

# TEXAS INFORMER

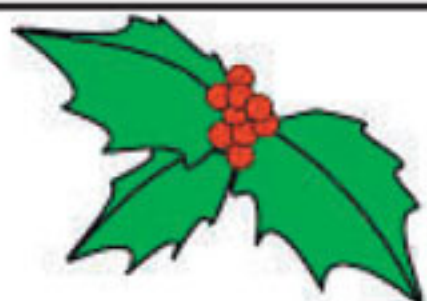
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Your Gateway to East Texas

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We wish you a merry Christmas and a Happy

## Oprah Winfrey Joins Selma, Which Will Be Released Christmas



Paramount Pictures has announced that Oprah Winfrey, who is producing Selma, will also be taking a supporting role. The film, which traces Dr. King's fight for voting rights that led to a historical march upon Selma, Alabama, adds Winfrey to a cast that includes David Oyelowo (as King), Tom Wilkinson, Carmen Ejogo and Tim Roth. Winfrey is playing Anne Lee Cooper, a major civil rights leader who fought in Selma for her voting rights. She was known for challenging Sheriff James Clark face-to-face. The Christmas release will be in selected theaters only, but will be in full release on January 9, 2015.

### The Affordable Health Care Plan covering millions

(Washington) The Affordable Care Act is achieving its central aim: millions of Americans who were uninsured before now have access to affordable, high-quality health care. By the end of the first open enrollment period, over 8 million people selected

and, of those, as of September 2014, 7.1 million people enrolled and were paying for insurance coverage ("effectuated" enrollees) through the Marketplace. As the second annual Open Enrollment Period (from November 15, 2014 through February 15, 2015) approaches, many analysts are projecting the number of people expected to enroll. Projections vary depending on the underlying assumptions and the analytical methods used. Analysts in the Department of Health and

Human Services project a range for 2015 of 9.0 – 9.9 million total enrollees, which is consistent with the growth rate of 25 – 30% seen in other new insurance products. As of June 2014, 10.3 million non elderly adults (ages 18-64) gained health insurance coverage since the start of the Affordable Care Act initial open enrollment period in October 2013. Government and private surveys offer a consistent picture of expansions in insurance coverage.

# God's Gift

When I first heard the gospel news,  
 It was revealed to me,  
 Why Jesus Christ came to this earth,  
 To die to set us free.  
 I'd like to share this news with you,  
 Why the Lord Jesus came,  
 So you can have this free gift too,  
 When you call upon his name.

I was told how in the beginning,  
 That the enemy of God,  
 Tricked Adam and Eve into eating,  
 Of the fruit that God forbid.  
 They disobeyed the sovereign Lord,  
 But not without a cost,  
 Through them sin came into the  
 world,  
 Separating mankind from God.

But God so loved the world,  
 He gave Jesus, his only Son,  
 You may live a life of kindness,  
 Without Jesus, but this I've  
 learned,  
 Good deeds lead not to salvation,  
 It's God's gift that cannot be  
 earned.

Some say they have not sinned at  
 all,  
 But if they read God's Word,  
 It says for all have sinned and fall  
 Short of the glory of God.

So take the gospel to your heart,  
 With God you always win,

Jesus Is the Reason For The Season!

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# Blacks Still Trail Whites and Latinos in Getting Treated for HIV By Freddie Allen

By Freddie Allen  
NNPA Senior Washington Correspondent

WASHINGTON (NNPA) – Blacks who have been diagnosed with the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) continue to lag behind Whites and Latinos when it comes to getting linked to care, increasing the chances that they could spread the disease to others.

Just 76 percent of Blacks, who have been diagnosed, are linked to care for HIV, the lowest rate of all racial and ethnic groups. Eighty-five percent of Whites who are living with HIV are receiving treatment.

“Engaging and retaining people in HIV care has to be a top priority in our HIV response, said Jonathan Mermin, the director the National Center for HIV, Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention at the CDC.

There are more than 1.2 million people living with HIV and 70 percent (839,336) of them have not achieved viral suppression, according to a recent report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). That’s why the CDC has stepped up efforts to get more people who are living with HIV the healthcare they need.

Tom Frieden, the director of the CDC, said that because most people achieve viral suppression with the proper medication, it’s important that people start treatment as soon as they’re diagnosed. Viral suppression is suppressing or reducing the function and replication of a virus.

“HIV care and treatment not only work to improve health and prolong lives, but also to prevent new infections,” said Frieden. “Yet, we’re not reaching nearly enough people.”

Frieden continued, “Treatment is particularly important, because people with HIV who achieve viral suppression aren’t just healthier, they are also less likely to infect others.”

Blacks account for almost half of all new infections in the United States each year (44 percent) and more than one third of all people living with HIV (41 percent), according to the CDC.

“Among Blacks, men account for 70 percent of new HIV infections and women account for 30 percent,” stated the CDC.

See HIV page 11

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**WHAT's Cook "n**

Waldorf Salad Recipe



**Ingredients:**

- 1/2 cup chopped, slightly toasted walnuts
- 1/2 cup celery, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup red seedless grapes, sliced (or a 1/4 cup of raisins)
- 1 sweet apple, cored and chopped
- 3 Tbsp Miracle Whip salad dressing
- 1 Tbsp fresh lemon juice
- Salt
- Pepper
- Lettuce

**Directions**

In a medium sized bowl, whisk together the mayonnaise (or yogurt) and the lemon juice. Add 1/2 teaspoon of salt, 1/4 teaspoon of fresh ground pepper. Mix in the apple, celery, grapes, and walnuts. Serve on a bed of fresh lettuce.



**Braised Beef Short Ribs**

**Ingredients**

- 12 beef short ribs, bone-in
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1/4 cup grapeseed oil or olive oil
- 1 yellow onion, peeled and chopped
- 1 stalk celery, chopped
- 1 carrot, peeled and chopped
- 1 750-ml bottle good dry red wine (we used a zinfandel)
- 6 cups veal stock (can substitute beef stock)

**Method**

1 Preheat oven to 350°F. Season ribs to taste with the salt and pepper. Heat oil in a large, heavy bottomed ovenproof pan over high heat. Add ribs and brown on all sides. Work in batches if you need to so that the

ribs don't get crowded (this will help with browning).

2 Transfer ribs to a plate. Pour off excess fat. Add the onions, celery, and carrots to the pan and sauté, stirring often, until lightly browned, about 5 minutes. Remove the vegetables from the pan, set aside. Then add the wine to the pan, deglazing the pan, scraping off any browned bits from the bottom of the pan. Reduce the wine by three-quarters until thick and slightly syrupy, about 15 minutes.

3 Return the ribs to the pan, add the veal stock and enough water to cover the ribs. Bring to a boil, cover with foil, and place in the oven. Braise, cooking in the oven, until the meat

is fork-tender, 2 to 2 1/2 hours. During the last 1/2 hour of cooking, add back in the vegetables. Allow the ribs to cool in the liquid, then cover and refrigerate overnight.

4 The next day, remove the excess fat that has solidified at the top from the overnight chilling. Place the pan with the ribs and cooking liquid over medium heat, uncovered. Cook until the liquid has reduced by three-quarters, about 1 hour. Continue to cook, spooning the sauce over the ribs, until the sauce is thick and ribs are glazed. Take care not to burn the glaze; move the ribs around in the pan to keep them from burning.

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# Marion Barry Hailed as a Freedom Fighter

Former Washington D.C. Mayor Succumbs by Kenneth D. Miller  
Special to the NNPA from the Los Angeles Sentinel

Former Washington, D.C. Mayor Marion Barry long recognized for being video taped while smoking crack cocaine, but who also will leave a lasting legacy for his commitment to his Black constituents has died. He was 78 years old.

Barry was arrested in an FBI sting operation and served six months in federal prison, but was still reelected to the City Council in 1992 and then as mayor in 1994 and served until 1999.

Despite his history of political and legal controversies, Barry was a popular and influential figure in the local political scene of Washington, D.C., being hailed as "Mayor for life," a designation that remained long after Barry left the mayoralty.

During the 1960s, he was involved in Nashville Student Movement protest of racial discrimination and later became the first chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating committee. He was the first prominent civil rights activist to become chief executive of a major American city and this week the president, Congresswoman Maxine Waters and Sentinel Publisher Danny J. Bakewell Sr, who knew Barry, fondly remembered him.

Michelle and I were saddened to hear of the passing of Marion Barry. Marion was born a sharecropper's son, came of age during the Civil Rights movement, and became a fixture in D.C. politics for decades. As a leader with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, Marion helped advance the cause of civil rights for all. During his decades in elected office in D.C., he put in place historic programs to lift working people out of poverty, expand opportunity, and begin to make real the promise of home rule. Through a storied, at times tumultuous life and career, he earned the love and respect of countless Washingtonians, and Michelle and I extend our deepest sympathies to Marion's family, friends and constituents," said President Obama in a statement.

Barry gave the presidential

nomination speech for Jesse Jackson at the 1984 Democratic National Convention.

"I am deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Marion Barry, a longtime friend and a man who helped transform the city of Washington, D.C.," said Waters.

"As a young man, Barry was a civil rights leader who championed the rights of Washington's often overlooked residents. He rose to become one of the most influential politicians in District of Columbia history, serving four terms as mayor, 15 years as councilmember and president of the Board of Education.

"Mayor Barry will always be remembered for the most expansive youth jobs program in the United States, where summer employment was guaranteed for every school-age resident. I will always fondly remember beating Marion handedly on the tennis court, and our many warm interactions over the years. My thoughts and deepest condolences go out to his son Christopher, and the entire Barry family at this time."

Bakewell Sr., a civil rights leader who fought for racial equality along with Barry was saddened by his loss.

National Newspapers Publishers Association President Benjamin Chavis credited Barry with the success of the 1995 Million Man March, which was held in the nation's capital.

"The Honorable Marion Barry was a freedom fighting mayor of D.C. He was the best mayor of our nation's capitol, ever," said Chavis. "We mourn his passing, but celebrate what it means to be a freedom fighter for African American people and all African people." "Marion was truly a man for all seasons. He had some dark days, but was always resilient. While he may be remembered as Mayor for Life, he surely was a champion of the people for life and he understood the struggle of Black people and was committed to sacrifice for their advancement. He was my friend and I will miss him," said Bakewell.

# Cherokee Brotherhood Association Holds Annual Bake Sale



The Cherokee Brotherhood Association held its annual baksale on Saturday, November 22nd on the sidewalk between Brookshire Brother's Grocery store and the True Vallue Hardware Store. Members pictured above are Sam O'Neal, John Griffith, Oliver Sturns, Walter Session, Rev. Jerry Leviston, Rev. Melvin Session and Michael Session. The cookies, cakes and pies were baked by Brotherhood members and their family members.

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## Seminary Heights Church of Christ and Fred Douglass Development Corporation donates and delivers Thanksgiving Baskets

## Brandy Attaway Makes Deans List



Pictured above is Bruce Harris, member of Seminary Heights Church of Christ of Jacksonville. He is loading Thanksgiving Baskets. The church put together the Baskets and delivered them to local citizens. Others who volunteered were Jean Hinton, Kathy Wells, Emerson Brown, Justin Boseman, Christin Dansby, Pastor, Kelvin Dansby and Lavoy Dansby.

Brandy Morris Attaway recently made the Dean's List at Kilgore Jr. College where she is a sophomore. The young lady lives in the Elm Grove Community of Rusk and is the daughter of Patricia Morris.

## Benefit held for Betty Jean White Christopher



The Elm Grove Community Choir, the First Baptist Church Youth Choir, Rev. Timother Bircher and other visiting choirs accompanied by Betty Smith Bircher on the piano provided the music.

Mrs. Christopher's husband, children and grandchildren along with other family members and neighbors were there to show thier love and support. Area churches from Rusk and surrounding area were also in attendance. Betty Jean is a longtime very active member of the church serving as secretary, Sunday School teacher choir member, member of the finance committee and other duties. She recently retired from RISD after forty plus years.

She has had several hospital stays recently because of her illness, but seems to be much improved. She thanks everyone for their prayers. Rev. Timothy Bircher is the Church Pastor.

The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. March and Celebration will be held on January 19, 2015 in Jacksonville, Texas.

For detailed information please call A. J. Rhodes at (903) 284-6203 or Helen Scott.

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A benefit and celebration was held recently for Betty Jean White Christopher at the Elm Grove First Baptist Church. Elder Ray Christopher was Master of Ceremony and the Rev. Dusty Fuller was speaker for the event.

# United Women of Strength present Christian Celebrity Awards 2014



On Friday night December fifth, United Women of Strength presented awards to twenty-six Christian Celebrities representing area churches. The Nрман Activity Center was filled to capacity as awards were presented to Ella Whitaker, Minister Stacy Hinton, Tomkia Wilcox, Vera Green, Sandra Williams, Harold Warren, Rev. Billy G. Rollins, Floretta Donnell, Minister Joyce Washington, Billy Thirkill, LaVell Session, Myrtle Castleberry, Minister Maurice Chase, Corlicia Bush, Waymon Nathaniel, Dexter Davis, Zelma Casel, Minister Byron Hall, Debra Marshall, Frenchell Baxter, Johnny Miller, Lativia Baxter, Gennell Parson, Rev. Charlvin Doty, Earnest R. Adams, and Daphne Session. Toast Master for the occasion was Floyd Marshall. The crowd was served a full course dinner and entertained by Joshua Sound Ministry, Belinda Griffin and Phyllis Johnson. A short memorial was conducted in memory of the late Mrs. Flora Waits, past UWS active member. Approximately twenty-five attendees with December birthdays were recognized.



UWS Members Annie Blanton, Billie Brown, Lillian Duffie, Charlie Esco, Ruby Franklin, Francis Freeman, Jessie Foreman, Jean Hinton, Ethel Rollins, Barbara Scott, Helen Scott, Secretary, Maxine Session, Verion Starling, Gladis Thompson, Callie Walker, Evelyn Wilcox, Annie F. Williams and Lois Teague, president.

# USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT ANNOUNCES FUNDING FOR CITY OF WELLS

## Project Will Help Eliminate Bottleneck in Major Texas Hurricane Evacuation Route



From Left to Right: Bossier City Mayor Lo Walker, Klotz Associates Herbert Bickley, Klotz Associates Christopher Key, Ark-La-Tex Corridor Council Chairman Richard Anderson, USDA RD State Director Paco Valentin, Cherokee County Judge Chris Davis, City of Wells Mayor C.W. Williams, State Representative Travis Clardy, ETCOG Executive Director David Cleveland, TxDOT Commissioner Jeff Austin III, East Texas Regional Director For Senator John Cornyn Louellen Lowe, Cherokee County Commissioner Kelly Traylor, Coordinating and Development Council President Max Locompte,

USDA Rural Development Texas State Director Paco Valentin announced funding yesterday for the City of Wells to relocate existing water and wastewater system infrastructure.

“Rural Development is pleased to offer funding to the City of Wells,” said Paco Valentin, USDA Rural Development Texas State Director. “Not only will it provide a crucial component in the completion of a Hurricane Evacuation Route that serves Wells and up to one third of the City in providing uninterrupted service to their water and sewer customers.”

the population of Texas; it also assists

USDA Rural Development has approved a Water and Waste Disposal grant of \$1,381,000 and loan of \$1,699,000 to the City of Wells to primarily relocate existing water and wastewater system infrastructure in advance of a major Texas Department of Transportation highway improvement and widening project. This improvement is necessary to provide adequate traffic flow for the Hurricane Evacuation Route along US Highway 69.

“TxDOT requested our assistance with this project about two years ago because their funds cannot be used to relocate utility lines. The East Texas Rural Planning Organization (RPO), led by our region’s 14 County Judges and the mayors of Longview and Tyler, adopted this project as a top priority and approved a multi-faceted funding strategy for ETCOG to pursue, said ETCOG Executive Director, David Cleveland. “This has truly become a collaborative effort between our staff, USDA, TxDOT, the City

of Wells, and Klotz Associates engineering firm. Today was not only a victory for Wells and Cherokee County, but for regionalism everywhere. One-third of our state’s citizens will be safer once this road widening project is completed, especially when we have to cope with the next hurricane.”

“This project has been on the drawing board since 1985, said Cherokee County Judge Chris Davis. “As a resident of the county I am pleased such a significant need is being addressed that will improve the lives

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1451	Bonus Word Crossword Overall Odds are 1 in 3.44	\$3	12/12/14	6/10/15
1546	Bingo Multi-Prize Overall Odds are 1 in 3.54	\$5	1/1/15	6/30/15
1527	\$100,000 Cashword-O-Rama Overall Odds are 1 in 3.58	\$5	1/2/15	7/1/15
1531	20X Ca\$h Overall Odds are 1 in 3.05	\$20	1/2/15	7/1/15
1581	Two Can Doubler Overall Odds are 1 in 4.58	\$1	1/21/15	7/20/15
1552	Platinum Payout Overall Odds are 1 in 3.20	\$10	1/21/15	7/20/15
1567	Ultimate Crossword Overall Odds are 1 in 3.04	\$10	1/21/15	7/20/15
1354	\$500 Million Frenzy Overall Odds are 1 in 2.77	\$20	1/21/15	7/20/15

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## CHRISTIANITY

## Get Out of Your Own Way

by Pastor E.A. Deckard

Special to the NNPA from the Houston Forward Times



"In the story of Ugly Duckling, when did the Ugly Duckling stop feeling Ugly? When

he realized that he was a Swan. Each of us has something Special, a swan of some sort, hidden inside somewhere. But until we recognize that it's there, what can we do but splash around, treading water? The Wise are Who They Are. They work with what they've got and do what they can do." – Benjamin Hoff

Forward Thinkers, we have looked at the life of Moses from a 21st century perspective as Moses was born against the odds and called to serve God against severe opposition but today, Forward Thinkers, we will look at Moses as he deals with himself: the good, the bad, and the ugly.

Forward Thinkers, often we are the biggest negative factor in our lives and today I challenge you to get out of your own way.

"When a man is a poor appraiser of his self worth he can't find inner peace anywhere" – Pastor E A Deckard

Exodus 4:10-12 Moses said to the Lord, "Pardon your servant, Lord. I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue."

10 The Lord said to him, "Who gave human beings their mouths? Who makes them deaf or mute? Who gives them sight or makes them blind? Is it not I, the Lord? 12 Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say."

Forward Thinkers, when you don't know who you are, it becomes very difficult to see yourself the way God sees you. Forward Thinkers, Moses can't even see himself being better after experiencing a personal encounter with God. Forward Thinkers, the devil takes great pride in beating you down with you.

Exodus 4:17

17 But take this staff in your hand so you can perform the signs with it.

Forward Thinkers, God will always put something in your hand that will connect you to your greatness. God promised your gift would make a way for you, therefore; I believe every man is born with a gift in his hand. There is a story in the bible in the New Testament about three men thus, the bible says one man had five talents, another man had two talents and the last man had one talent. Forward Thinkers, the men with five and two talents used their talents to increase their lives but the man with one talent did nothing because he didn't know or see his true value. Forward Thinkers, the story says when the master came back he blessed the two men who used their talents and he cursed the man who sat on his talent. Whatever God has blessed you with it's enough for you to "win" this season. Forward Thinkers, take another long look at what's in your hand and trust that God can do more with it than you can ask, think, or imagine.

Forward Thinkers, a hammer in the hands of a carpenter can produce new houses and build communities filled with peace and prosperity. A paint brush in an artist's hand can produce pictures worth millions and cancel the financial debts of his family. A pen in a writer's hand can produce a novel for all to read and become empowered to win.

Forward Thinkers, notice God asked Moses, "What's in YOUR HAND and not in the hand of Pharaoh." Forward Thinkers, a true card player does not focus on what's in the oppositions hand but what's in their hand. Forward Thinkers, as men and women of faith it's time to stop focusing on what someone else has and start maximizing what's in your hand.

Forward Thinkers, you were created to be you and to do you. There is nobody on the planet earth that can be a better you than you. This season get out of your own way and use what you have in your hand to do what you've never been able to do something.

Exodus 14:15-16

15 Then the Lord said to Moses,

"Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to move on. 16 Raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea to divide the water so that the Israelites can go through the sea on dry ground.

Forward Thinkers, God tells Moses to quit all the crying and MOVE ON.

Today I challenge you to quit all that crying and "MOVE ON" to your victory in Jesus Christ.

Forward Thinkers, notice God tells Moses to stretch out his hand. This season you must be stretched; it's time to leave your comfort zone and seek your destiny. Nobody can reach higher without stretching. Forward Thinkers, I'll never forget after I broke a bone in my shoulder and the doctor ordered me to do stretching exercises to regain my mobility, although the stretching exercises were painful I needed to stretch in order to reach new heights. Forward Thinkers, are you ready to be stretched?

Forward Thinkers, Moses always had the staff in his hand but nothing great happened until Moses changed what was in his head. What "You" think about will directly affect what "You" will accomplish in life.

Exodus 17:5

5 The Lord answered Moses, "Go out in front of the people. Take with you some of the elders of Israel and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go.

Forward Thinkers, this season to get where God intends you to be, you must leave the group and walk ahead. Remember, until you are spiritually mature enough to walk ahead, you will remain stuck in the crowd.

Forward Thinkers, notice God tells Moses to take some Elders with him; the Elders represent wisdom, experience, and they also serve as accountability partners because, when you are walking out-front you become a moving target.

Forward Thinkers, again, God gives Moses instructions to take the staff that's in his hand and do something

great with it. God is still able to do something great with what's in your hand, Forward Thinkers.

Forward Thinkers, God now tells Moses to strike the rock and get water; everybody knows you can't get water from a rock but this season "You Can" because, God says you can. Remember, obeying God always produces a field of brand new possibilities.

Numbers 20:11-12

11 Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice with his staff. Water gushed out, and the community and their livestock drank. 12 But the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not trust in me enough to honor me as holy in the sight of the Israelites, you will not bring this community into the land I give them."

Forward Thinkers, Moses forfeited his future because he allowed his past to control his today. Dr. Creflo Dollar states, "every problem has a root cause" and today I discovered Moses' problem was not the complaining people but the internal hidden issue of his low self esteem.

Forward Thinkers, for years I blamed the people, but today, I realize it is not the people's fault that Moses stroked the rock. God told Moses to speak to the rock but Moses had never overcome his past issues with his speech, his fear and self-doubt thus, causing him to disobey God. Forward Thinkers, old dormant issues will pop up at the worst of times.

In conclusion today, Forward Thinkers, I challenge you to DEAL WITH YOUR ISSUES BEFORE THEY SHOW BACK UP AND DEAL WITH YOU. GET OUT YOUR OWN WAY FORWARD THINKERS.

Pastor E. A. Deckard is the Senior Pastor/Founder of the Green House International Church located, 16711 Ella Blvd. Houston, Texas, 77090. To contact Pastor Deckard for speaking engagements contact him at [pr.ghic@gmail.com](mailto:pr.ghic@gmail.com) or the church website [www.ghic.net](http://www.ghic.net)

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**HIV Aids from page 3**

McCray said that one of the greatest challenges to getting young Blacks into treatment is the lack of a diagnosis.

"Many don't know that they're infected," said McCray. In an effort, to increase linkage and retention to care and access to prevention services and to decrease HIV/AIDS related deaths among people of color, the CDC launched the Care and Prevention in the United States (CAPUS) Demonstration Project. CAPUS provides \$44.2 million through eight state health departments in Georgia, Illinois Louisiana Mississippi, Missouri North Carolina Tennessee and Virginia.

The key to controlling the HIV epidemic is controlling the virus and that's true for all communities," said McCray. "Just 30 percent of people living with HIV have achieved viral suppression in all communities, Black and White. We need to improve our health outcomes along the entire continuum."



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Margarett Perkins, Laura Perkins, James I. Perkins and Dr. L. Michael Metke President of Tyler Junior College enter into agreement making possible the Rusk TJC Citizens Promise. The James I Perkins Family Foundation and Tyler Junior College established this scholarship program for Rusk High School graduates. The top fifty-percent/qualifying students will have \$8000. scholarships to TJC beginning with the class of 2014.

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## Los Angeles Protesters respond to the non indictment of Officer Darren Wilson for the killing of unarmed teenager Michael Brown



Protesters in Los Angeles respond to the non indictment of Officer Darren Wilson for the killing of unarmed teenager Mike Brown. (Jefferey Wadley for

Violence and protests erupted across the nation this week after the announcement came that “no probable cause exists” to file any indictments against officer Darren Wilson for “any crimes related to the death of 18-year-old Michael Brown.” The announcement came during a November 24 press conference revealing the grand jury’s decision in the Ferguson, Missouri case. Wilson, a white officer faced trial for shooting to death Michael Brown, an unarmed black teenager in August of this year, putting the city of Ferguson at the forefront of the nation’s civil rights agenda.

Main prosecutor Robert McCulloch made the announcement, explaining the process by which the jury came to its decision.

Over 25 days, he said, the jury heard more than 70 hours of testimony from about 60 witnesses, amid five possible charges including first degree murder. He was unable to break down the jury’s vote, saying

by law the process is secret. The jury consisted of nine whites and three blacks. Only nine not guilty votes were needed to exonerate Wilson.

Violence erupted soon after the announcement, though Brown’s family has continued to call for peaceful protests. Guns were fired and cars were vandalized, according to reporters in Missouri. Meanwhile, McCulloch offered his sympathies to the Brown family.

“No young man should ever die,” he told the crowd during his announcement. join with Michael Brown’s family, and with the clergy” and with the clergy” and others, he said, “in urging everyone to continue the demonstrations” and call for constructive change.

President Obama also made a statement after the announcement, reminding Americans that they “obviously have to accept” the grand jury’s announcement. He told them to honor Brown’s family’s wishes for non violence. “There is never an excuse for violence, particularly when there are people out here

willing to peacefully work on the issues,” he said.

Tear gas had been deployed in Ferguson at the height of his speech. One protestor in Missouri said that police threw tear gas on a woman who was already passed out from a heart attack.

Community leaders and elected officials here in Los Angeles continued to urge protestors in Lemiert Park to remain calm.

The Los Angeles Police Department went on a citywide tactical alert in advance of the announcement of the grand jury’s decision, allowing them to keep officers on duty beyond their normal shifts, according to City News Service.

Members of some community groups, including the Coalition for Community Control Over the Police, the Youth Justice Coalition and the Stop Mass Incarceration Network, indicated previously they would likely stage a protest at 3 p.m. Tuesday at Crenshaw and Martin Luther King Jr. boulevards.

“LAPD will facilitate peaceful

demonstrations and will allow your voices (to) be heard,” Los Angeles Police Department Chief Charlie Beck wrote on his Twitter account Monday in advance of the announcement. Beck said last week the department was reaching out to the community to encourage peaceful protests in response to the Ferguson decision. “We’ve done significant outreach in all our communities,” Beck said. “All our commands are ready to increase deployment if that is needed. We believe the outreach we have done will ensure that people are not only able to protest if they so desire, but will protest in a lawful manner.” On Sunday, Capt. Paul Snell, commanding officer of the LAPD’s Southwest Area, repeated that call in a letter to the community.

“We all join with Michael Brown’s father, President Barack Obama, community leaders and a vast array of public and private officials who plead for calm, non-violent peaceful demonstrations and we will support those demonstrations in the spirit of the law,” Snell wrote.