submitted by the coordinating partners. The views and opinions expressed in this program are those of the speakers and do not necessarily reflect the views or positions of any entities they represent.

"We look forward to furthering our understanding of Sabrena Smedley and Weston Wamp's perspectives on key issues for Hamilton County. We're proud to continue to be part of this partnership bringing the opportunity to know where these candidates stand on key issues to our community," said Lesley Searce, President and CEO of United Way of Greater Chattanooga.

Early voting will be held in Hamilton County April 13th through April 28th. The primary election will be held on May 3rd. More information about how and where to vote can be found at the Hamilton County Election Commission website at <https://elect.hamiltontn.gov>.

**Mike Greer Launches Campaign for Hamilton County Commission District 5**

Mike Greer has announced that he will be a candidate in the May 3, 2022 Democratic primary election for the District 5 County Commission seat being vacated by Katherlyn Geter. District 5 includes the Airport, Bonny Oaks, Dalewood, Eastgate, Glenwood, Lake Hills, Ridgeside, Tyner, and Woodmore voting precincts.

The long-time Chattanooga resident was born and raised in District 5. He and his wife raised their two daughters in this District. Greer is a financial advisor and small business owner, who is dedicated to helping community members find good jobs post-COVID and secure their financial future.

Greer is committed to seeing District 5 move forward, stating "I'm ready to pick up the work Commissioner Geter started, to represent this district in front of our entire Commission and to reprioritize it in front of all our communities."

The Greer campaign pledges to concentrate on three main community concerns: education and fully funding our local public schools, creating economic opportunities within District 5, and strengthening our neighborhoods with a focus on affordable housing and increasing home ownership.

Interested parties may learn more about the campaign by visiting [www.electmikegreer.com](http://www.electmikegreer.com)



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**Up For the Vote: Vaughn Pushes Teachers Promise Bill to Aid Tennessee Teachers**

By Vivian Shipe

KNOXVILLE, TN — She is 11-years-old and by all indications is going to be a great legislator in the very near future. Nia Vaughn created a bill to make the financial burden on the lives of teachers across the state of Tennessee much lighter. The Teachers Promise Bill will ensure teachers have the supplies they need to stock their classrooms. for the year.

Vaughn testified before the legislature in December and spoke of the needs of the teachers and how covering the cost of the supplies the 78,000 teachers across the state have to purchase with their own money would allow them to buy needed items for their own families.. She presented facts and figures and even showed how the current supply dollars amount to only four dollars per student.

Vaughn is an honor student at Karns Middle School, a member of the cheerleading team, the school choir, a sprinter on the Knox Area Youth Track Team and is a competitive baton twirler for Spectra Twirlers. She is an active member at Overcoming Believers Church, and is also a published author. Her book, "The Super Chronicles: Stories of the Power to Make a Difference," was written when she was five-years-old.

Her proud parents are Clarence and Syreeta Vaughn and she has two younger sisters, Jada and Zya. Her amendment to Tennessee Law HB 2604 request an increase of \$100 to all of K-12 teachers in Tennessee.

The amendment is up for a vote in the coming weeks.



Nia Vaughn testifying in Nashville. Courtesy photos



Clarence Vaughn, left, stands with his daughter Nia and her sister Jada and Rep. Sam McKenzie

**BIDEN: from front**

In Chattanooga, Ed Johnson, a black man wrongfully accused of raping a white woman, was killed on the Walnut Street Bridge March 4, 1906. A white mob attempted to hang Johnson, but when their hanging attempts failed, they shot him to death. Johnson had been convicted in a county court and sentenced to death. Johnson's lynching was followed by an unprecedented criminal trial at the Supreme Court, which ordered a stay of execution.

The Walnut Street Bridge in downtown Chattanooga has a history of being a site where lynchings took place.

"Lynching was pure terror to enforce the lie that not everyone--not everyone belongs in America and not everyone is created equal; terror to systematically undermine hard-fought civil rights; terror not just in the dark of the night but in broad daylight," said President Biden.

"Innocent men, women and children hung by nooses from trees. Bodies burned and drowned and castrated. Their crimes? Trying to vote. Trying to go to school. To try and own a business or preach the Gospel. False accusations of murder, arson and robbery. Simply being Black."

**LEE: from front**

Commissioner Butch Eley told the Democratic lawmaker that in proposing a month-long grocery tax "holiday," the administration looked at the gas tax and found that the grocery tax would be better relief for Tennesseans.

"As it relates to the gas tax, it's a tax that is gathered at the wholesale level so there are a number of complications," Commissioner Eley explained. "We felt that ultimately the grocery tax was one that every Tennessean could participate in."

In published reports, Republican House Speaker Cameron Sexton said the price tag for the proposed 30-day grocery tax suspension likely would be between \$80 million and \$110 million.

Grocery items are taxable at a rate of 4% (plus local rates of more than 2%) in Tennessee. If Gov. Lee's proposal is

approved, three exclusions to the halted grocery tax will be included: candy, alcohol, and prepared meals.

**ALLGOOD: from page 3**

in attendance. The reception was catered by Herman's Soul Food Restaurant.

At the conclusion of the event, Allgood and local R&B songstress Denise Dave took to the stage for a short concert.

In 1994, Ray's Records released "One Eye Watching," which debuted with a promotional video on BET, making Allgood one of the first African American artists from Chattanooga to land a music video on the station. The video played for 79 consecutive days, gaining Allgood national attention. He then came out with the remake of "Sara Smile," originally sung by pop duo Daryl Hall and John Oats.

Allgood has performed at Chattanooga's Riverbend festival and was recognized by the city of Chattanooga and former mayor Andy Berke for "putting in hard work with his craft and being a positive influence." His framed and signed photo is showcased alongside many other celebrities and stars on a "wall of fame" at the highly acclaimed City Cafe in downtown Chattanooga.

"We are always proud when Black Chattanooga natives make it big," said Dr. Elenora Woods, WPTP 100.1 FM founder and president.

Allgood credited his success to hard work, determination, and a strong belief in God, and thanked his family, as well as his many hometown fans and supporters.

"I want to give thanks to my mother, father, management team and fans for believing in me and supporting me," he said. "And a huge thank you is extended to WPTP 100.1 FM for spinning my music, showcasing me on their radio station and supporting me. It's been a long road for me, and I appreciate everyone coming out

to support this event. After more than 2-3 decades of putting work into the industry, it finally has paid off."

**EPB: from page 3**

"It's such an honor to promote the talent of our local, diverse artists," said Elizabeth Hammitt, EPB Director of Residential Energy and Environmental Solutions. "We continue to be impressed by the level of talent that we have seen and are so grateful to our many community partners who select the art through a blind judging process and advise us every step of the way."

A number of community partners made this project possible including ArtsBuild, Association of Visual Arts, Bessie Smith Cultural Center, City of Chattanooga's Public Art Chattanooga, Chattanooga Community Kitchen, MLK Neighborhood Association, RISE Chattanooga, River City Company, Urban League of Greater Chattanooga and University of Tennessee Chattanooga.

"I'm thrilled to see this next round of artists who will be bringing so much vibrancy to the MLK Neighborhood with their talents," said James McKissic, President of ArtsBuild. "I'm proud that we're able to support EPB's 10th Street Mural Project and look forward to seeing all of the new murals coming to downtown."

This is the second year of the four-year project. EPB will take submissions to create a public mural on the third side of the substation wall in late 2022.

**GIVEAWAY: from page 3**

plus two mobile coaches that travel to all the counties surrounding Hamilton County. The center offers evening and weekend hours for convenience. To schedule a screening mammogram at any location, call 423.495.4040. The MaryEllen Locher Breast Center has financial assistance available for uninsured and under-insured women, so they can receive a mammogram at no cost to them. Visit [MaryEllenLocher.com](http://MaryEllenLocher.com) for more information, including location addresses.