

# AN OI N T E D

## NEWS JOURNAL

The Nation's Premier **Bi-Weekly** Faith-Based and Professional Publication For Winners

Volume 32

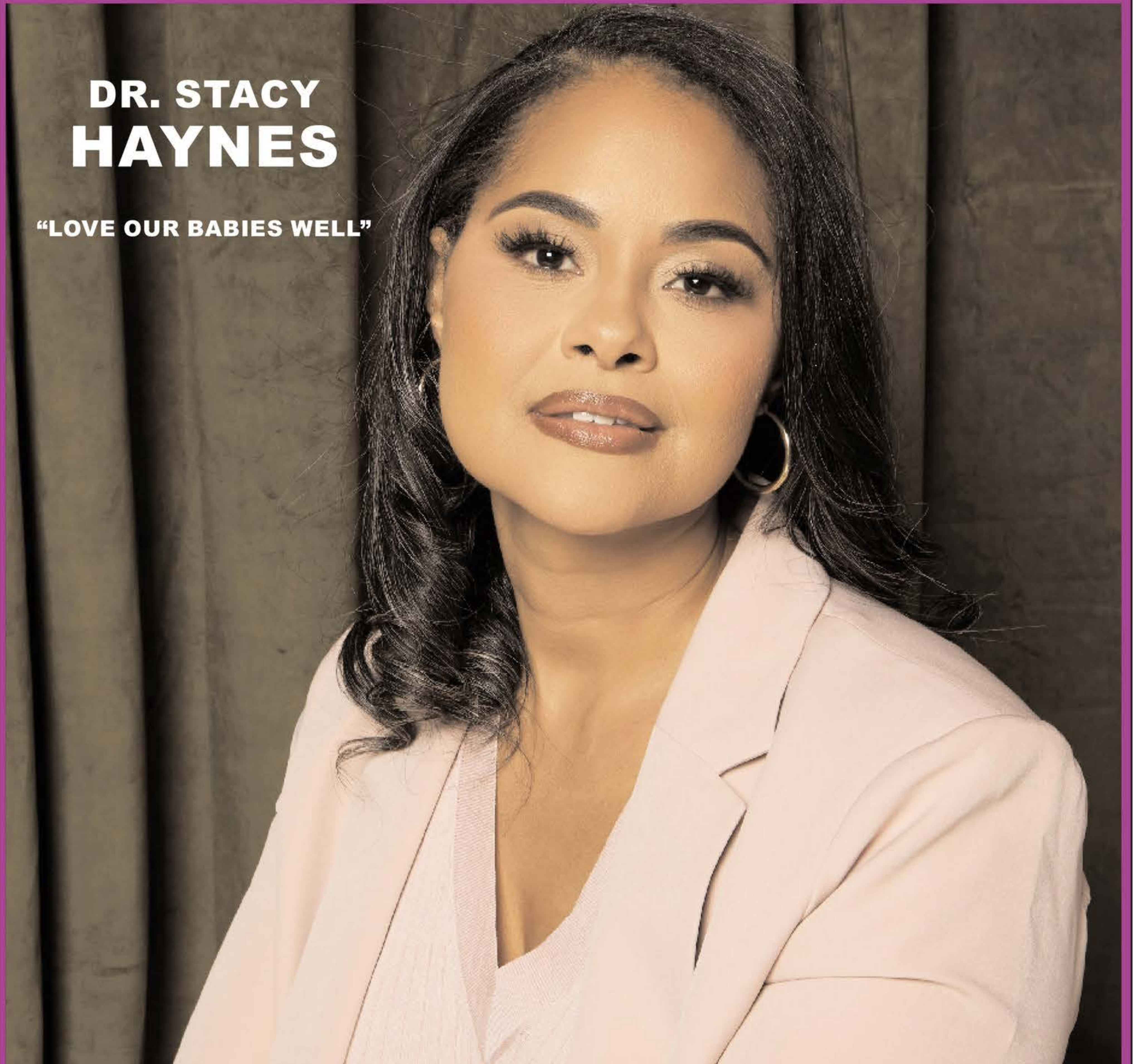
Issue 8

May 24 - June 6, 2026

FREE SEE INSIDE

**DR. STACY  
HAYNES**

**"LOVE OUR BABIES WELL"**



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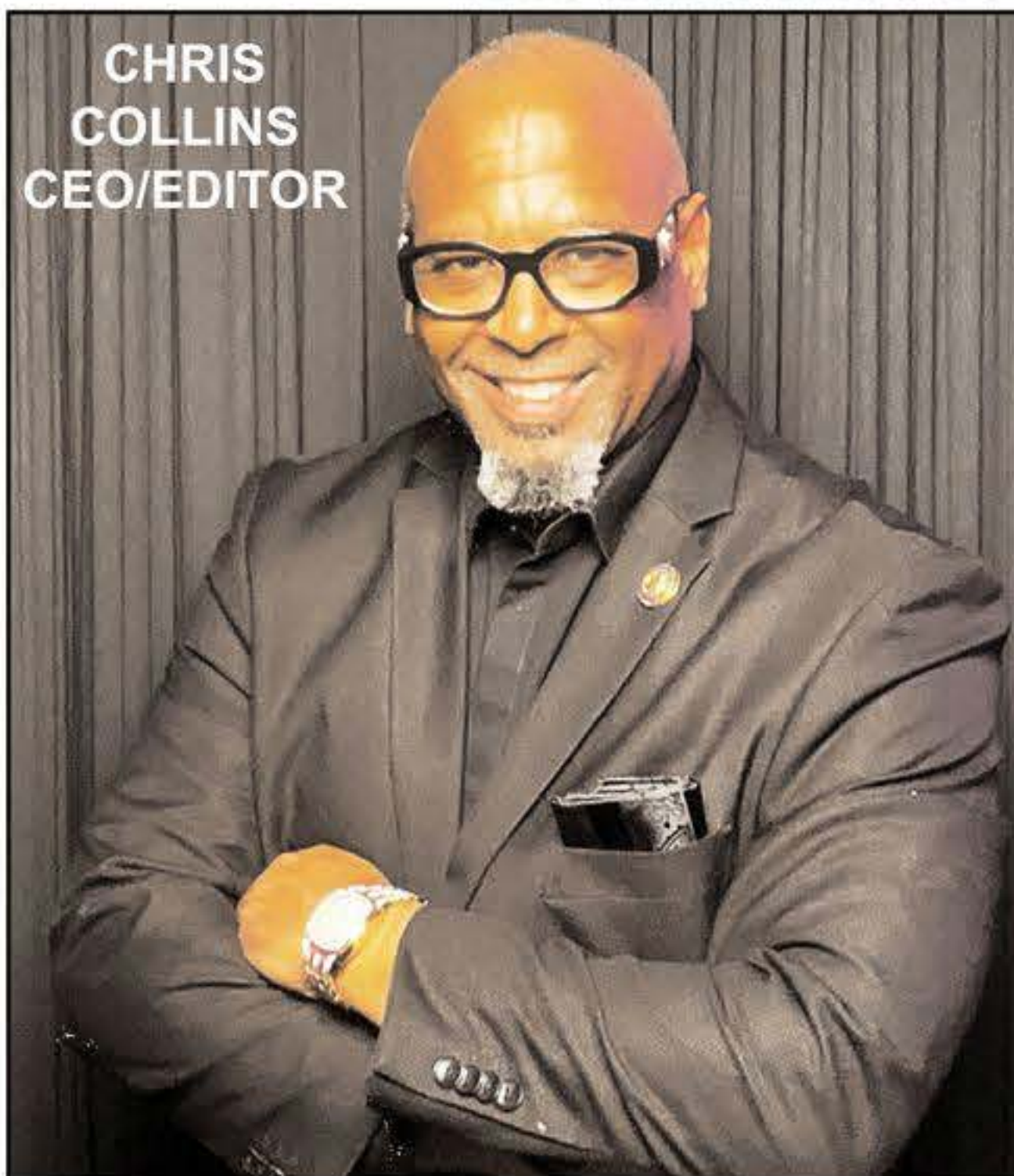
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CHRIS COLLINS  
CEO/EDITOR

**A Word from the Editor**

**Celebrating 32 years of providing quality news to our readers**

Dear Readers of the nation’s premier faith-based and professional newspaper for winners, Anointed News Journal (ANJ). I am taking this time personally to thank each and every individual that has read the Anointed News Journal. I hope you have been inspired by the many positive people interest stories, and stories that have uplifted and empowered our communities.

I am also taking this time to thank our many advertisers that saw the value in utilizing ANJ to accomplish your marketing goals for your companies and/or purpose. ANJ remains the VOICE of Camden city and the SOURCE for connecting people together. If you are in business and need to advertise, we can help. Based in Camden, NJ, the Anointed News Journal has distribution locally in CAMDEN, BURLINGTON, GLOUCESTER, SALEM, CUMBERLAND, DELAWARE, NEW CASTLE, KENT, and PHILADELPHIA COUNTIES. Since 1995 ANJ has provided stories and distribution to 28 states across the country and 11 nations around the world.

Getting your message in front of more than 180,000 readers bi-weekly in print and much more via the world-wide web is a great way to reach the market you are looking for.

I am also thanking those individuals that have given resources to support our mission of publishing positive press. Your contributions are paramount and my heart continues to be filled with joy from the smallest contribution to the largest, every time I receive a contribution, I cannot hold my smile in. I am forever grateful. For those that have been reading ANJ for many years and have never given a contribution, now is a great time to do so.

ANJ is a free publication that is supported by its advertisers. We offer cost effective advertising giving advertisers the opportunity to get quality exposure at a comfortable price point. We offer RISK-FREE Advertising, which simply means if you are not satisfied, you will receive a complementary ad in an upcoming edition.

**About Anointed News Journal**

In May 1994 the CEO/Editor-in-Chief, Chris Collins received a vision from the Creator to write a business plan to seek funding for a grass-roots newspaper. For eight months and through Divine intervention, the business plan was rewritten for the ministry of the Anointed News Journal. The Holy Scripture given divinely to Collins was Habakkuk 2:2 (Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry). As a result, and with prayer and seeking God’s direction, the name “Anointed” was given.

Knowing that English was not his favorite subject while attending school, and that his career goal had nothing to do with journalism, Collins completely trusted in the Creator while developing this business.

The name “Anointed” comes from the hands that God has anointed to master this work and profession. Collins left a career in law enforcement to pursue the vision he received from the Creator.

Using his hands cutting and pasting stories and artwork is how it all began. Typing, proofreading, and making sure things were camera-ready before the layout was the process before technology was included.

Today, 32 years later, ANJ is recognized as a leader in the newspaper industry. ANJ was awarded Best100 Small Businesses consecutively since 2017. In 2021 Chris Collins was recognized by CIO Magazine as a Top 50 Innovators of the Year.

Although it may seem as if newspapers are becoming obsolete, ANJ continues to thrive. As the daily press struggles due to increase rates that have simply priced them out of the market. Weekly newspapers continue to make their mark serving the community and its advertisers. Although many have embraced the digital divide, people still want their physical newspapers. Because of the types of “Peoples Interest Stories” found in ANJ, most readers save their copies for years. Although mainstream media focus on negative press, ANJ has built its legacy on positive stories. “We have written a lot of stories in the past 32 years, and in 32 years we still have not run out of great stories to write about the great people of Camden and surrounding areas,” said Collins. “As we look at the rise of Camden, NJ and the great positive image it has today, I believe we helped to increase that image by sharing the positive stories Camden has to offer, and we’ve been doing that for 32 years now,” said Collins.

**My Ask!**

This is what I am asking from you today. I am asking every reader of ANJ, those of you who believe in positive press and grass-roots press to make a financial contribution to support our mission. Many have been reading ANJ for 32 years and have never made a contribution but would like to. Now is the perfect time as we have entered into our 32nd season. For those who are unable to financially contribute, we are thankful for your continued prayers.

The Holy Scriptures in Matthew 7:7-8 (KJV) states, “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.”

Luke 6:38 (KJV) states, “Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.”

I’m believing in the POWER of God. I’m believing in the POWER of God’s People coming together. Yes, I’m believing in YOU.

1 John 5:14-15 (KJV) states, “And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask any thing according to His will, He heareth us: And if we know that He heareth us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.”

Please make all contributions payable to: Anointed News Journal, P.O. Box 309, Camden, NJ 08101. You can also visit: [www.anointedonline.net](http://www.anointedonline.net) click on Donation button. You can also Cash App to \$ANJEDITOR.

May God continue to bless you! May God continue to bless this world! May god continue to bless ANJ!

Yours truly,  
Chris Collins, CEO/Editor-in-Chief

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*Have you received your salvation? If not just say, “Father, forgive me of my sins. I believe that Jesus Christ died on the cross for my sins and that He arose again from the grave.” If you believe this prayer, you are now saved by God’s grace. I encourage you to get into a Bible teaching church to learn more about our wonderful Savior Jesus Christ.*

**Note:** Opinions by columnists do not reflect those of the editor or staff. Feel free to respond.

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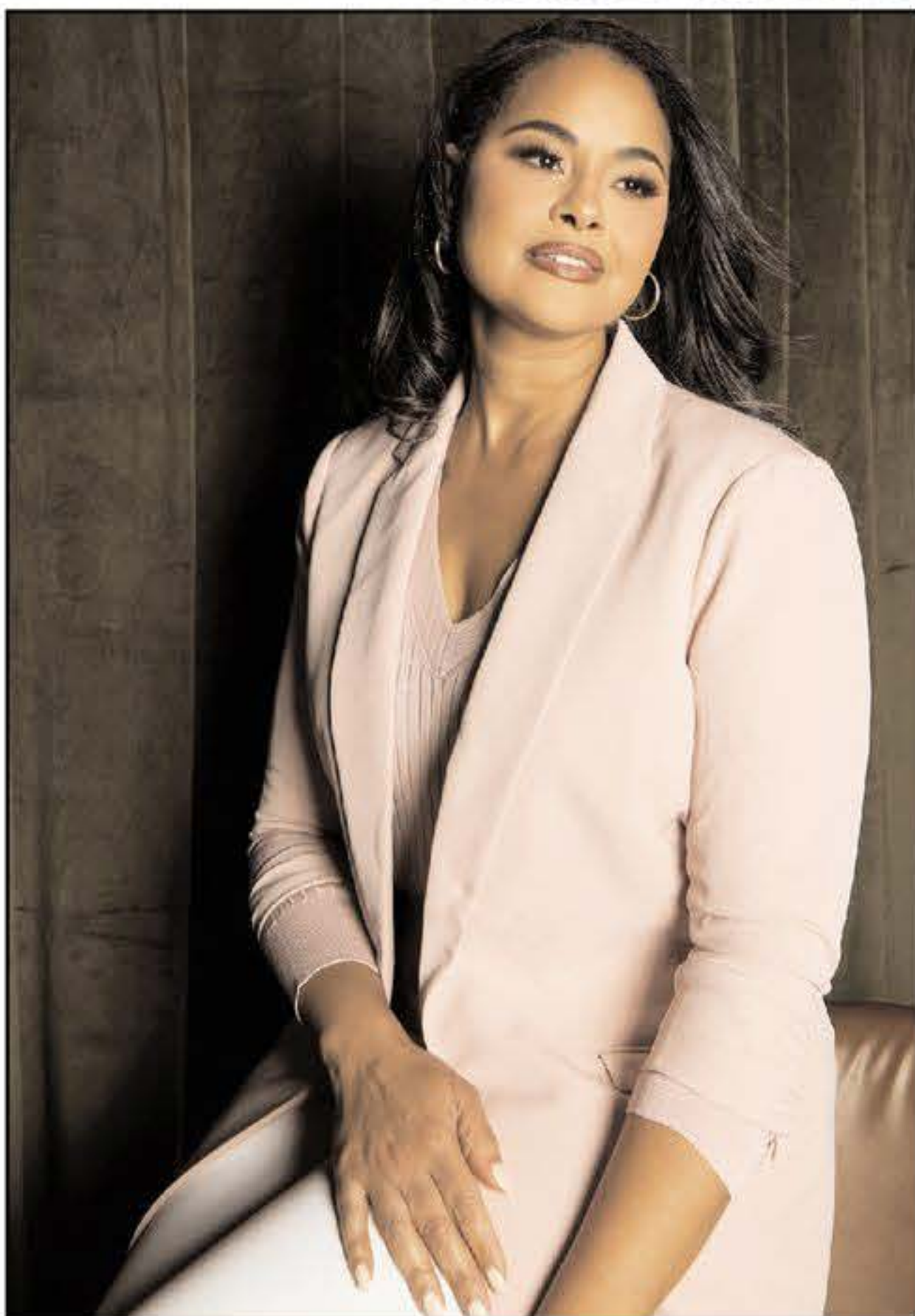


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## Mental Health Advocate Dr. Stacy Haynes Launches “Love Our Babies Well” Movement

**CAMDEN, NJ** - For more than two decades, Dr. Stacy Haynes has dedicated her life to helping children, families, and communities better understand mental health, wellness, and intentional parenting. As a licensed therapist, author, speaker, ministry leader, and podcast host, Haynes has turned her personal experiences and professional expertise into a mission focused on holistic healing, faith, and strengthening the next generation through her “Love Our Babies Well” movement. Through conferences, books, wellness initiatives, and virtual counseling services, she continues to encourage families and churches to become more proactive in supporting children emotionally, mentally, spiritually, and socially.

In an exclusive interview with the nation’s premier faith-based and professional newspaper for winners, Anointed News Journal, Dr. Stacy Haynes shares her passion for helping families embrace wellness, intentional parenting, and community support to guide the next generation toward healing and purpose.

### Collins II:

Who is Dr. Stacy Haynes?

### Dr. Haynes:

Dr. Stacy Haynes is a mental health therapist of over 22 years. She’s a mom of two, a children’s pastor, a speaker, an author, and a podcast host.

### Collins II:

Wow. Could you talk more about your life leading up to making the decision to get into this field? Kind of like the backstory.

### Dr. Haynes:

Yes, it’s interesting. I watched my brother growing up struggle with mental health and behavioral differences that got him suspended. He was having a hard time in middle school and high school academically and really struggled. He didn’t find out until he was an adult that he had a treatable mental health condition.

It was around that time that I decided in my college program that I really wanted to work with children and families and help prevent that. In communities of color specifically, we don’t talk about mental health. We don’t talk about diagnoses, and we don’t want our kids labeled. My parents were really in that space of not knowing how to help him.

Recognizing, even through my early psychology classes, that there are diagnoses and there is help, I also realized that from a cultural perspective, while the research may be based on others, there is still information about how these diagnoses show up for us. So, then I decided to work on my master’s degree and then a doctorate. That was my journey into mental health

— really trying to help families not live through that hard journey of raising children with differences without understanding what’s happening.

### Collins II:

You recently hosted an event “Love Our Babies Well” conference. Could you explain what that was and the impact?

### Dr. Haynes:

Yes! We’re doing another one in September. The “Love Our Babies Well” is really stemming from the book that I authored, and it’s about evidence-based treatment and how we can raise children well. Specifically, I looked at research for children of color. The idea is that there are areas of wellness that can also help with parenting.

For example, parents learning about physical wellness — like whether their child is eating well and sleeping well, and how that impacts their mental and emotional wellness. So, the “Love Our Babies Well” conference, and what we’ll be doing again in September, focuses on the eight dimensions of wellness in families and how we raise our children, but also in couples and relationships.

We want to help parents and individuals in areas like financial wellness, social wellness, and other dimensions of wellness. Again, from a scriptural perspective, whenever Jesus healed someone, He said, “I want you to be made well.” We really want wellness to be how we help people within the church.

That may look like having an exercise or yoga group at church, financial planning workshops, or respite care so families can have a break. We want our communities to come together with a focus on wellness and helping families.

### Collins II:

And the title “Love Our Babies Well” wasn’t just a conference; you turned it into a brand-new book.

### Dr. Haynes:

Yes. My brand-new book, Love Our Babies Well, is a workbook that walks parents through the stages of development. It’s not just about babies. It goes all the way from infancy to young adulthood, including when our children begin having families of their own.

It also helps parents understand strategies and tips they can use at each stage of development to help their children be well. For example, I talk about environmental wellness during the college-age years and how we teach our children to pick and select colleges. Financial wellness can start when they’re little by playing games like Life and Monopoly, where they have to pay for things, or by giving them allowances and letting them pay for purchases.

I also do a lot of teaching with college students about how to order a pizza with a real person because they’re so used to apps and technology that they don’t talk to people anymore.

A big part of the book is equipping parents to understand wellness from a holistic perspective. Mental and emotional health are just one area of wellness. The focus is really on the whole person and helping children and families become well holistically.

### Collins II:

What would be one major piece of parenting advice that you’d offer to any parent?

### Dr. Haynes:

I tell parents to be significant. Parenting is not about perfection; it’s about significance and our ability through faith, love, and wellness, to show up for our children each and every day. We’re not going to be perfect. I always tease that Mary lost Jesus, right? Yet she was still chosen. The angel Gabriel called her the favored one.

So, we can still be the favored parent of our children even though we’re going to make mistakes and we’re not always going to get it right. Our goal is really to be significant, show up, and be intentional about how we love our kids each and every day.

### Collins II:

So what’s next for Dr. Stacy Haynes?

### Dr. Haynes:

What’s next is definitely the conference in September. We are going to be in Glen Burnie, Maryland, at Fresh Start Church. I’m also working on another book that will hopefully come out before then.

I will be speaking at Reclaiming Wellness in Washington in July, where Dr. Thelma Bryant will be the keynote speaker. I’ll also be in Dallas next week doing a “Love Our Babies Well”

workshop for the World Conference for Wellness Counseling.

### Collins II:

Wow.

### Dr. Haynes:

I’m trying to spread the “Love Our Babies Well” message.

### Collins II:

And you’re also a brand-new co-author in Legacy in Ink with 180 other authors, so you’ll be in Philadelphia on May 30th for a Guinness World Record attempt as well!

### Dr. Haynes:

Yes, which is really exciting! I’ve never done anything like this before, so I think I’m even more excited.

### Collins II:

Yeah, I’m excited as well. I’ll be there too. Anointed News Journal is one of the sponsors of that event...As you already mentioned, it sounds like you’re available for speaking engagements and events?

### Dr. Haynes:

Yes, absolutely. That’s really my heart — women’s conferences especially. On June 12, we have our Signature Women event with Pastor Bonnie Eastlack here in Greensboro, North Carolina. We love creating opportunities for women to gather together and focus on wellness.

My passion is to write, speak, and help churches develop programs that focus on the wellness of their children. We have many children with diverse needs when we talk about mental health and behavioral concerns. Even on Sunday mornings, many Sunday school programs are struggling to support children and families effectively.

That’s where my heart is — trauma-informed care in churches, helping churches implement wellness programming, and speaking engagements that support women’s ministries and church ministries.

### Collins II:

Also, your podcast — what is the name of your podcast, how often does it air, and what is it about?

### Dr. Haynes:

The Dr. Stacy Show is about parenting through faith, love, and wellness. We feature guests such as teachers, entrepreneurs, speech pathologists, and others who provide advice and strategies for parents. I always say it takes a community to help raise our kids.

Each episode airs every Tuesday on YouTube, Apple Podcasts, and Spotify. Every week, we release a new episode that helps parents with tips and strategies related to wellness and raising children. It’s not just me speaking — I bring on amazing people to share their expertise, which is really helpful.

### Collins II:

So how can people get ahold of you?

### Dr. Haynes:

People can reach me at [www.DrStacyHaynesLPC.com](http://www.DrStacyHaynesLPC.com). If they’re looking for parent coaching or therapy services, they can also register through the website.

The office number is 856-228-1005 for anyone looking for services or wanting to connect. On Instagram, they can find me at Dr. Stacy Haynes LPC, as well as The Dr. Stacy Show on Instagram.

A big part of what I do now is virtual care. I’m licensed in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina, so people can still reach me for virtual mental health services in those states.

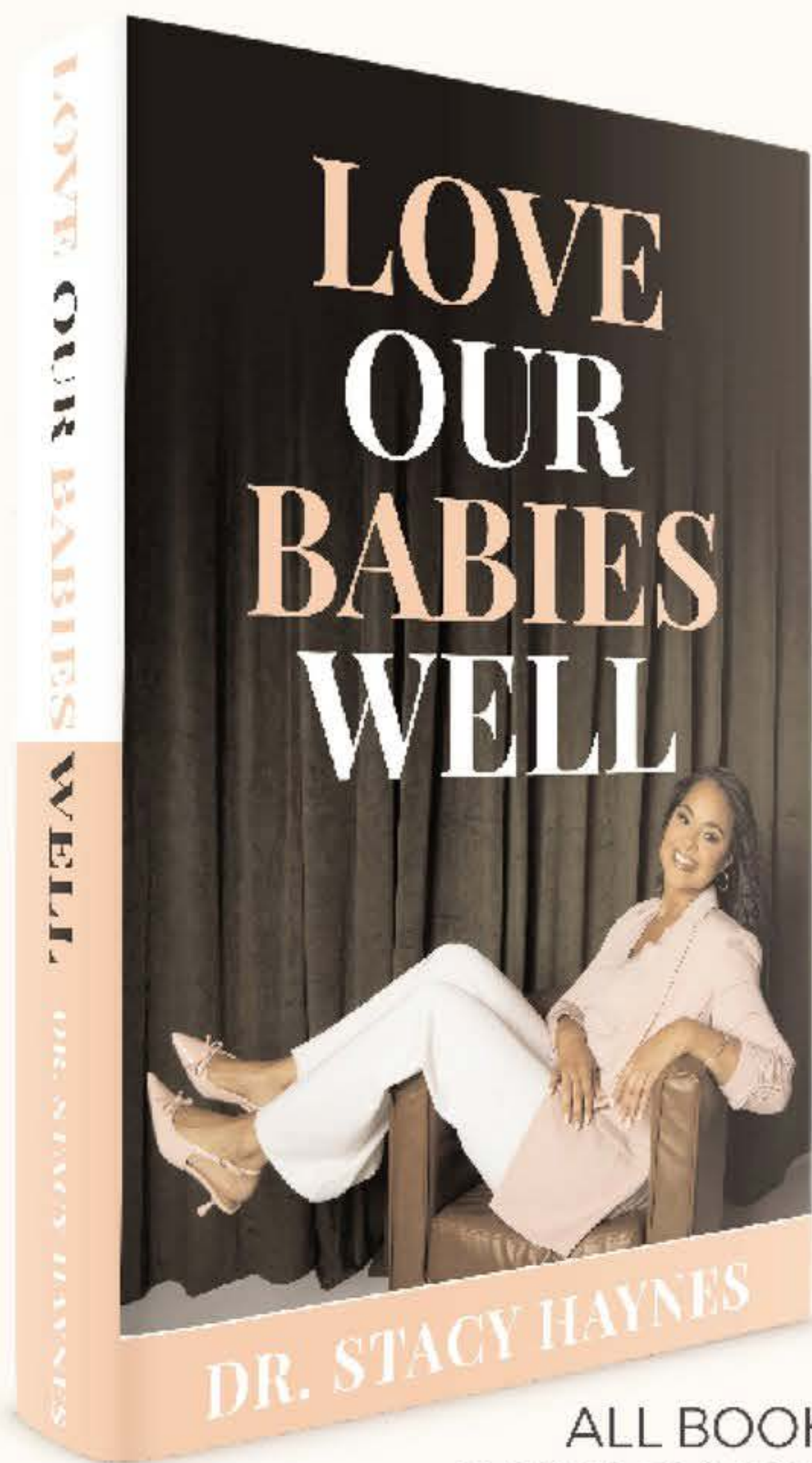
Parent coaching is different because it’s not considered mental health treatment under my license, so I can provide parent coaching services to anyone regardless of location.

### Collins II:

What words of encouragement would you give to a young person? I know you have two children in college right now, so for people who are college age and entering further into their twenties, what advice would you give to someone trying to find themselves and figure out their career path in life?

### Dr. Haynes:

Everybody’s journey is different, and yours doesn’t have to look like anybody else’s. I think sometimes we get so stuck on social media, images, and even what our parents tell us we’re supposed to do and how life is supposed to look.



Dr. Stacy author, speaker, conference leader, Children's Pastor, podcast host, mom.

Topics Include:  
Trauma Informed Care in the Church, Mental Health, Supporting Autistic Youth, Parenting and Women's Retreats,

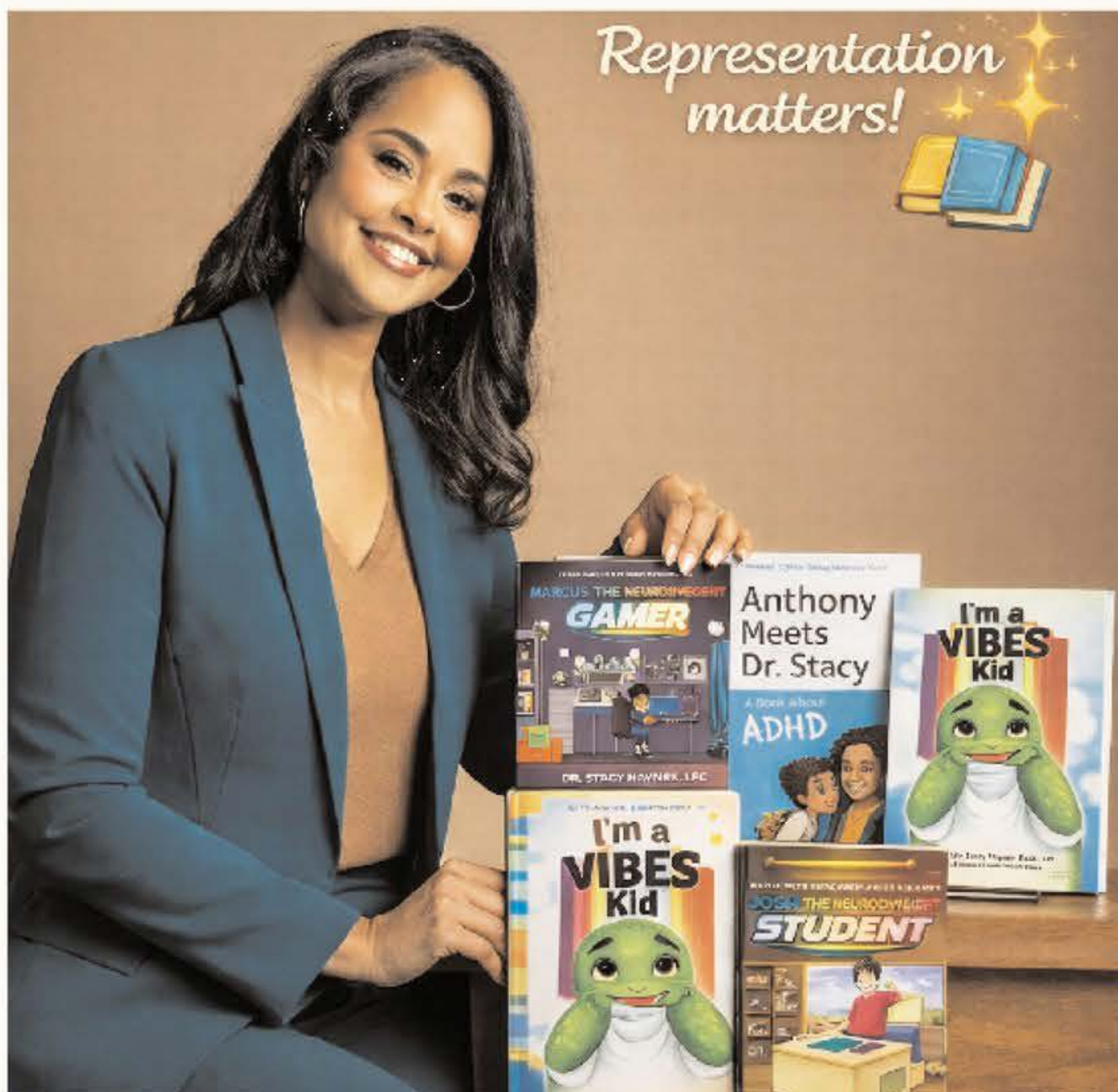
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### Love Our Babies Well



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Parenting with Faith, Love, & Wellness



Love Our Babies Well Season Three



Dr. Stacy Haynes

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Every Tuesday

Season 3



Continued from page 4

I was just talking to an entrepreneur who is starting businesses at 38 years old, and I also spoke to a 70-year-old who just reached a major milestone. Things that some people may do in their twenties, others may accomplish in their seventies. Our journey does not have to follow a cookie-cutter path.

I think we should embrace who we are, have confidence in how we are built and designed, and focus on finding our strengths. Many of us spend too much time focusing on our weaknesses instead of our strengths. Most importantly, enjoy the journey. It's definitely meant to be enjoyed.

**Collins II:**

In a final word, what would you like to say to the readers of the Anointed News Journal?

**Dr. Haynes:**

First of all, keep reading the Anointed News Journal. I love it. I think it is all of our responsibility to pour into this next generation. We talk about them all the time — the younger generation coming up, and we often complain or criticize, but it is really our responsibility to mentor them.

We are supposed to be the older women and men in the church who teach and guide them. Deuteronomy 6:7 tells us that we are supposed to give instruction and direction to our children when they wake up, when they are in the streets, when they are in the stores, and when they are at home. It truly is our responsibility to help guide this next generation.

**Conclusion:**

Dr. Stacy Haynes continues to use her platform as a therapist, author, speaker, and ministry leader to help families embrace wellness through faith, love, and intentional parenting. Through her Love Our Babies Well movement, conferences, podcast, and virtual services, she is encouraging parents and churches alike to take a more holistic approach to raising and supporting the next generation. In an exclusive interview with the nation's premier faith-based and professional newspaper for winners, Anointed News Journal, Dr. Haynes shares her passion for guiding families toward healing, purpose, and life-long wellness.

You can purchase her book, "Love Our Babies Well", on Amazon.

By Christopher Collins II



**Camden Born and Raised  
Dr. Lorna Young-Wright,  
A Musical Icon**

Dr. Lorna C Young Wright, a Camden, New Jersey native, has been a student of music since receiving initial piano lessons from her father, at the age of five. Continued studies on the piano, organ, and a quartet of string instruments, include instruction at the Settlement Music School in Philadelphia,

Glassboro State College (Veda Zuponic), the Johns Hopkins Peabody Conservatory of Music (Julio Estaban), the Moscow Conservatory of Music (Mezhlumov), and the Michigan State University (Deborah Moriarty), from which she received the Doctor of Musical Arts (Piano Performance).

Young Wright has enjoyed travelling professionally as a concert pianist, composer, choral director, collaborative artist, and lecturer. Performances and lectures include, in part, those in the United Kingdom (London and Cambridge), the People's Republic of China (Beijing), France (Paris and Annemasse), Bosnia and Herzegovina (Sarajevo), Germany (Munich), Turkey (Istanbul), and the Caribbean. Young Wright spent years as an accompanist for the Young's Choral Ensemble and, during her tenure at the Johns Hopkins Peabody Conservatory of Music, traveled as the classical pianist for Dr. Nathan Carter and the Morgan State University Concert Choir. While studying at Glassboro State College, Young Wright made her orchestral debut, playing Liszt's Totentanz.

In September 2013, the University of the Virgin Islands has named Dr. Lorna Young-Wright the inaugural recipient of the Ann Elizabeth Richardson Distinguished Professor of Music Award. Young-Wright – a music professor at UVI for 29 years – was chosen for her years of excellence and dedicated service to the university. "I feel completely elated," Young-Wright said of being selected for the award. "The receipt of the award means that there is an appreciation for what we are doing at the university in the music department."

The university created the professorship award at the request of Gwendolyn E. Kean. Kean donated a gift from her estate and asked that UVI create a music professorship in her mother's name that would enhance music in the territory. As Distinguished Professor of Music, Young-Wright will serve as endowed chair for a term of two years. She will promote music excellence in the Virgin Islands.

After thirty-four years, Dr. Young Wright retired as Professor of Music (Piano and Music Theory), and the Inaugural recipient of the Ann Elizabeth Richardson Distinguished Professor of Music Award, from the University of the Virgin Islands (St. Thomas campus).

Young-Wright has had a long musical journey. As a child she studied piano, violin, viola, violoncello, theory and composition. She studied at the Settlement Music School and played at the Moscow Conservatory of Music. She also had an orchestral debut as a soloist with the Glassboro State Community Orchestra. Young-Wright has performed piano throughout the Caribbean and served as a concert pianist, choral conductor, corroborating artist and composer in the United Kingdom, France, Germany, China and Switzerland.

"I hope that when I am remembered it is related to my desire to produce a cadre of disciples committed to a personal and academic excellence that is reflected in the manner in which they embrace themselves and others in the world," said Dr. Young-Wright. "A manner that reflects a kind, peaceful and yet understanding knowledge that allows each one to enjoy a successful life."

Lorna is the founder/director of the Disciples, a chamber choral ensemble; the Minister of Music at the North Baptist Church in Woodbury and has taught as an Adjunct Professor of Music (Music Theory) at Rowan University, Glassboro campus. Her most valued attribute, however, is the relationship she shares with her Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

By Deacon Richard Stanard  
"Be Prosperous and In Good Health," Laymen President  
New England Missionary Baptist Convention

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# CAMDEN MARCH FOR JESUS

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**JESUS IS LORD**

**SATURDAY  
MAY 30, 2026**

Meet at 9th & Kaighns Ave, Camden, NJ | 9AM  
Celebration at Staley Park: 7th & Jefferson St. | 11AM

This march is about Christian Service and Evangelism. We want to celebrate the love of Jesus by giving love to our neighbors.

For more information please contact: Rev. Dr. Rhetta M. Moore, Chairperson  
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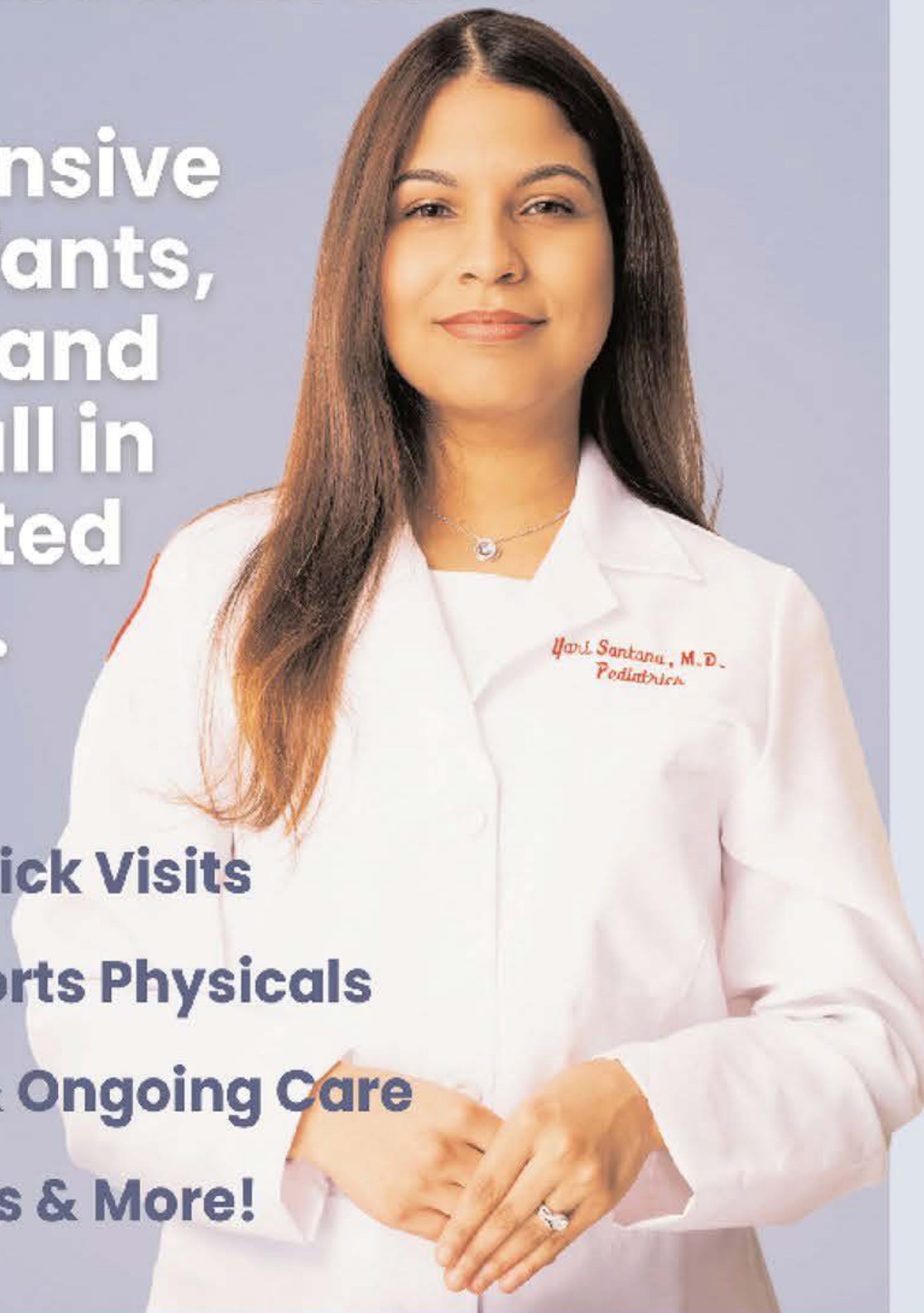
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### 2026 RISE Teacher Awards

CAMDEN, NJ - Camden Education Fund recently celebrated three exceptional educators through the 2026 RISE Teacher Awards, a citywide initiative recognizing outstanding teachers across Camden’s district, charter, and renaissance schools.

As part of the celebration, teachers were surprised during live classroom visits by Camden Mayor Victor Carstarphen, Camden Education Fund CEO Giana Campbell, school leaders, family members, and community representatives. Each educator received flowers, trophies, a Certificate of Achievement from the City of Camden, and a \$5,000 award recognizing their dedication and impact on students throughout the city.

The 2026 RISE Teacher Award winners are:

- **Reese Hart** – Mastery Cramer Hill
- **Naina Batra** – KIPP Lanning Square Primary School
- **Chioma Emeka-Obasi** – Brimm Medical Arts High School

The RISE Teacher Awards highlight educators who go above and beyond to create meaningful learning experiences, build strong relationships with students and families, and positively shape school communities. The selection process included school nominations, written applications, recommendations, classroom observations, and evaluations conducted by an independent committee of veteran educators.

Now in its sixth year, the RISE Teacher Awards continue to celebrate the diversity, excellence, and commitment of teachers across Camden schools.

Camden Education Fund extends special thanks to partnering sponsors American Water Charitable Foundation and Reworld for helping make this recognition possible and for investing in educators who continue to inspire and uplift Camden students every day.



**NAINA BATRA – KIPP LANNING SQUARE PRIMARY SCHOOL**



**REESE HART – MASTERY CRAMER HILL**



**CHIOMA EMEKA-OBASI – BRIMM MEDICAL ARTS HIGH SCHOOL**



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## New Jersey American Water Announces 2026 Volunteer Firefighter and EMS Grant Recipients

### 21 Departments to Receive about \$50,000 in Grants

**CAMDEN, N.J.** – New Jersey American Water announced today that 21 volunteer fire and EMS departments in its service areas will receive about \$50,000 in grants to support firefighter safety, emergency response and lifesaving equipment purchases. Funding from grants will help departments buy equipment and make operational improvements tailored to the local response needs.

“The grant we received in 2025 had a significant impact on our department,” said Andrew J. Welsh, chief of the Bay Head Fire Department. “It helped us purchase two thermal imaging cameras, which allow for faster, more informed command decisions and strengthen overall firefighter safety, operational readiness, and emergency response capabilities.”

“Every department knows its own needs best, and this program is designed to help local responders invest in the tools that will make the biggest difference in their communities,” said Kim Schalek Downes, vice president of Business Development, Government and External Affairs. “We’re proud to support that work year after year.”

This year’s grants will support a variety of initiatives across participating departments, including the purchase of gas leak detectors, gas meters, defibrillators, thermal imaging cameras, and other critical lifesaving equipment.

### The 2026 Volunteer Fire and EMS Grant Program recipients are:

#### Atlantic County

- Cardiff Volunteer Fire Company
- South Egg Harbor Volunteer Fire Company No. 5 of Galloway Township, N.J., Inc.
- Burlington County
- Riverside Fire Company No. 1
- Vincent Fire Co. 1

#### Camden County

- Magnolia Ambulance Corps, Inc.
- Oaklyn Fire Department
- Cape May County
- Upper Township

#### Essex County

- South Orange Fire Department
- Hunterdon County
- Three Bridges Volunteer Fire Company

#### Middlesex County

- Jamesburg Fire Department

#### Monmouth County

- Community Fire Company of Leonardo
- River Plaza Hose Company #1
- Township of Middletown EMS Department

#### Morris County

- Budd Lake Fire Department

#### Salem County

- Quinton Fire Company
- Salem Fire Department

#### Somerset County

- Bound Brook Fire Department
- Raritan Borough

#### Union County

- Garwood Fire Department

#### Warren County

- Good Will Fire Co. 1
- Washington Borough Fire Department

Since launching the program in 2011, New Jersey American Water has awarded 353 grants totaling more than \$587,500 to 176 local volunteer fire departments and emergency response units in its service areas. More information about the program is available at [www.newjerseyamwater.com/community](http://www.newjerseyamwater.com/community).

### About New Jersey American Water

New Jersey American Water, a subsidiary of American Water (NYSE: AWK), is the largest regulated water utility in the state with approximately 875 dedicated employees working to provide safe, clean, reliable and affordable water and wastewater services to approximately 3 million people. For more information, visit [www.newjerseyamwater.com](http://www.newjerseyamwater.com) and follow New Jersey American Water on LinkedIn, Facebook, X, and Instagram.



## New Jersey American Water Provides Wise Water Tips for Summer as New Jersey Drought Warning Remains in Effect

**CAMDEN, N.J.** – With temperatures in the mid-90s this week and the unofficial start to summer this holiday weekend, New Jersey American Water is reminding customers that smart irrigation and landscaping practices are essential for conserving water, especially as New Jersey remains under a drought warning.

“As we head into the summer months, we know our customers are spending more time outdoors and using more water,” said Mark McDonough, president of New Jersey American Water. “Conserving water is a shared responsibility, and by making small changes, like limiting outdoor watering and using smart irrigation practices, our customers can play an important role in protecting our water resources.”

Despite recent precipitation, the state is still recovering from a significant rain deficit from late last summer that continued through winter and spring. In response to the ongoing drought warning issued by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), New Jersey American Water’s Mandatory Conservation Notice remains in effect statewide.

“While we saw a little relief over the winter, New Jersey is feeling the effects of nearly two years of below-normal precipitation,” Governor Mikie Sherrill said in a recent press release issued by the state. “It is extremely important that all residents and businesses remain mindful of conserving water use going into the late spring and early summer, when demand normally increases. I urge everyone to join us in spreading awareness about the importance of conserving water.”

To help alleviate stress on water sources and save on water bills, New Jersey American Water offers the following smart irrigation and landscaping tips:

### Upgrade Your Irrigation System:

- Use smart controllers: These devices automatically adjust watering based on weather conditions.
  - Install rain sensors: Prevent unnecessary watering during or after rainfall.
  - Consider drip irrigation: This system delivers water directly to plant roots, reducing evaporation and runoff.
  - Inspect and maintain regularly: Fix broken sprinkler heads and check for leaks or overspray.
- Landscape Thoughtfully:**
- Plant drought-resistant and native species: These plants require less water and thrive in local conditions.
  - Mulch matters: Apply 2–3 inches of mulch around plants to retain moisture and reduce weed growth.
  - Mow wisely: Keep grass height between 2.5 and 3.5 inches to improve drought resistance and reduce water needs.
  - Group plants with similar water needs: This helps avoid over-watering or under-watering certain areas.
- Water Smart:**
- Water early or late: Irrigate in the early morning or late evening to reduce water loss through evaporation.
  - Water two times per week at a maximum: Most lawns only need watering once or twice a week, and watering more frequently can harm your plants.
  - Check soil moisture: Stop watering when the soil is moist 4–6 inches deep. This is typically enough for healthy root growth.
  - Turn it off when it rains: If rain is in the forecast, skip the watering day altogether.

New Jersey American Water continues to monitor water supply conditions and is working closely with NJDEP and local authorities. The company has implemented operational adjustments to maintain service reliability, but conservation remains a critical part of managing the ongoing drought. Customers can learn more about wise water use and track their usage by logging into their MyWater account at [amwater.com/mywater](http://amwater.com/mywater). Additional tips and tools are also available at [newjerseyamwater.com/conservation](http://newjerseyamwater.com/conservation) and on NJDEP’s Water Conservation website at [dep.nj.gov/conserves-water](http://dep.nj.gov/conserves-water).

### About New Jersey American Water

New Jersey American Water, a subsidiary of American Water (NYSE: AWK), is the largest regulated water utility in the state with approximately 875 dedicated employees working to provide safe, clean, reliable and affordable water and wastewater services to approximately 3 million people.

For more information, visit [www.newjerseyamwater.com](http://www.newjerseyamwater.com) and follow New Jersey American Water on LinkedIn, Facebook, X, and Instagram.



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# WATER MAIN FLUSHING PLANNED IN CAMDEN

Each year, the City of Camden flushes its water distribution (pipeline) system to help ensure that our customers continue to receive high-quality water service.



## FLUSHING SCHEDULE

American Water, the City's contracted water service provider, will be conducting fire hydrant flushing for approximately 10 weeks beginning the week of April 6, 2026 during the hours of 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

## WHY WE FLUSH

Flushing helps us to clean out any build up of mineral deposits and sediment inside the pipes. These harmless deposits can occur when water service demands are reduced during the winter months. It also allows us to use the hydrants to make sure they are operational and to check fire flows.

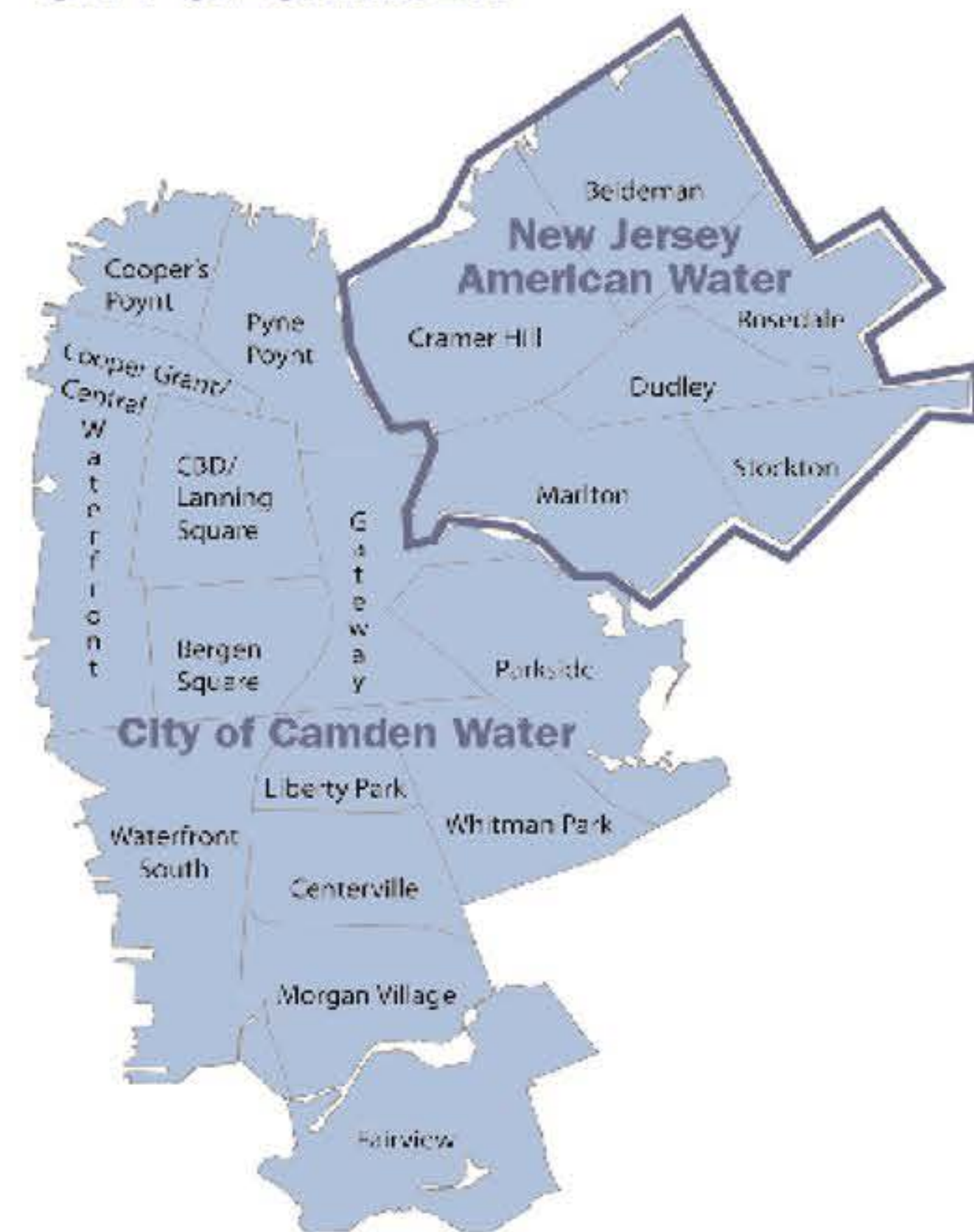
## WHAT TO EXPECT

When crews are in the area, you may experience a drop in water pressure or discolored water. If discolored water occurs, let the cold water run until it is clear.

## HOW TO PREPARE

- Draw water for cooking ahead of time.
- Store a large bottle of water in the refrigerator for drinking.
- Check for discolored water before using the washing machine or dishwasher.

## WATER SERVICE IN THE CITY OF CAMDEN



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## Governor Sherrill Announces Comprehensive Plan on Data Centers

Establishes Guardrails to Hold Data Centers Accountable, Positions New Jersey to Lead in AI Innovation

**TRENTON, NJ** – Governor Sherrill today announced a comprehensive statewide plan to address the growing impact of data centers on energy demand, resource use, and local communities. These measures will help hold data centers accountable, while positioning New Jersey to lead in AI innovation.

As demand for data centers accelerates, the plan will establish strong guardrails to protect communities, strengthen transparency, ensure these facilities invest in New Jersey's energy infrastructure, and deliver good-paying jobs.

"Data centers are among the biggest drivers of energy costs, which I am working tirelessly to bring down. While many states are approaching this issue piecemeal, this is the first comprehensive plan to tackle it holistically. At the same time, New Jersey will take a thoughtful approach to harnessing investment, lowering costs for ratepayers, and leading on AI innovation," said Governor Sherrill. "By establishing these guardrails, we will hold data centers accountable, ensure they contribute their fair share, and make sure our communities not only benefit from the AI innovation happening in our state, but have a real hand in shaping it."

The comprehensive plan includes four key pillars:

- Establishing fair-share rules to ensure data centers bring new clean energy online and contribute to the grid infrastructure needed to support their growth, shifting costs away from residents and ratepayers rather than to them.
- Improving transparency starting with requiring reporting on energy and water use so the public has greater visibility into the impact of large-scale facilities.
- Developing strong statewide standards for Community Benefits Agreements and providing state resources to ensure municipalities can negotiate from positions of strength, ensuring data centers address impacts like light, noise, and pollution while making meaningful local investments.
- Delivering good paying jobs by ensuring these centers leverage local trades and pay prevailing wages.

The plan builds on the Administration's broader affordability agenda and ongoing efforts to lower energy costs for New Jersey families by addressing some of the largest drivers of demand growth on the grid.

This includes decisive action on Day One through Executive Orders No. 1 and 2 to freeze rate hikes and aggressively expand power generation to bring more affordable energy online for New Jersey families. Since then, Governor Sherrill and her Administration have approved six large-scale solar and battery

storage projects, announced a historic expansion of community solar to 3,000 MW, and signed legislation to accelerate battery storage deployment and lift the 50-year moratorium on new nuclear energy.

## Sherrill Administration Highlights Success of Historic Program Helping Hundreds of Fire Departments Remove Pfas-Containing Firefighting Foams

**TRENTON, NJ** – The Department of Environmental Protection and Department of Community Affairs today highlighted the success of a major state-led effort to collect and safely destroy PFAS-containing firefighting foams from hundreds of fire departments across the state at no cost to them.

### Acting Commissioner Potosnak

The initiative, part of the Sherrill Administration's mission to deliver on addressing complex environmental problems, is helping fire departments comply with state legislation banning the use and storage of these foams after Jan. 1, 2027. The effort is protecting communities and firefighters from the health and environmental threats these harmful chemicals pose.

Two regional sites have been collecting the firefighting foams throughout the month for destruction by an out-of-state contractor.

"We are extremely pleased that fire departments from across New Jersey have been stepping up to get rid of these foams and protect firefighters, their communities, and the environment from potential impacts from these dangerous chemicals," DEP Acting Commissioner Ed Potosnak said during a media event at the northern regional collection site in Hunterdon County. "The DEP is delivering on one of the Sherrill Administration's environmental priorities to mitigate harmful PFAS, keeping them out of the environment and avoiding the extremely high cost of cleanup down the road."

"Improving quality of life is at the heart of everything we do at the Department of Community Affairs. This includes stopping the use of cancer-causing firefighting foam in an effort to protect the health of New Jersey firefighters and the safety of drinking water supplies," said DCA Commissioner Jacquelyn A. Suárez. "Working together with the Department of Environmental Protection and local fire departments across the state, our Department's Division of Fire Safety (DFS) is proud to be part of this massive collection and disposal program that will reduce future environmental contamination."

"Our firefighters put their lives on the line to protect us every day. The last thing they should have to worry about is exposure to dangerous 'forever chemicals' when they are using the very tools that are meant to keep them safe," said Senator Troy Singleton, who authored the law banning PFAS in firefighting foam. "Protecting those who protect us will remain a top priority and I am encouraged by the State's efforts to implement this law, and safely destroy PFAS-containing foam."

"New Jersey is leading the way in addressing the serious public health risks posed by PFAS, the 'forever chemicals' that are pervasive in our consumer products, and now our environment," said legislation sponsor Senator Linda Greenstein. "Efforts like this from the Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Community Affairs to safely collect and destroy material containing PFAS build off of our broader work to reduce exposure and strengthen protections, with the goal of ensuring a healthier environment for our residents in the future."

### Eliminating a Threat

State law adopted in 2024 directed the DEP to establish a collection and disposal program to address the risks posed by PFAS-containing firefighting foams, of which the most common is aqueous film-forming foam (AFFF).

### AFFF

Believed to be one of the largest cooperative collection programs of its kind in the nation, New Jersey's program is funded through a \$16.6 million state appropriation.

DEP and DCA's Division of Fire Safety identified more than 400 fire departments eligible to participate and expect to collect approximately 150,000 gallons of firefighting foam. Participating fire departments were required to register in advance and have been advised of collection and drop-off requirements, including safe handling and transportation of the materials. No walk-ins are being accepted.

"Today we are continuing the process of removing these PFAS 'forever chemicals' from our fire departments throughout the state. Now is the time to begin the transition from these PFAS containing foams and move to safer fluorine-free alternatives," said State Fire Marshal and Division of Fire Safety Director Wayne Wolk. "This is a good day for the fire service in New Jersey and the DFS, we will continue to advocate for the health and welfare of both our firefighters and residents to be free from these harmful chemicals."

"Our members face elevated exposure to PFAS through firefighting foams and contaminated gear at much greater levels than the public. Remediation efforts being conducted will protect our firefighters and HAZMAT technicians from continued risks from these forever chemicals," said New Jersey State Firefighters Mutual Benevolent Association President Eddie Donnelly. "Cancer in the fire service is our number one killer. The NJFMB is grateful for the partnership with our Legislature and Governor Sherrill for taking action to reduce long-term health concerns and ensure safer conditions for New Jersey's first responders. We are the front lines of defense for our state and deserve nothing less than common sense collaboration to ensure New Jersey provides the protection, staffing and equipment for our women and men to do their jobs safely."

### The Problem with PFAS in Firefighting Foams

PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substance) are synthetic chemicals linked to cancer, immune system impacts, and long-term environmental contamination. Because they do not readily break down, they can persist in water, soil, and the human body for decades.

### AFFF

Given their durability and water-resistance, they have been used in a wide variety of applications over the years, including non-stick cookware, water-repellant clothing, grease-resistant food packaging, stain-resistant carpets and fabrics, cleaning products and cosmetics.

PFAS have also been used for decades in certain firefighting foams because they form a highly effective barrier to extinguish high-hazard flammable liquid (Class B) fires, such as fuel, oil and grease fires. Due to its highly concentrated PFAS content, removing PFAS-containing foams from service is considered one of the most urgent and effective actions states can take to reduce future contamination risks.

When used in firefighting, these foams can seep into the ground and impact nearby water bodies, posing a serious threat to drinking water supplies. Studies have found elevated levels of PFAS in water sources near military bases, airports, and industrial sites where AFFF has been used extensively.

The state legislation signed in 2024 set a January 8, 2026, deadline for fire departments to cease using PFAS-containing firefighting foams. The deadline was extended to January 1, 2027.

Fire departments are responsible for the transition away from PFAS-containing firefighting foams. Modern alternatives that do not contain the harmful chemicals are available and suitable for most municipal firefighting applications.

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection is dedicated to protecting New Jersey's environment and public health. The agency prioritizes addressing climate change, protecting New Jersey's water, revitalizing its communities and managing and promoting its natural and historic resources.

For the most recent information, follow the DEP on X @NewJerseyDEP, Facebook @newjerseydep, Instagram @nj.dep, and LinkedIn @newjerseydep, or visit [www.nj.gov/dep](http://www.nj.gov/dep).

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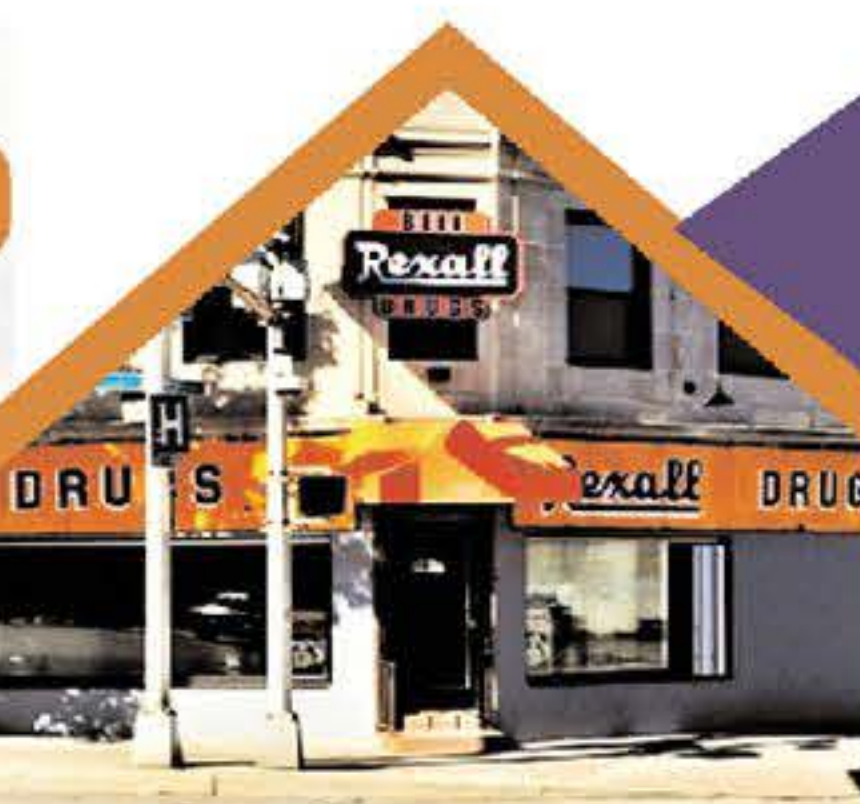
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President, CFO

**Anthony V. Minniti, RPh**  
Vice President, Pharmacist in Charge

**Allen R. Morton, RPh**  
Executive Director in Charge of Long Term Care at Home and Remote Fulfillment Services



## Virtua Voorhees Hospital is First in New Jersey to Earn Advanced Certification in Spine Surgery

**VOORHEES, N.J.** - Virtua Voorhees Hospital is the first New Jersey facility to receive advanced certification in spine surgery – the highest level available.

The Joint Commission, a prestigious international accrediting agency, has awarded the Voorhees, N.J., hospital its Gold Seal of Approval® Advanced Certification in Spine Surgery (ACSS). This designation reflects a health care organization’s commitment to providing safe, high-quality patient care.



“Advanced spine certification is recognition of our dedication to achieving the best possible patient outcomes and clinical excellence,” said **Dr. James Sanfilippo**, vice president of clinical operations for musculoskeletal services at Virtua Health.

“This certification encompasses patients’ full journey – from their first consultation with the surgeon, to their hospitalization or outpatient surgery admission, to their rehabilitation and follow-up for 90 days after surgery,” he explained.

The certification process, conducted in collaboration with the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons, helps organizations provide consistent communication and collaboration among all health care providers involved in the care of the patient.

“We recognize the importance of collaboration to ensure our patients’ success before, during, and after their procedures,” said Dr. Sanfilippo. “Our surgeons, nurses, and rehab teams work closely together on behalf of each patient.”

To be eligible for ACSS, organizations must implement evidence-based care and clinical practice guidelines and participate in the American Spine Registry, a national quality-improvement registry for spine care. Additionally, organizations must collect performance measurement data on surgical site infection rates, new neurological deficits, unplanned return visits to the operating room, and pre-operative and post-operative patient-reported outcomes.

### Leading-Edge Services

Virtua Health, South Jersey’s largest health system, has specialized in treating spine conditions, including those requiring complex surgeries, for more than a decade.



**DR. JAMES SANFILIPPO IN A VIRTUA HEALTH OPERATING ROOM WITH THE ROBOTIC-ASSISTED SPINE SURGERY EQUIPMENT.**

These conditions can include chronic back and leg pain caused by trauma, and spine deterioration due to aging, disc herniation, misaligned vertebrae, and even chemotherapy. These issues can cause pain, loss of mobility, and reduced quality of life.

Virtua is dedicated to offering state-of-the-art care, including minimally invasive and robotic-assisted spine procedures -- building on its 20-plus years of robotic surgery experience. Robotic-assisted spine surgery is not widely available yet, and Virtua is one of the first in the country to offer this advance, which can enable faster recovery, fewer complications, and less pain after surgery.

The organization recently became the first in the Philadelphia/South Jersey region to combine robotic-assisted spine surgery with a GPS-like navigation system that enhances safety and enables better outcomes.

The navigation software allows surgeons to create “safe zones” where the surgical tools can be blocked from entering, minimizing the risk of damage to surrounding structures.

“The safe zones enable us to relieve pressure on compressed nerves more safely and efficiently,” said Dr. Sanfilippo, who is also a spine surgeon with Virtua Reconstructive Orthopedics.

### Enhancing Access to Care

“We’re always on the lookout for new technology, tools and approaches that will benefit our patients,” Dr. Sanfilippo noted. “And we’re proud to provide this advanced care for our families, friends and neighbors, right here in South Jersey.”

He also emphasized that advanced age is not necessarily a barrier to spine surgery at Virtua.

“We can treat highly complex patients, regardless of age. We address issues such as diabetes or hypertension before surgery, so patients do as well as possible after surgery,” the physician explained.

The rigorous certification process helps ensure that Virtua Voorhees Hospital is well equipped to care of patients with complex needs, Dr. Sanfilippo noted.

For more information on spine care at Virtua, visit [go.virtua.org/ortho](http://go.virtua.org/ortho) or call (609) 267-9400.

### About Virtua Health:

Marlton, N.J.-based Virtua Health is an academic health system committed to helping the people of South Jersey be well, get well, and stay well by providing the complete spectrum of advanced, accessible, and trusted health care services. Virtua’s 16,000 colleagues provide tertiary care, including renowned cardiology and transplant programs, complemented by a community-based care portfolio. In addition to five hospitals, two satellite emergency departments, 42 ambulatory surgery centers, and more than 400 other locations, Virtua brings health services directly into communities through Hospital at Home, physical therapy and rehabilitation, mobile screenings, and its paramedic program.

Virtua has 3,000 affiliated doctors and other clinicians, and its specialties include cardiovascular and gastrointestinal health, orthopedics, advanced surgery, and maternity. Virtua is academically affiliated with Rowan University, leading research, innovation, and immersive education at the Virtua Health College of Medicine & Life Sciences of Rowan University. Virtua is also affiliated with Penn Medicine for cancer care and neurosciences, and the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia for pediatrics.

As a not-for-profit health system, Virtua is committed to the well-being of the community and provides innovative outreach programs that address social challenges affecting health, most notably the “Eat Well” food access initiative, which includes the unparalleled Eat Well Mobile Grocery Store. Discover more at [virtua.org](http://virtua.org).





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Learn more about advanced treatments at [virtua.org/HereForGood](http://virtua.org/HereForGood).



## AmeriHealth Hosts Second Annual Community Health Fair for Seniors in Camden

**CAMDEN, NJ** - Today AmeriHealth hosted its second annual Medicare Advantage Member Health Fair at the Salvation Army KROC Center in Camden, NJ. The event brought together seniors from Camden and surrounding communities who are AmeriHealth Medicare Advantage members and aimed to improve access to preventative care, address health disparities and empower older New Jerseyans to stay proactive about their health.

Attendees received wellness resources and personalized support from Medicare Advantage and clinical experts, and had access to a variety of on-site preventative health services including:

- Blood pressure checks
- Diabetic retinal eye screenings
- Diabetic blood pressure and urine testing
- Mammogram scheduling
- Fall prevention and sit-to-stand testing

The health fair was hosted in partnership with Cooper University Health Care and CamCare Health. Both providers offered practical information on scheduling appointments and managing electronic medical records, ensuring members remain vigilant in checking in with healthcare professionals. AmeriHealth representatives from Medicare, Population Health, and Case Management were also on hand to connect with attendees and provide one-on-one support.

“Many older people face real barriers in accessing preventative care, managing chronic conditions and navigating our health care system,” said Dr. Donna Raziano, Network Medical Director at AmeriHealth. “In communities like Camden, these

barriers can be compounded by language differences, limited health literacy and more. We’re committed to addressing these gaps to improve health outcomes for older adults in our region.”

AmeriHealth will host additional health fairs throughout the year, and is aiming to improve preventative care utilization, chronic condition management and member satisfaction.

### About AmeriHealth:

For over 30 years AmeriHealth has been dedicated to enhancing the health and well-being of the people and communities we serve. AmeriHealth gives our members peace of mind knowing we have people who care, solutions that work, and next-generation technology to handle all health care needs. We offer one of the largest networks, robust health and wellness programs, and a wide range of affordable health plans to meet the unique needs of individuals, businesses, municipalities and organizations across New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and select regions nationwide. Named one of the Best Places to Work for the past 14 years, AmeriHealth is headquartered in Cranbury, NJ. For more information visit [amerihealth.com](http://amerihealth.com).





## 2026 Milk Run/Walk Raises over \$20,000 Support Children's Milk Programs in Delaware

**CAMDEN, DE** – Runners gathered to help support children's milk programs in Delaware during the 2026 Milk Run/Walk, held at Ramsey's Farm in Wilmington. The event was organized by the Delaware Farm Bureau (DEFB) Foundation in partnership with Beast Coast Productions, benefiting the Foundation, Food Bank of Delaware, and the Ministry of Caring.

136 participants registered for the race, which featured 5K, 10K, and Health Walk divisions along scenic courses through Ramsey's Farm. Top finishers in each category were recognized with signature cowbell awards, among other prizes. Participants also enjoyed a unique photo opportunity with a live dairy cow courtesy of Emerson Farms. The morning concluded with an awards ceremony, a 50/50 raffle, and a silent auction featuring items donated by numerous local businesses.

This year's event raised over \$20,000 to support the DEFB Foundation, the Food Bank of Delaware's Backpack Program, and the Ministry of Caring's Milk for Children Fund. Together, these programs help provide nutritious meals to youth in need while also educating them about agriculture, food sources, and healthy choices.

One of the beneficiaries of the race, The Ministry of Caring, provides for those in need in the Wilmington area. Milk is one part of the nutritional meals served to guests of the Emmanuel Dining Room. The Food Bank of Delaware's Backpack Program allows children in need to take a backpack full of food home at the end of the school week to provide nutrition for the weekend. The backpacks have food such as shelf-stable milk and juice, macaroni and cheese, granola bars, and apple sauce.

The DEFB Foundation strives to increase awareness, understanding, and positivity surrounding Delaware agriculture. Funds raised from this event will benefit the Foundation's various programs and other initiatives to support this mission.

"We're so grateful for the Delaware Farm Bureau Foundation's partnership and support of the Food Bank of Delaware's Backpack Program," said Food Bank of Delaware Special Events Manager Jessi Dominguez. "The Milk Run was a beautiful morning filled with energy and enthusiasm from the crowd, all coming together to support children facing food insecurity across our state. Events like this help ensure kids have nutritious meals and snacks to take home over the weekends, making a meaningful impact for Delaware families."

This event could not be possible without the support of the community. This year's top sponsors are as follows and to view a full list visit the DEFB Foundation Facebook page.

### Diamond Sponsors:

- Delmarva Farmer
- First State Orthopedics
- Kathy Barry Agency
- Hoobers Inc./Case IH
- Hy-Point Dairy Farm
- Land O' Lakes
- Ramsey's Farm



- Seasons Pizza
- Woodside Farm Creamery

### Gold Sponsors:

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- Delaware Electric Cooperative
- Dempsey Farms LLC
- Dr. James Fierro
- Holtz Farm LLC
- Jones Family Farm
- Kenny Family Foundation
- Kevin Rogers & Jackie King
- Lisa Broadbent Insurance Inc.
- Gail Melendres Wynn, MD
- New Castle County Conservation District
- New Castle County Farm Bureau
- Puglisi Egg Farms
- SpineCare Delaware
- Syngenta
- University of Delaware – CANR/UDairy

For more information on the Delaware Farm Bureau and Foundation, visit [www.defb.org](http://www.defb.org). For more information on the Ministry of Caring, visit <https://www.ministryofcaring.org/>. For more information on the Food Bank of Delaware, visit <https://www.fbd.org/>. For results of the race, visit [www.runsignup.com/Race/Results/Overview/73211](http://www.runsignup.com/Race/Results/Overview/73211).

## Delaware Farm Bureau Summer Interns Strive to Connect Producers and Consumers

**CAMDEN, DE** – Delaware Farm Bureau (DEFB) is pleased to announce that Harmony "Montana" Golden of Felton and Dillana Reed of Camden will serve as DEFB Summer Interns.

Golden and Reed will work collaboratively to promote and support DEFB's mission to promote and protect Delaware agriculture through education and advocacy to ensure a quality of life for farmers and their families and their consumers.

Golden, originally from Panama City, Florida and now residing in Felton, is currently a sophomore at Warner University in Lake Wales, Florida, where she is majoring in Agricultural Studies and minoring in Marketing and Education. Her passion for agriculture stems from growing up on her family's farm and her early involvement in FFA. Golden is eager to gain hands-on experience in agricultural advocacy, connect with industry professionals, and build real-world skills through DEFB projects and events. Outside of the classroom, she serves as an intern with Youth Leaders in Production Agriculture and is actively involved in Delight, a college ministry, where she is the Team Director for her campus chapter. Golden aspires to become an agriculture teacher or pursue a career that supports and advances the agriculture industry.

"This opportunity means a lot to me because it allows me to grow professionally, build confidence, and take meaningful steps toward my future career while working in a field I am passionate about," said Golden about the summer internship.

Reed, a Camden native, is currently a junior at Delaware Valley University in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, where she is pursuing a degree in agribusiness with a specialization in livestock, dairy, and equine studies. She strongly connects with DEFB's



Reed, a Camden native, is currently a junior at Delaware Valley University in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, where she is pursuing a degree in agribusiness with a specialization in livestock, dairy, and equine studies. She strongly connects with DEFB's mission through her background in her family's farm and first-hand experience with the challenges farmers face. Outside of her coursework, Reed enjoys helping on the farm, spending time with her horse, and riding with the western equestrian team at her college. Her interest in the internship was sparked by her family's involvement in the organization and DEFB's support of both the agricultural industry and the local community. Reed looks forward to expanding her skills across all areas of agriculture, especially agricultural policy, member services, and industry advocacy.

"I take pride in my agricultural roots and am grateful for the opportunity to grow professionally while contributing to an organization that supports Delaware agriculture and its producers," said Reed.

A major project for the interns this summer will focus on encouraging families to incorporate Delaware-grown specialty crops into their everyday meals. This initiative will provide easy-to-follow recipes, promotion of local farm markets, and instructional cooking videos featuring DEFB members, chefs, and other local food advocates. Funded through the United States Department of Agriculture Specialty Crop Block Grant and in partnership with the Delaware Department of Agriculture, the project aims to strengthen connections between consumers and farmers, promote the inclusion of specialty crops in daily meals, and encourage family engagement in both the kitchen and agriculture.

To learn more about Delaware Farm Bureau, visit [defb.org](http://defb.org). To contribute a recipe or be featured in a cooking video, please contact DEFB Assistant Executive Director and Marketing Coordinator Mikayla Paul at [mikayla.paul@defb.org](mailto:mikayla.paul@defb.org).



**SAT  
JUN  
20<sup>TH</sup>**

**7PM**



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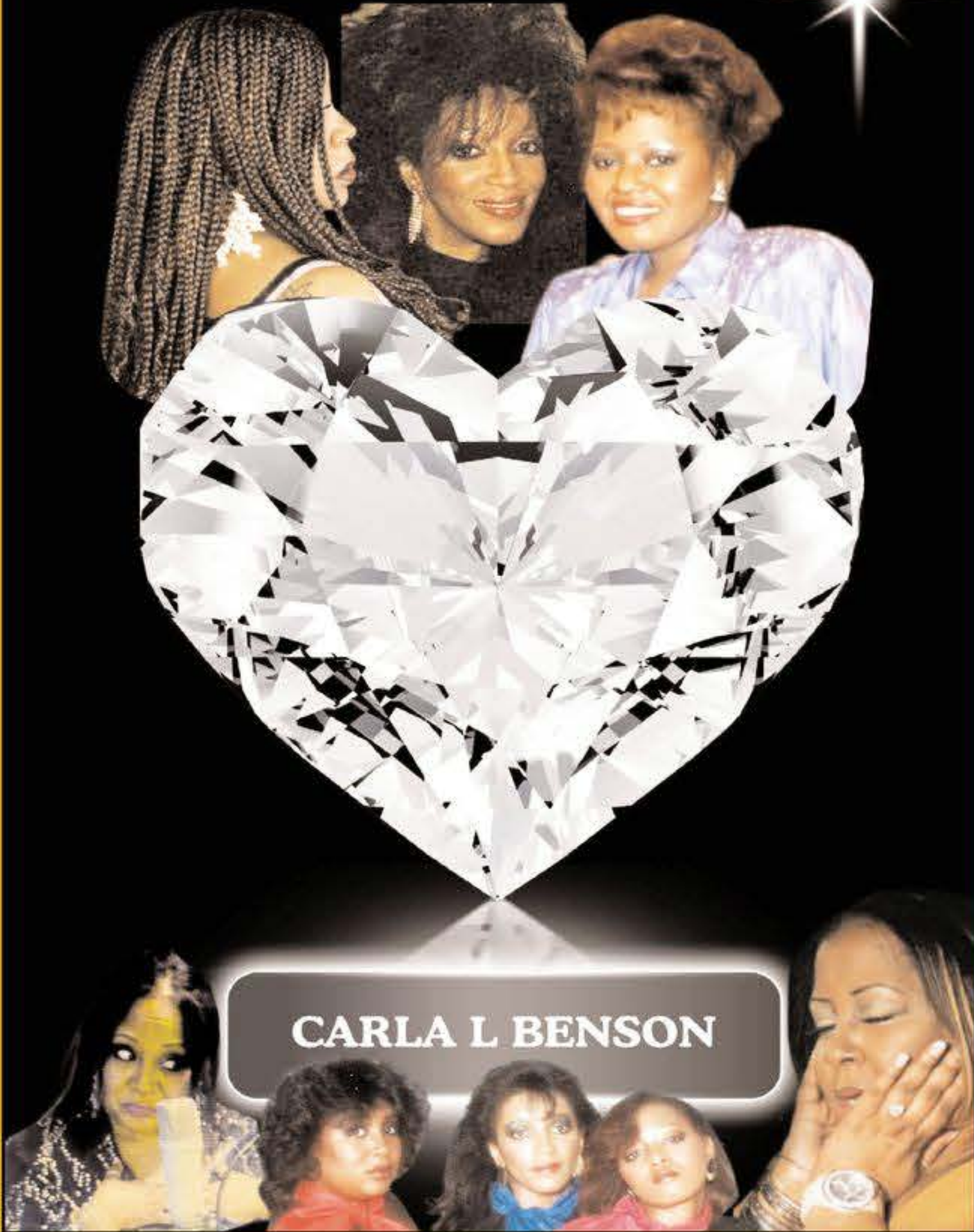
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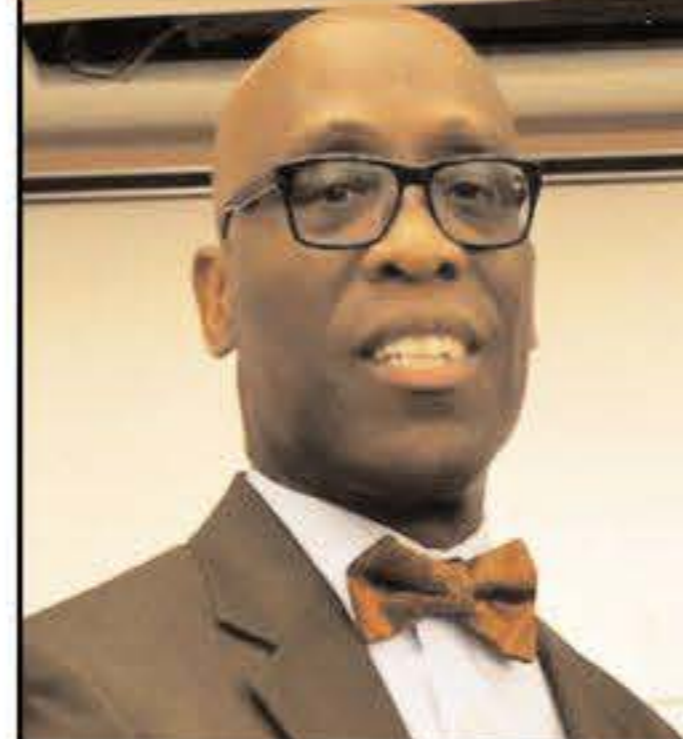
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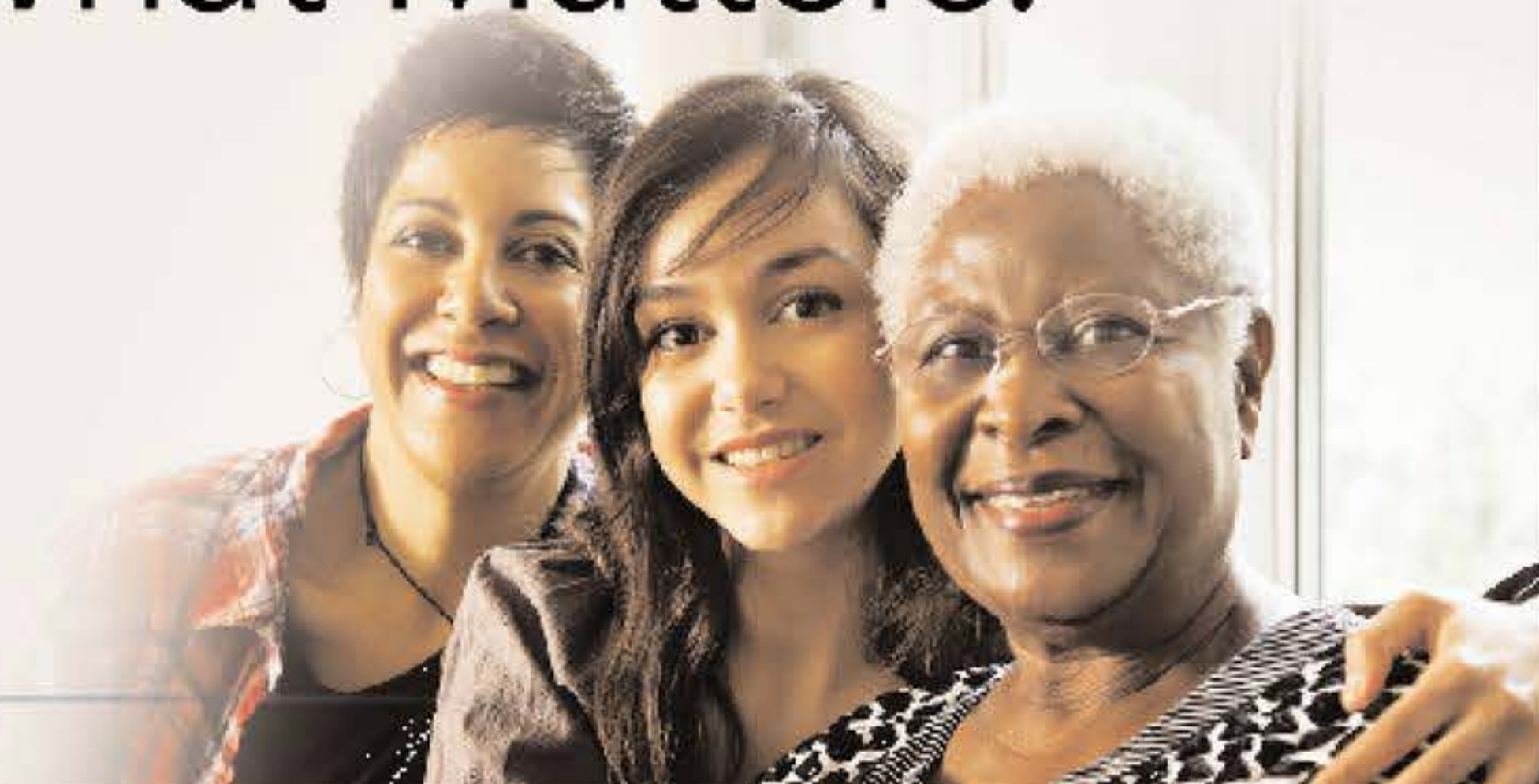
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# Let's Talk About What Matters: The Complexities of Mother's Day

By Phillip W. Heath, MS  
President and CEO, Samaritan



Each May, Mother's Day offers us the opportunity to pause and recognize the individuals who nurture, guide, and support us throughout our lives. When we think of mothers, we think of all of moms, yet we also think of grandmothers, aunts, sisters, mentors, and caregivers – anyone who steps forward to offer comfort, wisdom, and unconditional love. These maternal figures shape who we are, often in quiet but profound ways.

I was fortunate to grow up in a family where motherhood was defined by resilience and strength. My own mother raised eight children, a task that required patience, determination, and an incredible capacity for love. She balanced countless responsibilities, made sacrifices without hesitation, and ensured each of us felt seen and supported. Watching her navigate both the joys and challenges of raising a large family gave me a deep appreciation for the strength of mothers.

My mother is now ninety-eight years old, and I am grateful every day that she is still here with us, imparting wisdom and sharing in life's precious moments. I will also share that last year, we lost my beloved mother-in-law at age ninety, and my wife and I learned firsthand that the sayings about love and grief being intertwined are indeed quite true.

For our family, as for many, Mother's Day arrives with complex emotions in tow. Those who have lost a mother or another maternal figure may face the day's approach with trepidation. The loss of a

mother is often felt across every sphere of life – in family traditions, milestone celebrations, everyday conversations, and even in the quiet moments when we long for their guidance. Because mothers are so impactful, a day dedicated to celebrating them may feel especially heavy.

Those mothers who have lost a child, and those women who have never fulfilled their dream of becoming a mother, may also find Mother's Day difficult to navigate. By acknowledging both the joy and the grief of the holiday, we can create a more inclusive narrative that honors all experiences.

I have learned that grief is not limited to a single day or season but rather evolves and changes over time. Grief, in all its seasons, is a natural response to love. When we lose someone who played such a central role in our lives, the absence can feel vast. Yet, while grief is universal, everyone's journey through grief is different.

Seeking out the support we need can make a meaningful difference in how we

process loss and find ways to honor the memories of those we hold dear. Grief counseling, support groups, and peer connections provide safe spaces where individuals can share their experiences and find comfort amongst peers who understand.

Sometimes just learning about the hallmarks of grief can create a "roadmap," so we can learn what to expect. And grief support options can be tailored to help a person navigate their specific loss – such as Samaritan's "Daughters Without Mothers" support group, which offers the chance for women to connect with others who have lost a maternal figure.

This Mother's Day, we honor all mothers – those who are with us, those we now carry in our heart, those who have stepped into maternal roles, and those mothers with empty arms. May we celebrate their strength, remember their love, and extend compassion to those experiencing loss. And for anyone grieving, know that support is available, and you do not have to walk this journey alone.

To learn more about Samaritan's grief support groups and resources, as well as tips on coping with holidays such as Mother's Day, please visit us at [SamaritanNJ.org/Grief](https://SamaritanNJ.org/Grief).

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