



The Black Heartbeat February 2022



Black History Month

This month we celebrate almost one hundred years of celebrating the contributions of Black influence around the world. In 1926, Carter G. Woodson founded Negro History Week to honor the history, lives and contributions of African Americans to American society. In the mid 1960's during the Civil Rights Movement college students demanded that the celebration be changed from one week to one month. President Gerald Ford in 1976 established the month-long celebration in the United States.

The teaching of Black History 365 days of the year to children allows us to learn so much about ourselves and our ability to overcome challenges. It is our opportunity as their role models to guide their moral compass by learning from the mistakes of the past. Black Americans at first were forced to live here by force. E can't change

the past but we can use each day to teach about our history.

National Geographic For Kids shared that Black History Month is also celebrated in Canada, The United Kingdom, Germany and The Netherlands.

“Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” George Santayana

(Please share the included Black Facts with friends and family.)

**A Letter from Our President,
Gloria Blevins, MMG, SHRM-CP**



“Ours is not the struggle of one day, one week, or one year. Ours is not the struggle of one judicial appointment or presidential term. Ours is the struggle of a lifetime, or maybe even many lifetimes, and each one of us in every generation must do our part.” – John Lewis

As we join the world in celebration of Black History Month, we recognize this as a moment to celebrate our victories and reflect upon our progress towards equity and equality. Since 1970, National Black Child Development Institute and its Affiliate Network has been standing at the forefront of advocacy for Black and Brown children. BCDI Cleveland, chartered in 2017, joined the efforts to address disparities, inequities, and to become the ‘VOICE’ for Black children and families throughout Ohio. I acknowledge that we have made effective progress yet to move forward, intentional collaboration and partnership is essential in creating positive outcomes.

Our ancestors created a blueprint inclusive of resiliency, advancement, and empowerment in their pursuit of equality and with these foundational principles, BCDI Cleveland will continue to impact policy, implement programming and connect resources to achieve change. As we continue to engage in the work to facilitate change, I thank our stakeholders, members, Board Members, and volunteers who remain invested in the success of Black children. I welcome anyone who wishes to foster positive change in educational, health, family engagement, and more to join BCDI Cleveland-WE ARE CREATING HISTORY!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gloria Blevins', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

A promotional banner with a yellow background. At the top, there is a row of six small images showing diverse Black families and children. Below the images, the text reads "Become a  member today!" where the logo is a stylized 'B' with a person silhouette. Below this, a black bar contains the text "Click on this banner to learn more." in white and orange.

***A letter from our Vice President,
Robyn Gibson, M.ED.***



Greetings,

My name is Robyn Gibson and I am the Vice President of BCDI Cleveland. I have served as Vice President for this great affiliate since its inception in 2017. It has been my pleasure to serve in a role that prioritizes Black children and their families. Being part of this organization excites me because it provides me and many others with opportunities to support, educate and empower our communities.

Black History Month adds flavor to our ongoing work. We know that it is important for BCDI Cleveland to forge forward with work that brings meaning and positive change to our communities, amplify the voices that acknowledge the history of African Americans and inspire in ways that transform lives today for better futures tomorrow. We welcome you to join us on this journey of celebrating and creating Black History!

I am very proud of our new publication. I thank all who have joined us to make many things such as this publication

possible. It will prove to be a great resource that will facilitate connections that empower Black families, provide impactful information, and more importantly enhance the lives of Black children.

Enjoy!

Black History Facts

After years of remarkable work as an attorney, Thurgood Marshall became the first African American to serve in the U.S. Supreme Court. Officially nominated by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1967, he served as a justice until 1991.

In 1981, broadcast journalist Bryant Gumbel became the first Black person to host a network morning show when he joined NBC's *Today* show.

In 2012, at the London Olympics, Gabby Douglas became the first Black gymnast to win the Individual All-Around title.

The oldest Black female Greek-letter organization, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. (AKA), was founded at Howard University in 1908. Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. (Alpha), the first Black male Greek-letter organization, was founded in 1906 at Cornell University.

Computer scientist Lisa Gelobter assisted with the 1995 creation of Shockwave, essential technology that led to the development of web animation. (So we have her to thank for GIFs.)

Phillis Wheatley was the first African American to publish a book of poetry, *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*, in 1773. Born in Gambia and sold to the Wheatley family in Boston when she was 7 years old, Wheatley was

emancipated shortly after her book was released.

After graduating from Oberlin College in 1850 with a literary degree, Lucy Stanton became the first Black woman in America to earn a four-year college degree.

Founded in 1984, the Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo is the only touring African American rodeo in the world

Rebecca Lee Cumpler was the first black female to become a doctor of medicine in the United States.

M.L.K. improvised the most iconic part of his "I have a Dream" speech.

Anna Murray was the first African American ordained a Episcopal priest.

Benjamin Banneker taught himself astronomy and math to become America's "First Known African American Man of Science."

Allensworth, California was an all- Black township -one of the first of its kind.

John Baxter Taylor was the first African American to win an Olympic Gold Medal. Ralph Bunche was the first person of color and first African American to win the Nobel Peace Prize.

CALL FOR ACTION: Sign A Letter to Show Your Supports for Prenatal-to-Three Investments

As a member for the [National Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers](#)—a coalition comprised of more than 2,500 local, state, and national organizations representing business leaders, pediatricians, child care providers, parents, state and local officials, advocates, and researchers—Black Child Development Institute - Cleveland knows that **our nation needs bold leadership in order to secure the futures of our youngest children.**

We invite you to join us in signing on to an [open letter from the National Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers](#), laying out a united vision for increased investments in prenatal-to-three issues in 2022 and beyond. By signing on, we demonstrate our commitment as individuals and a collective to educate the public and raise awareness about the urgent priorities that support pregnant people and families with children under 3.



Please click below to sign the letter to show your support.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/5_Z762G9

BCDI Cleveland Action Agenda

- 1) Investment in Early Care to Support a Diverse Workforce
- 2) Building & Supporting Access to the Supply of Quality Affordable Child Care
- 3) Racial and Culturally Competent Programs that Support Health & Wellness
 - a. Eradicate Lead Exposure
 - b. Early Childhood Wellness Curriculum (Good for Me)
 - c. Decrease Infant Mortality
- 4) Support Medicaid Expansion
 - a. Supports for behavior and mental health
- 5) Promoting Advocacy & Policy Transformation w/Coordinated Systems of Supports
- 6) Racial & Culturally Competent Programs
 - a. Build an equitable platform of professional development in trauma informed care that supports and build the capacity of educators, parents, and caregivers
 - b. Implement strategies to support a parent/caregiver's knowledge and awareness in the development of the whole child (physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and language development)

Overall: Strategies to better reach underserved populations that dismantle racism as a public health crisis.

Strategic Goals (2022-2025)

- 1) Sustainability-Build BCDI Cleveland's brand and fund development capacity
- 2) Increase & Expand Membership Throughout Ohio
- 3) Transition from volunteer-based to staff to effectively implement BCDI Cleveland's mission and vision
- 4) Expansion of Services to Support Black Children & Families

Strategic Goals (2022-2025)



Health equity is when all members of society enjoy a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. Public health policies and programs centered around the specific needs of communities can promote health equity.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought social and racial injustice and inequity to the forefront of public health. It has highlighted that health equity is still not a reality as COVID-19 has unequally affected many racial and ethnic minority groups, putting them [more at risk of getting sick and dying from COVID-19](#). [1], [2]

Help Protect Your Child, Your Family, and Others

Getting a COVID-19 vaccine can help protect children ages 5 years and older from getting COVID-19.

- Vaccinating children can help protect family members, including siblings who are not eligible for vaccination and family members who may be at [increased risk of getting very sick if they are infected](#).

- Vaccination can also help keep children from getting seriously sick even if they do get COVID-19.
- Vaccinating children ages 5 years and older can help keep them in school and help them safely participate in sports, playdates, and other group activities.

Help protect your whole family and slow the spread of COVID-19 in your community by getting yourself and your children ages 5 years and older vaccinated against COVID-19.



Considerations for Children wearing MASK

Masks

Anyone ages 2 years or older who is not vaccinated or not up to date on vaccines should [wear masks in indoor public spaces](#). This recommendation also applies to people who are up to date on their vaccines when they are in [an area of substantial or high transmission](#). CDC also currently [recommends](#) universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of their vaccination

status or the area's transmission rates. The benefits of mask-wearing are well-established.

Respirators

Parents and caregivers may have questions about NIOSH-approved respirators (such as N95s) for children. Although respirators may be available in smaller sizes, they are typically designed to be used by adults in workplaces, and therefore have not been tested for broad use in children.

Selecting Masks

- Masks and respirators should not be worn by children younger than 2 years.
- Choose a well-fitting and comfortable mask or respirator that your child can [wear properly](#). A poorly fitting or uncomfortable mask or respirator might be worn incorrectly or removed often, and that would reduce its intended benefits.
 - Choose a size that fits over the child's nose and under the chin but does not impair vision.

Follow the user instructions for the mask or respirator. These instructions may show how to make sure the product fits properly.

- Some types of masks and respirators may feel different if your child is used to wearing a regular cloth or disposable procedure masks.

Safety Precautions

- If your child has a medical condition, such as a heart or lung problem, ask their healthcare provider before they use methods to improve mask fit or use an ASTM F3502 mask or a respirator.
- If your child has a hard time breathing, gets dizzy, or has other symptoms while you are trying to get the mask to fit better or when using an ASTM F3502 mask or a respirator, choose a regular cloth or disposable mask. They should continue to follow [CDC guidance](#) to protect themselves and others. Consult your healthcare provider if these symptoms do not resolve.

Content source: [National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases \(NCIRD\)](#), [Division of Viral Diseases](#)



Get Your Covid or Flu Vaccine!

VACCINE CLINIC

FEB 26

Boosters Available

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Lee Heights
Community Church
4612 Lee Rd
Cleveland, OH 44128
11AM - 1PM

Call for more info:
216.581.2448

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A REACH Grant Partnership



BCDI
Black Child Development Institute
Cleveland



VACCINATION
SAVES
LIVES



Board Member Spotlight:

Crystal Williams, MBA

Ms. Crystal Williams currently works full-time as a Program Coordinator for CMHA and is a sole proprietor of her company - Crystal MBA Branding and Design, where she provides marketing and graphic design consultation to small and large organizations part-time. With a background in Marketing, Graphic Design, and Analytics, Crystal possesses 14 years' experience in the areas of operations administration, direct mail marketing, corporate marketing, B2B/B2C marketing, email marketing, print and digital advertising, and social media. She has earned an MBA in Marketing, BA in Communication, and an Associates in Graphic Design.

How and when did you start this line of work?

After earning my MBA in Marketing, I started working in Marketing at Cleveland Clinic and was responsible for all the direct mail projects which included approving the marketing collateral used in the mailings. I took interest in the creation and design aspects of marketing and returned to school and earned an Associates Degree in Graphic Design from the Art Institute of Pittsburgh. From there, I began working part-time as a freelancer offering graphic design and marketing services in 2012.

What motivated you to start your business ?

I was motivated to start my business to do the type of work I love: combining marketing and graphic design services as a total package to help other small businesses gain market share and grow.

What products and services does your business offer?

I offer market planning, social media planning and advertisement, logo design, web design, branding services, and direct mail services, as well as marketing collateral design services which includes but is not limited to advertisements, flyers, brochures, business cards, posters, signage, etc.

How long have you been in this small business industry?

I have been in the small business industry for 10 years.

What is most crucial to you as an entrepreneur ?

Most crucial to me is being able to bring to life my clients' vision and mission, as well as providing original work and good customer service.

What do you think is the significant challenge facing small businesses today?

Most small businesses do not last more than five years because they do not budget and invest in marketing and advertising they need. In addition to offering the "total package," my aim is to educate small

business owners about marketing and how important it is for their businesses' success.

In what ways can the community help small businesses today?

The community can help by supporting small businesses more by investing in them, utilizing their services and promoting them.

Readers please take advantage and share with your network the services offered by this woman- minority owned small business:
Crystal MBA Branding andDesign, LLC .

Crystal N. Williams, MBA

Crystal MBA Branding & Design, LLC. Phone:
216.245.2520

Email: crystal.mba.01@gmail.com

Website: www.crystal-mba.com

Facebook: [crystal_mba](#) Instagram:
[crystal_mba](#)

Twitter: [crysta](#)

**Black Child Development
Board of Directors
2022-2024**

**Black Child Development Institute –
Cleveland Announces Ten Board Members**

Beachwood, Ohio – Black Child Development Institute (BCDI)- Cleveland, an affiliate of the National Black Child Development Institute, announces ten new board members who will support the mission of the organization, to improve and advance the lives of Black children and families through education and advocacy throughout Ohio.

“ We are excited and grateful as we welcome these exceptional leaders dedicated to empowering the Black Child in achieving positive outcomes,” says President Gloria Blevins. “Our board members are the core of the organization effectively impacting policy and programming to pursue equity and equality for Black children and families. Our intentional collaboration is essential in progressing forward towards success for families.”

The new board members began their three-year terms with BCDI Cleveland in 2022 and can serve a maximum of two terms:

Robin Brown, Board Trustee

Robin Brown is an Environmental Injustice Advocate and Organizer with an emphasis on the impact of lead poisoning on African American children. Ms. Brown is a certified Lead Risk Assessor and Lead Contractor. In 2005 Robin and her daughter founded CCOAL to heighten awareness and provide education and solutions of the

lead poisoning epidemic in the community.

Dorian Wingard, Board Trustee

Dorian L. Wingard, MPA serves as Partner and Chief Operations Officer on the team at Restoring Our Own Through Transformation (ROOTT). Known as an innovative and strategic senior executive with a demonstrated record of pioneering leadership in large and complex organizations, Dorian’s direct experience includes the management of Workforce Development, Business Integrity Services, Program Policy & Legislation, Facilities Management, Human Resources, Legal Services, Information Technology and Joint Labor & Management Relations.

Joan Spoerl, Board Trustee

Joan Spoerl has been advocating for practices and policies to optimize young children’s well-being for thirty years. She currently works for The Literacy Cooperative as Director of Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library book-gifting program. Before coming to Northeast Ohio, she taught kindergarten for 10 years in a NAEYC-accredited hospital-based child care center and then taught Head Start and preschool in the Chicago Public Schools.

Kelsey Hopkins, Board Trustee

Kelsey E. Hopkins serves as the Prenatal-to-Three Manager at Groundwork Ohio, where she works to elevate Groundwork's prenatal-to-3 policy priorities and provides targeted support to Groundwork's engagement with stakeholders, policy research, and advocacy efforts.

Dr. Mittie Davis Jones, Board Trustee

Dr. Mittie Davis Jones serves as Associate Director of The Diversity Institute and Associate Professor Emerita at Cleveland State University where she returned after retiring in 2016 as a faculty member and administrator.

Dr. Sharon Calhoun, Board Trustee

Dr. Sharon Calhoun is a tenured professor of early childhood education and faculty coordinator at Cuyahoga Community College Metropolitan Campus. She has thirty years of expertise in teaching, mentoring, and advocacy with children, families, students, and staff.

Loryn E. Green, Board Trustee

Loryn E. Green is a student at Cleveland State University pursuing a second master's degree in educational research. Her thesis work focuses on the representation of the BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) community in U.S. History textbooks. Loryn worked as an Intervention Specialist for

more than 20 years in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, educating students with learning disabilities.

Shalonda Murray, Board Trustee

Shalonda Murray is the co-founder of a grassroots organization, MIMB (Mothers of Indianapolis Melanated Boys) committed to addressing the complex needs and inequities pertaining to education and social awareness faced by Indianapolis melanated boys ages 5-18. She is the CEO of ACORN Village, a small new company focused on generating connections within disadvantaged communities to develop opportunities to support community health and well-being.

Ariana Johnson, Board Trustee

Ariana is an Outreach Coordinator for The Northern Ohio Recovery Association, Youth Administrator of her home church of Greater Faith Missionary Baptist Church. Ariana is an advocate for mental health, social justice and advocacy amongst the black community.

Rev. Eugene Norris, Board Trustee

Eugene Norris is the Senior Pastor and Founder Mountain of the Lord Fellowship in Akron Ohio. He is also involved in community and economic development in housing, business, and workforce development in the United States and as well as the continent of Africa. Pastor Norris is the CEO of FameFathers, a Fatherhood program promoting responsible committed and involved Fathers.

YES I WANT TO JOIN BCDI CLEVELAND TODAY!

Membership Includes:

- Recognized as a National affiliation required for CDA or SUTQ
- Low membership fee
- Bi-monthly publications
- Ohio approved trainings /webinars
- Parent cafes

Membership Categories:

- *Student \$25
- *Regular \$40
- Organizational:
- *Non-profit \$250 (includes 7 members)
- *Corporate \$500



Black Child Development Institute -Cleveland

An affiliate of the National Black Child Development Institute - Cleveland, chartered in 2017, committed to the National mission " to improve and advance the quality of life for Black children and families through education and advocacy."

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