



APRIL 16th, 2024

# THE BRIDGE

A weekly update from the Friends of VJ4ward7



The  
**BRIDGE**

Weekly Committee Update April 10, 2024

Villareal **'VJ' Johnson**  
DC COUNCIL • WARD 7

Message from  
**The Candidate**

On April 16th, President Lincoln released close to 3,200 enslaved Africans, in the District of Columbia, in 1862, 9 month before the Emancipation Proclamation.

Maybe a little known fact, the federal government allocated \$1,000,000 dollars to compensate owners of enslaved Africans. Additionally, \$100,000 was also set aside for the emancipated Africans, if they would leave the U.S. and relocate to Haiti or Liberia.

The District of Columbia has always been a progressive place of problem solving, compromise and restitution. However, has the District of Columbia or Federal government compensated the decedents of those enslaved? What we do know is Georgetown took a step in the right direction.

They, along with the Jesuits, pledged \$27 million in money and land donations to the descendants of 19th-century enslaved people who were sold to fund the highly prestigious institution. Historic records accounts for thousands of enslaved Africans sold before the emancipation day and the Emancipation Proclamation.

The District of Columbia has a unique relationship with the federal government. DC still serves a place that has many social programs that are useful to residents looking to improve their lives. However, the wealth gap between African Americans and White American residents in DC records whites at 81 times more income than African Americans. While some African Americans can fare well in DC, many others do not.

I think it's time to do more to close that gap and further enhance the quality of life and prosperity for African Americans in DC. We need to go beyond job training and free education. We need to restore the Baby Bonds' program, fully fund financial literacy programing in DCPS & DCPCS and have the crucial conversation about reparations.

Let's do more, together.

#more4ward7

#more4DC



## EVENTS

### 1. East River Strengthening Family Collaborative Forum

**Date and time**

Wed, Apr 24, 10:00am-2:00pm EDT

**Location**

St. Luke's Center  
4923 E Capitol St SE, Washington, DC 20019

19th Annual Vincent Orange DC  
Emancipation Invitational Golf Event

[Donate ->](#)

[Reserve your spot here ->](#)

### 2. Empowering Returning Citizens:

**Date and time**

Thu, Apr 25, 6:30 pm-8:30 pm EDT

**Location**

2220 Branch Ave SE 3340, Washington, DC 20020

[Reserve your spot here ->](#)

### 3. Woman's National Democratic Club

**Date and time**

Mon, Apr 29, 6:00 pm-8:00 pm EDT

**Location**

Woman's National Democratic Club  
1526 New Hampshire Ave NW, Washington, DC 20036

[Reserve your spot here ->](#)

### 4. League of Women Voters Candidate Forum

**Date and time**

Mon, Apr 29, 6:00 pm-8:00 pm EDT

**Location**

Pennsylvania Avenue Baptist Church  
3000 Pennsylvania Ave. SE, Washington, DC 20020

[Reserve your spot here ->](#)

# IN THE NEWS

## D.C.'S YOUTHS DANCE THROUGH EMANCIPATION DAY CELEBRATION AT FREEDOM PLAZA



On an 80-degree Sunday afternoon, the D.C. region's youngest performers took over Pennsylvania Avenue in waves of purple, pink and gold.

The Limitless Dancing Warriorettes — girls ages 4 to 17 from D.C., Maryland and Virginia — were the first in a series of young locals performing alongside floats and dancers from around the world at the District's annual Emancipation Day parade. Leading the group in matching zebra-print leotards, the older girls waved with white gloves to the locals and tourists that crowded in the shade on either side of the road.

[Read more ->](#)

## OUR VISION

### BUILDING COMMUNITY

Recognizing the critical role small businesses play in the local economy, VJ's strategy includes supporting microbusinesses through initiatives like the Dream Grants Program. This program awards over \$200,000 to microbusinesses in Ward 7 & 8, helping them grow and achieve sustainability, which is vital for building community wealth (Mayor Bowser Awards Over \$200,000 in Dream Grants to Ward 7 & 8 Microbusinesses).



[Website ->](#)



**VOTE**  
**June 4<sup>th</sup>**  
Democrat

[vjforward7.com](http://vjforward7.com) [#More4Ward7](https://twitter.com/More4Ward7)

Paid for by Friends of Villareal VJ Johnson  
Anthony Bolling, Chair - Tim Lewis, Treasurer

