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PROVIDING INFORMATION ON RESOURCES AND EVENTS THAT IMPROVE THE LIFESTYLE OF INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES IN OUR COMMUNITY

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Week of October 15, 2026

FIND ME: Missing Women and Girls

Missing Black Women and Girls Deserve to Be Found, Protected and Remembered



(l-r) Sam Binion-Operation Safe Neighborhood, CEO, Nicole "Nikki" Harvey- the Office Of Congressman Danny K Davis, Il. State Representative Camille Lily - 78th District, Sam Binion - Operation Safe Neighborhood, Dr. Keisha Roberts-Tabb - Girls Night Out, CEO, Congressman Danny K Davis, Angela Mclemore - The Office Of Senator Mattie Hunter, Yasmin Z Vafa. Esq. - Rights4Girls, CEO / New York New York, Brenda Powell-Meyers - Earnestine's Daughter, CEO, Regina Lewis-Smith - Ashunti Residential Management, CEO, Chief Andre Parham - Chicago Police Department/ Chief of Patrol, Brenda Stewart - Earnestine's Daughter, Executive Director.

Congressman Danny K. Davis convenes community leaders to address sex trafficking, missing-person investigations and prevention

CHICAGO — Missing African American women and girls must not be forgotten, dismissed as runaways or denied the urgent attention their cases deserve. That was the central message of a community discussion convened by Congressman Danny K. Davis to address missing persons, sex trafficking, survivor support and community prevention.

Participants included Sam Binion, CEO of Operation Safe Neighborhood; Nicole "Nikki" Harvey of the Office of Congressman Danny K. Davis; Illinois State Representative Camille Lilly of the 78th District; Dr. Keisha Roberts-Tabb, CEO of Girls Night Out; Angela McLemore of the Office of Senator Mattie Hunter; Yasmin Z. Vafa, Esq., CEO of Rights4Girls in New York; Brenda Powell-Meyers, CEO of Earnestine's Daughter; Regina Lewis-Smith, CEO of As-

hanti Residential Management; Chicago Police Department Chief of Patrol Andre Parham; and Brenda Stewart, executive director of Earnestine's Daughter.

The discussion emphasized that addressing the crisis requires coordinated investigations, safe housing, prevention programs, support for survivors and greater public awareness.

Chief Parham: Families Deserve Answers

Chief Andre Parham discussed the Chicago Police Department's response to missing-person cases, emphasizing the importance of the first 24 to 48 hours. Police districts develop plans to locate missing people, while detectives conduct deeper investigations. When trafficking or interstate activity is suspected, investigators may work with federal partners, including the FBI.

Parham urged families to continue seeking information and assistance from authorities.

"There's no way that if you make a million phone calls that we should not answer and that we should not provide any support that is needed to a family in a situation

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Malcolm X College West Campus Reopens After \$20 Million Renovation

By Westside Community News Staff

CHICAGO — Residents of Austin, Lawndale, and West Garfield Park have a renewed educational resource following the October 17 grand reopening of Malcolm X College West Campus, featuring \$20 million in renovations and the newly named Danny K. Davis Community Center.

College leaders, elected officials and community members gathered to celebrate improvements designed to expand access to education, career training and community activities on Chicago's West Side.

Malcolm X College President David A. Sanders called the reopening a fulfillment of commitments made to the community. "Today is the dawning of a new day in the West Garfield and Austin communities. It is a day of celebration, but also a day of promises kept," Sanders said.

The project includes a 3,000-square-foot community center named in honor of longtime U.S. Rep. Danny K. Davis. According to Sanders, the renovated campus increases its capacity by 50%, allowing it to serve as many as 2,000 students annually. The community center is available for public rentals, including meetings, conferences, weddings, birthday parties, baby showers and



Outside view of Malcolm X College Westside Branch located at 4624 W. Madison St.,

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INSIDE THIS

ISSUE

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Missing from front page

like that,” Parham said.

He acknowledged the emotional toll missing-person cases take on families and emphasized the need for empathy, communication and community participation. Cases involving children receive particular urgency, he said.

Dr. Roberts-Tabb Calls for Prevention and Safe Housing

Dr. Keisha Roberts-Tabb, founder and CEO of Girls Night Out and deputy chief probation officer for Cook County Juvenile Court, described working with young people affected by abuse, neglect, homelessness and sexual exploitation.

Roberts-Tabb said she established a human trafficking unit for adolescent youth receiving probation or pretrial services. Her work has included thousands of assessments involving girls who have experienced unsafe living conditions and exploitation.

She raised concerns about young people remaining in detention while waiting for safe placement.

“No child should have to be locked up” simply because there is nowhere else for that child to go, she emphasized.

Roberts-Tabb called for safe housing, workforce development, educational alternatives, transferable job skills and mentoring. Girls Night Out provides street outreach, distributes resources, reconnects young people with families and links survivors to transportation, mentoring and employment opportunities.

“As a community, we should ensure that our children have a safe place to thrive and not just survive,” she said.

She also urged adults to learn the warning signs of exploitation and help young people access resources before they experience further harm.

Lilly Calls for Accountability and Investment

Illinois State Representative Camille Lilly of the 78th District stressed the importance of prevention, public policy and sustained funding for programs that protect children and support survivors.

Lilly highlighted education and community services as important parts of prevention. She also emphasized the role of community hospitals, which may be among the first places where trafficking victims seek help.

Participants discussed holding perpetrators accountable and ensuring that victims and their families have access to meaningful support.

The message was that lawmakers, service providers and residents must work together rather than leaving the responsibility to one agency or organization.

Vafa and Earnestine’s Daughter Emphasize Survivor Support

Yasmin Z. Vafa, Esq., CEO of Rights4Girls, traveled from New York to participate. Her organization addresses the abuse and exploitation of girls and advocates for survivors who may be blamed or criminalized instead of protected.

Vafa highlighted the need to examine how society views women and girls experiencing commercial sexual exploitation. Rights4Girls’ research, including its report Buyers Unmasked, examines the attitudes and behavior of people who purchase sex.

Brenda Powell-Meyers, CEO of Earnestine’s Daughter, and Brenda Stewart, the organization’s executive director, highlighted the importance of reaching women and girls directly through outreach and supportive services.

Stewart described the organization’s outreach work, which includes distributing supplies and connecting women with referrals for treatment, recovery and other

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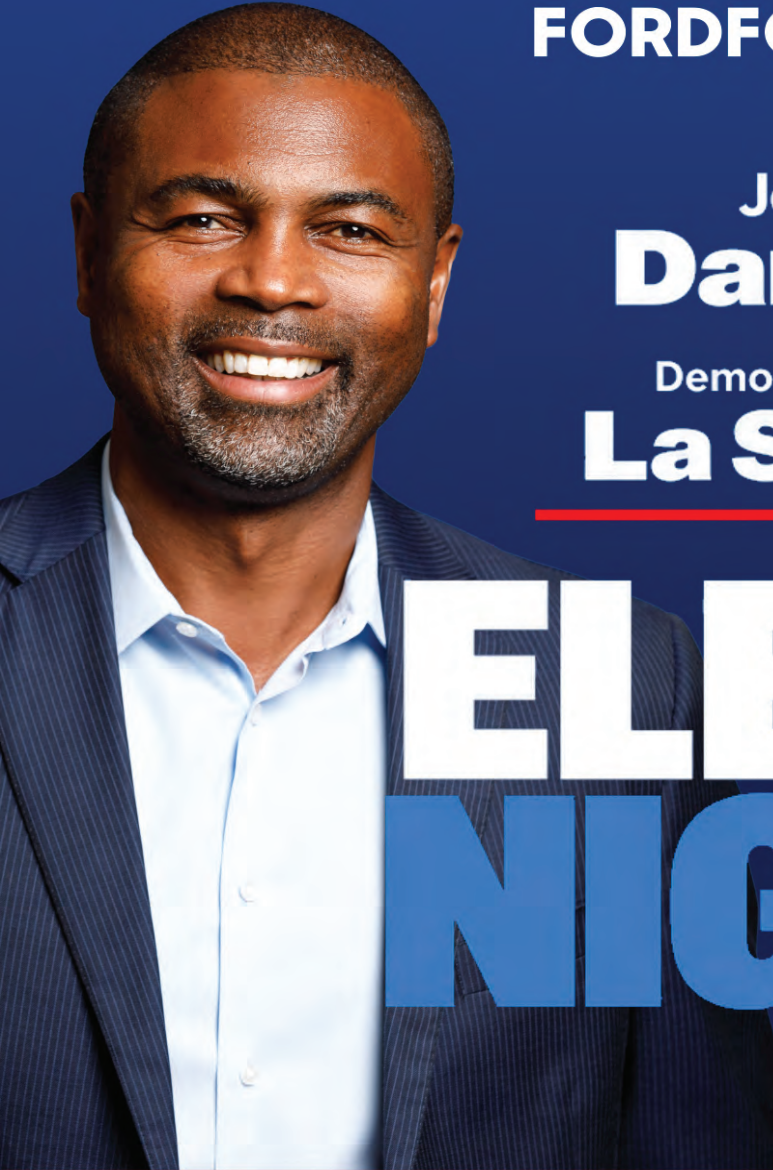
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BLAST FROM RECENT PAST EVENTS

BP Gas Station Owners Give Back to the North Lawndale Community

****By Chevette Conley and Isaac Lewis****
North Lawndale Community News



Owner of BP Gas Station, Alex with regular customer affectionately known as "Moe"

North Lawndale residents and regular customers enjoyed a day of free food, fellowship and community appreciation on Friday, July 24, 2026, at the BP gas station located at 3939 W. Ogden Ave., near the Cermak and Pulaski area.

The owners of the busy gas station welcomed customers with a special community giveaway featuring grilled chicken, hot dogs and delicious Angus beef burgers. Snacks and additional giveaways were also available, adding to the excitement of the day.

Regular customers who frequently visit the station turned out to enjoy the complimentary food and take part in the celebration. As residents lined up to receive their plates, the atmosphere reflected the importance of local businesses building positive relationships with the communities they serve.

The owners were pleased to see the enthusiastic response from neighborhood residents. Customers appeared to appreciate the opportunity to enjoy a hot meal while connecting with others in the community.

Beyond providing food, the event demonstrated how local businesses can make a meaningful difference by showing appreciation for the people who support them throughout the year. Small acts of generosity can strengthen relationships, encourage community pride and remind residents that neighborhood businesses are important parts of the local community.

The free food giveaway was a welcome gesture for customers who regularly patronize the station. With good food, snacks, giveaways and friendly interaction, the event created an enjoyable experience for everyone who stopped by.

When business owners take the time to give back, they demonstrate that their relationship with the neighborhood extends beyond providing goods and services. Their investment in community goodwill helps build connections between businesses and residents.

For those who attended, Friday was more than just a stop at the gas station. It was a day to enjoy a meal, share fellowship and celebrate a business showing appreciation for its customers.

****Article and Photos by Chevette Conley and Isaac Lewis****
North Lawndale Community News



Two owners of BP with customers Moe and Jamein



Moe - long time customer of BP



Community customers getting food from neighborhood Barbeque given by the owners



Long time employee known as Billy (beige pants) standing with a regular customer



Chicken was seasoned and grilled by company hired by owners Alex and his business partner.



Customer getting free gifts from vendor for attending barbeque

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The North Lawndale Community News

The North Lawndale Community News is published weekly by Strategic Human Services. Our purpose is to help inform the communities we serve on resources, events, and issues relevant to them. Our community includes those who live, work, worship in, and/or care about North Lawndale and its neighboring communities. Our focus is on positive, productive solutions, that will improve the lifestyle of community members.

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Violence from page 2

assistance. The organization also displays photographs of missing and murdered girls on its outreach van, helping bring visibility to cases that might otherwise receive little public attention.

Their work reflects the importance of meeting people where they are, building trust and connecting them with practical help.

Community Partnerships and Prevention

Sam Binion, CEO of Operation Safe Neighborhood, participated in the discussion about community safety and cooperation among residents, volunteers, service providers and law enforcement.

Nicole "Nikki" Harvey of Congressman Davis' office helped bring participants together for the conversation, while Angela McLemore represented the Office of Senator Mattie Hunter. Regina Lewis-Smith, CEO of Ashunti Residential Management, also participated, contributing

to the broader discussion about prevention and the need for safe, stable environments for young people.

Congressman Davis convened the gathering to encourage collaboration among elected officials, community organizations and advocates working to protect women and girls.

Missing Black Women and Girls Must Not Be Overlooked

Advocates raised concerns about disparities in media attention given to missing Black women and girls. Families can struggle to receive public attention for their loved ones, while harmful stereotypes may influence how missing-person cases are perceived.

Participants discussed the potential role of an Ebony Alert in increasing visibility for eligible missing Black youth and other qualifying cases through channels such

as highway signs, television, radio and social media.

Names of missing individuals were read during the gathering, reminding attendees that each case represents a family waiting for answers.

A Shared Responsibility

The discussion reinforced that no single agency or organization can solve the crisis alone. Police must communicate with families, lawmakers must support effective policies, service providers need resources to help survivors, and community members must recognize warning signs and respond.

The speakers called for stronger prevention, safe housing, accountability for perpetrators and continued attention to missing African American women and girls.

Their message was clear: protecting vulnerable people requires more than concern when a case makes the news. It requires sustained community involvement, compassion and action.

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MXC from front page



President Sanders of Malcolm X College cuts ribbon of reopening Westside Branch, with Mayor Brandon Johnson and other dignitaries present

employer events. The facility also offers free parking. Mayor Brandon Johnson joined the celebration, emphasizing the importance of investing in communities that have historically experienced underinvestment.

“Malcolm X College is truly a fixture on the West Side of Chicago, and particularly these two dynamic communities, Garfield Park and Austin, not just as an educational institution, but a place for vital resources for the community,” Johnson said.

Johnson connected the renovation to his administration’s economic development priorities.

“My goal is to build the safest, most affordable big city in America. And the way we do that is by investing in people,” he said.

Sanders credited Gov. JB Pritzker, Johnson, Davis, state Rep. La Shawn K. Ford, former state Sen. Patricia Van Pelt and other partners for helping make the project possible. He said the state provided \$16 million toward construction, while Van Pelt contributed \$4 million.

Expanding Educational Opportunities

The West Campus offers programs designed to prepare residents for careers, particularly in healthcare. Available offerings include high school equivalency preparation, basic nursing assistant training, community health worker training, medical assisting, and prerequisite courses in biology, English and mathematics.

Dean Barbara Moschino encouraged residents to visit the campus and explore its programs. She also invited community members to propose noncredit classes through the college’s community and continuing education programs.

Chancellor Juan Salgado said the renovation reflects City Colleges of Chicago’s commitment to equity and ensuring students have access to quality facilities.

For Austin, Lawndale and West Garfield Park residents, the renovated campus offers expanded opportunities to pursue education, develop job skills and participate in community life.

College officials encouraged residents to share information about available programs with neighbors, friends and family members who could benefit.

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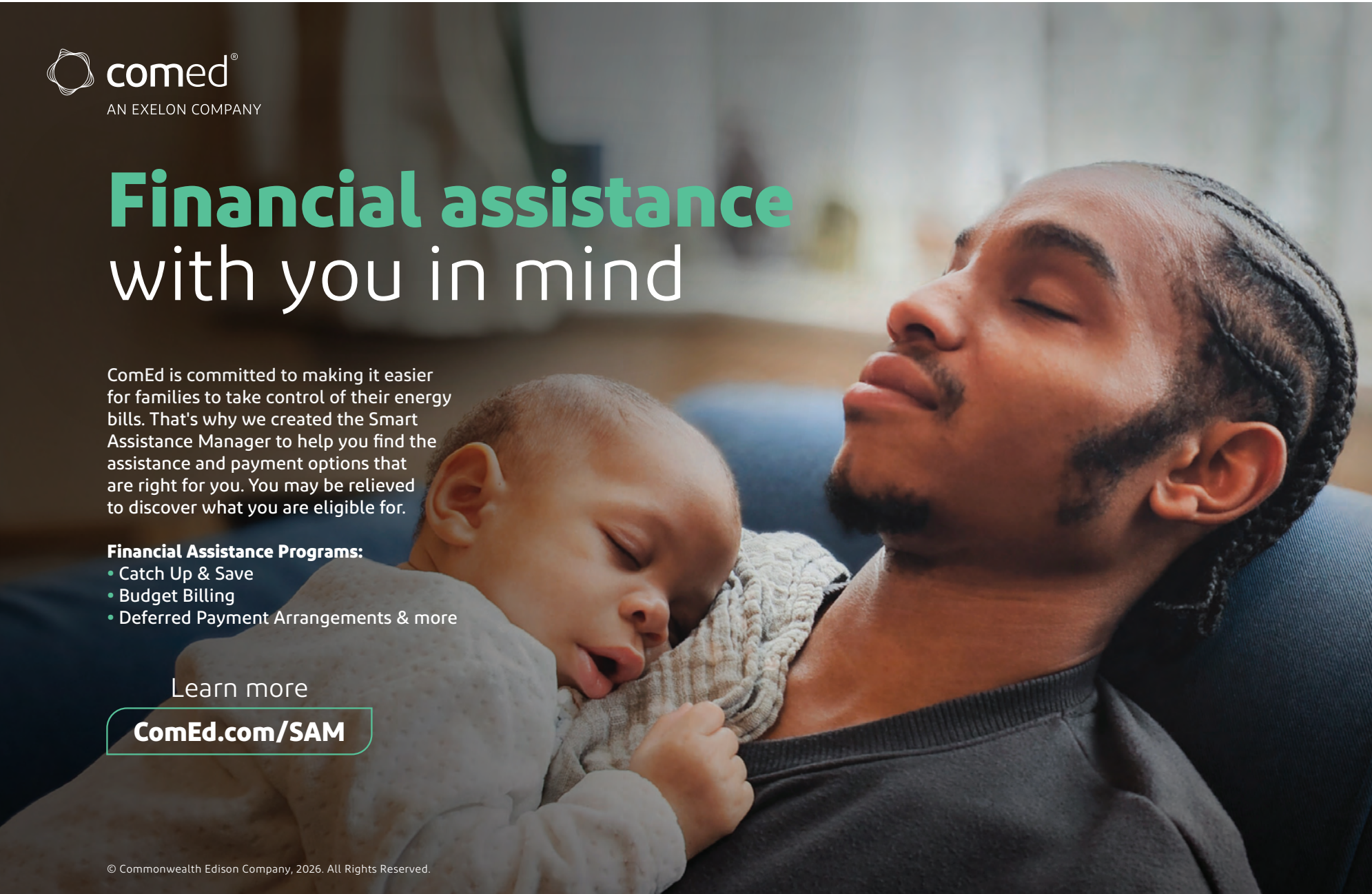
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