



Michael Jackson Would Have Turned 68. In Las Vegas, His Music Is Filling the Room Again

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Los Angeles

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Secretary of State Shirley N. Weber Urges Californians to Vote Early as Voter ID Battle Intensifies

By Antonio Ray Harvey
California Black Media

California Secretary of State Shirley N. Weber is asking voters to help protect the integrity of the November 2026 election by taking one important step: Vote early.

Weber said her office is working to combat misinformation, expand voter outreach and maintain ballot security as California prepares for the Nov. 3 general election.

“We want folks to vote early because there are so many attacks on voting,” Weber said. “We want to make sure everyone gets their ballot in. Don’t wait until the last minute. It will help us immensely in terms of not just reducing time but making sure that your ballot gets counted.”

Weber spoke Aug. 18 at the UC Student and Policy Center in Sacramento as part of its California Leaders Speaker Series. She encouraged eligible Californians to participate in the election and avoid waiting until the last minute to return their ballots.

The California Leaders Speaker Series is an ongoing program that provides a platform for public officials, policy experts and state leaders to



California Secretary of State Shirley Weber's appearance at the UC Student and Policy Center drew a diverse audience. Weber, California's chief elections officer, discussed election administration, voting by mail and national debates over election integrity. CBM photo by Antonio Ray Harvey.



California Secretary of State Shirley Weber, right, discussed her transition from academia to politics, the importance of voter participation and the need to protect election integrity during the UC Student and Policy Center's California Leaders Speaker Series on Aug. 18. Former Assemblymember Catharine Baker, a Republican, moderated the discussion. Baker serves as director of the University of California Student and Policy Center in Sacramento. CBM photo by Antonio Ray Harvey.



California Senate President pro Tempore Monique Limón (D-Santa Barbara), right, U.S. Sen. Alex Padilla, center, and Assemblymember Isaac Bryan (D-Ladera Heights), left, were among the speakers at a Proposition 39 campaign event held at California Democratic Party headquarters. CBM photo by Antonio Ray Harvey.

engage with students and the broader University of California community. According to organizers, the bipartisan series is designed to foster dialogue about significant political and social issues and strengthen connections between the university and the Capitol community.

During the discussion, Weber offered insights into her role as California's chief elections officer and the preparations underway ahead of the November election.

Former Assemblymember Catharine Baker (R-Dublin), director of the UC Student and Policy Center and a former California Fair Political Practices Commission member, moderated the conversation.

Their discussion focused on election integrity, leadership and the future of democracy. Weber described California's voting process as a “special system” that empowers people while requiring election officials to manage complex logistical, security and communications responsibilities.

“We have to be careful with this system, our voting systems,” Weber said. “It empowers the

people to have their voice heard, and if you treat it right those voices will be heard and adhered to (in terms) of policy and programs.”

Since the June primary, state election officials have worked to provide voters with information intended to help them participate safely, easily and confidently in the general election.

Hours after Weber spoke, U.S. Sen. Alex Padilla (D-Calif.) held a news conference about a mile away at California Democratic Party headquarters to launch a campaign opposing Proposition (Prop) 39, the voter identification measure on the November ballot.

The measure would establish additional identification and citizenship-verification requirements for California voters. Its official ballot label states that it would prohibit citizens from voting unless they present government-issued identification.

Padilla, Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas (D-Hollister), Senate President Pro Tem Monique Limón (D-Santa Barbara), Assemblymember Isaac

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Gov. Newsom Nominates 3 Black Women Judges to Serve on State Courts of Appeal

By Fisher Jack
EURweb | Oakland Post

Gov. Gavin Newsom nominated three Black women — Justice Rashida Adams and Judges Denise Hippach and Juliet Macaulay — to serve on the California Courts of Appeal.

Adams, Hippach, and Macaulay are among eight appellate court nominees recently announced by Newsom. The governor also appointed nine Superior Court judges across five counties.

Adams, of Los Angeles County, was nominated as presiding justice of the Second District Court of Appeal, Division Three. She has served as an associate justice on the court since 2023 and previously served as a Los Angeles County Superior Court judge from 2017 to 2023.

Adams, who earned her law degree from Yale Law School, would succeed retired Justice Lee Edmon. Her term would begin Jan. 4, 2027, subject to voter confirmation in the Nov. 3 general election.

Hippach, of San Luis Obispo County, was nominated as an associate justice of the Second District Court of Appeal, Division Six. She has served on the Santa Barbara County Superior



From left to right: Justice Rashida Adams, Judges Denise Hippach, and Juliet Macaulay. Image courtesy of California Black Media.

Court since 2022 and previously worked in county counsel, attorney general, district attorney and appellate counsel offices. She earned her law degree from the University of Southern California Gould School of Law.

Macaulay, of Orange County, was nominated as an associate justice of the Fourth District Court of Appeal, Division Three. She has served on the Orange County Superior Court since 2022.

Previously, she was chief administrative law judge at the California Department of Social Services and held several positions with the California Board of Parole Hearings. She earned her law degree from the University of Ibadan.

Newsom's other appellate nominees are David Sapp and Judge Lauri Damrell for the Third District; Judges Marsha Amin and Lisa Rodriguez for the Fourth District, Division One; and Judge Frederick Chung for the Sixth District.

The governor also appointed Justin Ford, Erin Murphy, Wilson Park and Maricela Segura to the Los Angeles County Superior Court; Timothy Mulhere in Riverside County; and Crystal Salumbides and Brigid Campo in San Diego County.

David Kim received an interim appointment in Sonoma County, and Phoebe Maffei received an interim appointment in San Francisco County.

The appellate nominations require confirmation by the Commission on Judicial Appointments. Each appellate position pays \$280,052 annually, while the Superior Court positions pay \$244,727.

Big City Mayors Ask for "Yes" Vote on Housing Bond Measure; Conservatives Say "No"

By Antonio Ray Harvey
California Black Media

On Aug. 19, a bipartisan coalition of mayors from California's largest cities gathered at the State Capitol to urge voters to approve Proposition (Prop) 1, an \$11.25 billion housing and veterans bond measure on the November ballot.

Also known as the Veterans and Affordable Housing Bond Act of 2026, Prop 1 would provide state funding for local affordable housing projects.

Sacramento Mayor Kevin McCarty said cities need the measure's support to address California's housing crisis.

“Without help from the state and this ballot measure, we can’t do our jobs in cities across California. We need this measure to do our jobs,” said McCarty, a former member of the California Legislative Black Caucus (CLBC).

“We need Prop 1 for the future of California, addressing the issues of this generation, and housing affordability for all levels of income throughout California,” McCarty added.

The mayors said their jurisdictions lack the substantial subsidies needed to move shovel-ready affordable housing projects forward and help address the state's homelessness crisis.

The coalition included Long Beach Mayor Rex Richardson, Oakland Mayor Barbara Lee, San Diego Mayor Todd Gloria, Fresno Mayor Jerry Dyer and San Francisco Mayor Daniel Lurie.

The city leaders were joined by Sens. Bob Archuleta (D-Pico Rivera) and Christopher Cabaldon (D-West Sacramento), as well as Assemblymember Buffy Wicks (D-Oakland). Supporters say the measure would help finance the construction of 40,000 affordable housing units statewide.

“In Fresno, more than 1 of 5 residents live in poverty. That’s nearly twice the state average,” Dyer

said. “We need more affordable housing at every income level to include single-and multi-family dwelling units.”

Prop 1 would authorize \$11.25 billion in general obligation bonds. Of that amount, \$10 billion would support affordable housing and homeownership programs and be repaid from the state's General Fund.

The measure would allocate \$7.2 billion to build, acquire or rehabilitate rental housing through low-interest loans. Another \$1.1 billion would support homeownership loan programs for low-and moderate-income households.

Prop 1 would also provide \$500 million for



Local and state officials gathered at the State Capitol on Aug. 18 to discuss Proposition 1, a statewide bond measure that would fund housing and homelessness programs. Oakland Mayor Barbara Lee urged voters to approve the measure on the November ballot. Pictured to Lee's right are Assemblymember Buffy Wicks (D-Oakland), Sacramento Mayor Kevin McCarty and Sen. Christopher Cabaldon (D-West Sacramento). CBM photo by Antonio Ray Harvey.



Proposition 1 on California's November ballot would provide state funding for affordable housing and homelessness programs. If approved, the measure would support housing initiatives benefiting low-income residents, veterans and other communities across the state. CBM photo by Antonio Ray Harvey.

housing infrastructure projects; \$450 million for farmworker housing grants and loans; \$350 million for student housing at University of California and California State University campuses; \$200 million in housing grants for Native American tribes; and \$200 million for local government pilot programs aimed at lowering housing costs.

An additional \$1.25 billion would go to the CalVet Home Loan Program to help military veterans purchase homes. Those bonds would be repaid over time through veterans' monthly mortgage payments, with the General Fund serving as a backstop.

Lee said the measure would provide critical statewide funding to complete much-needed affordable housing and permanent housing for

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Aretha Franklin's Sons Still Fighting Over Her Estate 8 Years After Her Death

DETROIT, MI. — Eight years after Aretha Franklin's death, her estate remains tied up in probate court as her sons continue to dispute assets, music rights, and personal belongings. The case has generated more than 1,400 court filings and remains unresolved. The legal battle began after Franklin died on Aug. 16, 2018, without a traditional formal will that clearly settled her estate. Her niece, Sabrina Owens, initially served as executor and discovered three handwritten documents that appeared to outline different versions of Franklin's final wishes. The conflicting papers changed what had initially looked like a straightforward inheritance process.

The biggest question centered on a handwritten 2014 document found between couch cushions at Franklin's Detroit-area home. In 2023, a Michigan jury ruled that the document was a valid will. Oakland County Probate Judge Jennifer Callaghan later interpreted it and determined how Franklin's assets should be divided among her four sons, Edward, Clarence, Kecal, and Ted White II, who performs as Teddy Richards. Despite those rulings, the estate remains open.

According to the Detroit Free Press, Kecal and White continue to disagree over several parts of their mother's estate. Their disputes include funding for Clarence, who has special needs and remains under guardianship, as well as copyright shares from songs such as “Dr. Feelgood” and “Think.” They are also dealing with hundreds of personal belongings kept in 11 storage units around metro Detroit, including a vintage Ford Thunderbird and a Mercedes-Benz. White has also challenged Kecal's alleged installation of security cameras at the storage facilities.

The estate's music and video archives have become another major issue. Dozens of reel-to-reel tapes and video recordings remain in storage, with some boxes carrying little or no labeling. The material could include unreleased recordings, studio mixes, and footage from Franklin's career, including her 1998 “VH1 Divas” performance and a 2003 concert at Freedom Hill Amphitheatre. White has questioned the storage conditions and wants the recordings moved. The judge is also considering whether to appoint Nashville audio restoration specialist Catherine Vericolti to examine the tapes.

The estate once moved more smoothly under Owens, with projects such as the Jennifer Hudson film “Respect,” the “Genius” miniseries starring Cynthia Erivo and the “Amazing Grace” documentary moving forward. Owens resigned in 2020 as family tensions grew over the handwritten wills. The probate case has now lasted longer than Prince's estate fight, which took about six years, although it remains shorter than the 15-year battle involving James Brown's family. A hearing over disputed legal fees was scheduled for Aug. 20, while Franklin's estate remains open until the remaining disputes are settled and her assets, music rights, and royalties are fully distributed.

\$1 Billion Lawsuit Dismissed Over Death of Black Teen Killed in School Gym

VALDOSTA, GA — The family of Kendrick Johnson, who died in a high school gym in Valdosta, Georgia, back in 2013, has had their \$1 billion lawsuit against law enforcement and local agencies dismissed. The case raised long-standing questions about how Kendrick died and whether authorities mishandled the investigation.

Kendrick was 17 when he was found dead inside a rolled-up gym mat at Lowndes High School. Officials ruled his death an accident, saying he suffocated while reaching for shoes inside the mat. The family, however, has long claimed foul play, accusing local authorities, including the GBI and the school district, of covering up the truth.

According to 11Alive, the lawsuit centered on key evidence, including school surveillance footage. An independent analyst said the video appeared altered, with missing clips. The judge noted the family filed their lawsuit nearly ten years after the footage became public, exceeding the two-year statute of limitations.

Other concerns focused on the initial investigation. The local coroner said law enforcement offered poor cooperation, and Kendrick's body had been moved and opened before he could examine it. A sheriff's report later suggested the mat opening was smaller than Kendrick's shoulders, supporting the accidental death ruling. Outside autopsies pointed to blunt force trauma, and recently discovered photos hinted at a possible skull fracture.

The judge dismissed the suit against four defendants, including the GBI, Lowndes County, and two media outlets. The GBI is protected by sovereign immunity, the county wasn't properly served, and the news companies succeeded on procedural grounds. The family has already filed an appeal and plans further legal action.

In a statement, Kendrick's father, Kenneth Johnson, warned others involved in the case, saying, “Anyone, regardless of who you are, what position of power and influence you may hold, if you choose to join the murder cover-up scandal of my son Kendrick, you do so at your own peril.” The judge concluded that despite lingering concerns, the claims could not move forward.

Entertainment



Michael Jackson Would Have Turned 68. In Las Vegas, His Music Is Filling the Room Again

By BlackPressUSA

Las Vegas turns up the music to celebrate Michael Jackson's birthday.

The lights go out, the theater goes dark, and then that unmistakable voice fills the room, even before the song begins.

Suddenly, Michael Jackson feels larger than life once more.

His image appears above the Las Vegas stage while dancers perform moves inspired by him, acrobats spin through the air, and his decades-old music fills a theater designed for it. Now, 64 drones fly overhead, and nine new LED panels light up the room with images.

Jackson died 17 years ago. He would have turned 68 on August 29. At Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino, the Estate of Michael Jackson and Cirque du Soleil are planning a birthday celebration at a special time: Michael Jackson is having another big year.

The biographical film Michael, directed by Antoine Fuqua and starring Jackson's nephew Jaafar Jackson, has made over \$1 billion worldwide. It is now the highest-grossing biopic and music biopic ever and the biggest film in Lionsgate's history. The movie opened in late April with \$97 million in the U.S. and \$217 million worldwide, making it the largest global debut for a musical biopic.

Alana Clapp, general manager of Michael Jackson ONE, thinks the movie's success is bringing longtime Jackson fans back with new excitement and introducing him to a new generation who never saw him perform.

"We're seeing such a wonderful movement right now with Michael Jackson and old fans that are coming together to celebrate his legacy and his stature in pop culture," Clapp told The Black Press. "I think a lot of that is obviously driven by the success of the biopic that's come out recently."

That energy is making this year's birthday celebration feel different.

"We're lucky enough in Las Vegas to have a show that can continue to celebrate everything that he has done as a performer and as an entertainer in today's world," Clapp said.

A one-time birthday surprise

The Aug. 29 celebration begins at 12:30 p.m. with the sixth annual fan reception in the lobby of the Michael Jackson ONE Theater for ticketholders to either the 6:30 or 9 p.m. show.

At 2 p.m., the theater opens to everyone. A question-and-answer session with special guests chosen by Jackson's Estate starts at 2:30 p.m., followed by a surprise that Clapp is keeping secret.

"The Q&A portion will culminate with a performance, a unique, one-time-only special performance by the cast of Michael Jackson ONE, where you will only be able to see it this one time," she said.

"The cast and crew have worked incredibly hard on bringing something new and fun and different than anything that you've seen on our stages before."

Organizers plan to live-stream the Q&A for fans worldwide. Michael Bush, Jackson's longtime costume designer, will hold his annual book signing near the Michael Jackson ONE Boutique, followed by pre-show meet-and-greets with Estate representatives, special guests, and members of the ONE creative team.

Cupcakes will be served, too.

After all, it is Michael Jackson's birthday.

Michael without an impersonator

The celebration centers on a show facing a clear challenge: its star can't step onto the stage.

Cirque doesn't try to solve this by hiring an impersonator.

For Clapp, this is key to what makes ONE special.

"This is the only show where you get to see Michael Jackson," she said. "It's not an impersonator or somebody who's playing tribute to Michael. It is Michael Jackson."

Jackson is seen through his original recordings and films, sometimes shown on a huge scale. His choreography, costumes, and images are the base, while Cirque's dancers and acrobats perform live around him.

His voice fills the theater as performers move above the audience. Dancers strike poses that fans instantly recognize. Sometimes, the acrobatics fade, and Jackson's image takes over, making it feel like a



concert—until you remember he's been gone since 2009.

Michael Jackson ONE just marked its 13th anniversary and, as Clapp describes, has had a "massive refresh" with new music, costumes, and technology. A striking addition may be flying above the seats: 64 drones will move above the crowd.

"This is one of the first times that's being done in an indoor space," Clapp said, "and we're really proud of that."

Nine new LED panels add even more visuals, and a new Diabolo act set to "Wanna Be Startin' Somethin'" has performers tossing spinning objects high into the air as Jackson's 1983 hit plays.

Clapp thinks Jackson, who always pushed the limits of concert technology and showmanship, would like these updates.

"I would hope that he would be very proud of what the team has done," she said. "Especially with the refresh, bringing some of these new technological elements."

A new generation finds Michael

You can sometimes see the renewed excitement for Jackson even before the show starts.

More fans are showing up in Jackson-inspired outfits. Military jackets, black leather, buckles, glitter, and fedoras fill the lobby, creating a living timeline of his career, where his style is almost as famous as his music.

Some remember when those looks were new. Others weren't alive to see them.

Michael's billion-dollar movie has opened a new door for younger fans. They can see Jaafar Jackson play his uncle, then look back and discover Motown 25, the moonwalk, Thriller, "Billie Jean," Bad, "Smooth Criminal," and concert clips of Jackson standing still while crowds went wild.

Then, they can visit Las Vegas, where the actor steps aside.

Jackson's real voice and images are still there, with Cirque performers bringing his recordings to life on stage.

That mix of generations will be clear on August 29, when fans who remember the Jackson 5 sit

alongside people whose first real experience with Michael Jackson was the 2026 movie.

By the end of the night, the special guests will have taken the stage, Bush will have signed books, the unique performance will be over, and most of the cupcakes will be gone.

Then the doors will close.

The dancers and acrobats will get ready. Nine LED panels will sit in the dark. Sixty-four drones will wait to take off.

No one knows how Michael Jackson would have sounded at 68, or what he might have done with today's technology.

Las Vegas can't answer that question.

But it can dim the lights and let his original voice fill the room.

"That is what makes this show so unique and unlike anything else in the world," Clapp said. "Seeing it live with the human performance element and with Michael himself is an experience that you will never forget."



Why Black-Owned Businesses Can't Afford to Be Invisible to AI

By Rob McManus

Many people use AI tools to search for products and services instead of search engines. If Black-owned businesses aren't easy for AI to find, they end up losing potential customers. Let AI help you gain the trust of people who are considering your business for the first time so your brand can grow.

According to McKinsey & Company, Black Americans run over 3 million businesses across the U.S. It hasn't always been easy for small businesses owned by Black people to stand out in their communities.

Start using AI to gain a competitive advantage and keep up with how customers find brands now.

How Much Do Black-Owned Businesses Contribute to the Economy?

They generate around \$133.7 billion in total sales, as reported by the Department of Small and Local Business Development.

Your business doesn't need to make a huge amount of revenue to have an impact on the economy. You're helping others grow by:

- Offering them a job
- Inspiring them to be future entrepreneurs
- Supporting their businesses when they supply you with items

Why Do Black-Owned Businesses Struggle to Survive?

Failing to keep up with technology as it evolves and having limited access to funding. When you first start your business, you'll probably do most of the work by yourself.

Handling the following tasks without the right tools can be overwhelming:

- Bookkeeping
- Customer service
- Supply chain management
- Marketing

You might find yourself having little time to focus on the things that can actually help your company grow. Set aside time to ask your clients for their feedback. You may struggle with brand visibility if you don't have reviews to help you earn trust.

Many entrepreneurs start their businesses with savings or get loans from their loved ones. If lenders with good interest rates don't consider you for loans, you'll probably end up borrowing from those with high rates. Paying a huge interest reduces your profits over time.

Discovering the Benefits of Staying Visible to AI

Ensure your business shows up in AI searches whenever someone is looking up something related to what you offer. You don't even need a huge budget to boost digital visibility.

AI Helps Customers Find Your Business Faster

Many shoppers begin searching for products using simple questions. Someone may ask an AI tool to tell them who sells the best scented candles near them.

If a homeowner needs their pipes fixed, they might search for price estimates. You can boost your chances of appearing in AI snippets by:

- Answering the questions customers often ask using your content
- Providing accurate details about your company
- Posting great photos of your products

leave great first impressions if you have:

- Clear descriptions for all your services
- Updated business hours
- An active blog with content posted regularly
- Genuine customer testimonials

AI tools scan such things before recommending businesses to users. Avoid just marketing your products on your site. Posting content that also helps customers address the issues they're facing makes you more trustworthy.

If you own a Black-owned accounting firm, post guides explaining tax deadlines for small

marketing campaigns. If you have helpful content on your site, it can help you keep bringing in business for months or even years.

Start simplifying consumer discovery by:

- Creating articles that answer questions customers will continue asking for years
- Reviewing older blog posts to update statistics and links
- Tracking how each post is performing to see what you should invest in
- When you use these tips, you will be able to reduce how much you spend on marketing. It's important to be flexible since customers' behavior changes frequently.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can AI Recommend Small Businesses Even if They Aren't National Brands?

Yes. AI doesn't recommend businesses based only on size or popularity since it mostly looks for:

- Reliable information
- Content that's relevant to what a user is asking
- Consistent business details

Don't be discouraged if you're mostly competing against big businesses. When you position your brand well for AI tools to discover, people might pick you over brands they already know.

How Long Does It Take to Improve AI Visibility?

The results will vary depending on your website and the level of competition. It's possible to notice a huge difference in just a few weeks after getting new reviews.

AI tools were probably not suggesting your site simply because you didn't have testimonials they could refer to when checking if your brand is authentic.

Be consistent and know what AI tools reward the most. It will help you grow your visibility faster.

Do Social Media Pages Help AI Understand My Business?

Yes. Your social media profiles can give AI tools more details about your business. Post more often and don't ignore your customers in the comments.

Responding to them helps you build trust. Use your social media pages to support your website and help you direct more traffic to it.

Enhancing Digital Visibility

Black-owned businesses now have the chance to stand out and earn trust without you spending a lot of money. If you update your content and use it to address the problems your customers face, AI tools are more likely to notice you.

Get positive reviews from your loyal customers. Posting these on your pages and engaging with your customers boosts your visibility. Check out more black-owned business growth insights on our page.



Don't just create a simple business website and hope that your potential customers will stumble upon it. When you start using tools like GetNextNet.ai, you'll be able to see how AI tools see your brand. Tracking your readiness score helps you figure out what you need to improve.

Better Online Presence Builds Trust Before Customers Call

It's not easy for people to trust a business they've never worked with, especially when they want to order something online. You'll be able to

businesses. You should give AI more reasons to see you as the best solution.

Once someone visits your page after coming across it in an AI overview or an answer provided by a tool like ChatGPT, your job isn't done. Ensure your site shows them what to do next so they don't feel stranded.

Saving Time While Growing Your Online Presence

You'll keep enjoying the results of AI visibility for longer than you would with traditional

Insurance Redlining Means Two Identical Drivers Pay Different Prices

By Amy Kang

Insurance redlining happens when the address on your policy shapes your rate more than your record behind the wheel. Companies build prices from personal details like your neighborhood and credit, not just your driving history. The result: two drivers with identical records can pay far different premiums, and the steeper bill usually falls on Black neighborhoods.

State regulators are starting to back up what drivers have suspected for years. A 2024 study by the D.C. Department of Insurance, Securities and Banking found that Black drivers pay 46% more than white drivers on average — \$1,031 a year compared to \$705. Even after researchers accounted for age, claims history, and driving records, this gap persisted.

Gaps this large are no coincidence. They come from pricing formulas that lean on credit scores, homeownership, and neighborhood lines shaped by decades of housing discrimination. The old red ink is gone from the maps, yet its outline still lives in the algorithms that set your premium.

What Is Redlining in Insurance?

In the 1930s, federal housing maps drew red lines around Black neighborhoods and branded them "hazardous." This is what insurance redlining is. For decades, insurers and banks used these maps to deny coverage and loans. This practice was outlawed by the Fair Housing Act of 1968.

Modern insurance redlining wears a different disguise. An agent will be happy to sell you coverage regardless of race. By the time the quote reaches you, the higher price looks like just another number.

These models measure where you live and what you own, not how well you drive. Advocates say the pricing pattern lands almost exactly where the old red lines sat. Even with a flawless record, a driver in a majority-Black area often pays hundreds more than a twin driver a few miles away.

Why Do Auto Insurance Premiums Vary by ZIP Code?

Insurance companies frame ZIP-based pricing as basic risk math. More crashes, more theft, and pricier repairs in an area should mean higher rates, they say. The explanation sounds fair until you look at how narrowly the map gets sliced.

ZIP codes are only one piece of the formula. Insurers also rely on non-driving rating factors, including:

- Credit history
- Education level
- Occupation
- Marital status
- Homeownership

Each of these inputs sits entirely outside driving skill, and each can still shift auto insurance premiums by hundreds of dollars a year.

The same pattern shows up outside auto coverage. The Consumer Federation of America documented a racial premium gap in home insurance as well, with predominantly Black neighborhoods paying roughly 16% more, about \$500 extra each year, for the same coverage.

What Are Regulators Doing About Insurance Redlining?

State watchdogs are finally looking inside the pricing machinery. Colorado has moved first, with a rule that requires insurers to hunt down bias in their own models and correct it.

Under the state's expanded regulation, which took effect in October 2025, auto insurers that use outside consumer data must prove their tools avoid unfair discrimination in insurance practices. The requirements are direct:

- Test pricing models for racial bias
- Report the results to state officials
- Fix any model that fails

This makes Colorado the first state to require measurable evidence of fair pricing from auto insurers rather than taking their word for it.

What Can Drivers Do About High Rates and

Claim Denials?

The formula is out of your hands, but the first quote is not. Shopping around remains a driver's best weapon, since every company weighs the same inputs differently.

Start with these steps:

- Compare quotes from at least three insurers
- Ask which discounts apply to you
- Recheck your rate at every renewal
- Save copies of quotes and letters
- The same coverage can cost hundreds of dollars less at the next company, and finding out takes minutes.

Unfair pricing is only one side of the problem. After a crash, drivers can also run into:

- Dragged-out investigations
- Lowball offers
- Flat claim denials
- Insurers bet that most people will take the outcome quietly.

Bringing in legal help rewrites that equation. Experienced personal injury attorneys can:

- Review a denied claim
- Deal with the insurance company directly
- Fight for the full compensation a policy promises

Frequently Asked Questions

Is Insurance Redlining Illegal?

Charging higher rates based on race is illegal in every state. Pricing based on ZIP code, credit, and other non-driving rating factors remains legal in most places, even when the results fall along racial lines. That gap between what the law bans and what the data shows is exactly what regulators are now examining.

Does My Credit Score Affect My Car Insurance Rate?

Most states let insurers use credit-based insurance scores, and a weak score can raise your premium more than a speeding ticket does. California, Hawaii, and Massachusetts ban the practice for auto policies entirely. Improving your credit can lower your rate everywhere else, often within one or two renewal cycles.

Can I Find Out Why My Rate Went Up?

Federal law requires an adverse action notice whenever your credit information raises your rate or limits your coverage. You can also ask your agent in writing for the specific reasons behind any increase. The answer may reveal a factor you can change before the next renewal.

How Do I File a Complaint About Unfair Insurance Pricing?

Every state insurance department accepts consumer complaints online at no cost. Include your policy number, the quotes you received, and any letters from the insurer. Regulators track complaint patterns, so each filing helps build the case for stricter rules.

Can Usage-Based Insurance Lower My Premium?

Usage-based programs track real habits through an app or plug-in device, then price the policy on braking, speed, and mileage. Safe drivers in high-priced ZIP codes often save 10% to 30% this way. Read the terms first, since some programs can raise rates for risky driving.

Fair Prices Should Follow the Driver, Not the Map

Insurance redlining works best when nobody notices it. It lives inside an algorithm, a credit check, or a boundary drawn decades ago, and it leaves careful drivers in Black neighborhoods paying more for identical protection.

State testing rules and skeptical consumers are moving the needle. Until your record matters more than your address, the best defense is to shop, document, and object. Subscribe to our newsletter for the latest updates delivered straight to your inbox.

News Observed

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COMMUNITY SUBMISSIONS

WHAT HAPPENED ON YOUR BLOCK THIS WEEK?

The church anniversary.
The championship game.
The grand opening nobody showed up for.

Tell it yourself. Free, no account, and anonymous if you want it that way. A human editor reads every word before it runs.

TELL US WHAT THEY BURIED

NEWSOBSERVED.COM

Free. Anonymous if you want it that way. Verified by real reporters.

OBSERVER GROUP NEWSPAPERS

Political



By Bo Tefu
California Black Media

“Passing a Law Isn’t The Finish Line”: California Assembly Evaluates Implementation, Results

California lawmakers are finding that laws passed in Sacramento do not always work as intended once implemented. A new [Assembly oversight program](#) has identified gaps in laws addressing wildfire recovery, insurance, foster care and clean energy.

Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas (D-Hollister) announced Aug. 17 that the Assembly had completed the first year of its Outcomes Review program. Billed as the first initiative of its kind in the nation, the program enlisted 15 Assembly members to evaluate 14 laws they authored or championed. Through public hearings and community meetings, lawmakers assessed whether the measures were producing their intended results.

“Passing a law isn’t the finish line,” said Rivas. “The Outcomes Review project makes sure we’re checking our work.”

The reviews identified both successes and shortcomings. The expansion of telehealth largely improved access to care and provided patients with greater flexibility. Affordable housing financing reforms also strengthened coordination among state agencies and could reduce duplicative paperwork, development costs and delays.

Other reviews uncovered more significant implementation problems.

One focused on [Assembly Bill \(AB\) 238](#), which was enacted after the Eaton and Palisades fires to provide eligible borrowers with up to 12 months of emergency mortgage forbearance. The review found lender noncompliance, insufficient consumer complaint data and a need for stronger coordination between state and federal agencies.

Those findings helped shape AB 1842 and AB 1847, both victim-protection bills that are currently pending in the Senate.

After discovering that California’s [FAIR Plan](#) clearinghouse was failing to transition affected homeowners back into the private insurance market, Assemblymember Lisa Calderon (D-Whittier) introduced AB 69 to fix the issue.

A separate review found that the California Public Utilities Commission’s implementation of AB 2316 had not fulfilled the law’s intent or produced new community solar projects. In response, Assemblymember Chris Ward (D-San Diego) introduced AB 1813, legislation to overhaul the state’s renewable energy program and increase access to solar technology.

Lawmakers also found that the FAIR Plan clearinghouse was not effectively helping homeowners move into the traditional insurance market, prompting the introduction of AB 69, legislation adding new reporting, notification, and access requirements.

The program identified additional implementation problems related to foster care placement protections, oversight of charitable fundraising and wage theft enforcement.

Rivas said the findings demonstrate the need for lawmakers to continue evaluating legislation after it takes effect.

“This isn’t oversight for its own sake — it’s what accountability looks like, and we’re just getting started,” he said.

The Assembly plans to expand the Outcomes Review program in 2027 by involving more lawmakers and holding additional public hearings and community meetings. The next phase, according to Rivas, will build on the pilot year as lawmakers seek to identify implementation problems earlier and improve how state laws work in practice.

Gov. Newsom’s Latest Appointees Include Sacramento Advocate for Formerly Incarcerated Students; State’s New Tech Chief

Gov. Gavin Newsom announced eight appointments Aug. 19, including a new state chief technology officer and the reappointment of a Sacramento State outreach coordinator who works with formerly incarcerated students.

Ayushi Roy, of San Francisco, was appointed state chief technology officer at the California Department of Technology. Roy has taught at Harvard Kennedy School since 2022 and previously held technology and policy roles with New America, the U.S. General Services Administration, and the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

Roy’s policy work has focused on the gap between government programs and the people they are intended to serve. In a Harvard course inspired by Beyoncé’s “Cowboy Carter,” she teaches students to examine how administrative and implementation barriers can undermine social safety-net programs.

“I do know as a practitioner, having served in the government for over a dozen years, that the building of technology is the easy part; managing the political feasibility and the implementation is the hard part,” Roy said.

Roy’s appointment requires Senate confirmation and carries compensation of \$214,692.

Newsom also reappointed Michael Love, of Sacramento, to the State Rehabilitation Council, where he has served since 2025. Love has been an outreach coordinator at California State University, Sacramento since 2024 and previously held several roles at the university, including administrative services coordinator for Project Rebound and teacher’s associate.

Project Rebound supports formerly incarcerated students as they pursue higher education, making Love’s appointment relevant to the council’s work involving vocational rehabilitation services.

Love earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees in communication studies from Sacramento State. He is a Democrat.

Newsom also appointed Eric De La Cruz of Sacramento as executive director of the Racial Equity Commission. De La Cruz has served as chief of the Office of Civil Rights at the Department of Toxic Substances Control since 2022. The position pays \$146,220 and does not require Senate confirmation.

The governor additionally appointed Christine Aurigemma to the State Rehabilitation Council and reappointed Lisa Weiler, Michelle Bello and Matthew Asner. The council positions are unpaid and do not require Senate confirmation.

Gov. Newsom Launches New Free Lunch Program; Announces Nearly \$14,000 Per Family in Universal TK Savings

Gov. Gavin Newsom marked the start of California’s new school year by [highlighting universal](#) free school meals and the statewide expansion of Transitional Kindergarten, which the state says saves families nearly \$14,000 per child each year.

Newsom and First Partner Jennifer Siebel Newsom celebrated the full implementation of Universal Transitional Kindergarten, making free TK available to every 4-year-old in California. The state enrolled 213,313 children in TK during the 2024-25 school year and has invested \$12.5 billion in the program since 2019.

“California is proving what’s possible with historic investments in the next generation,” said Newsom. “Free TK for every 4-year-old. Free meals at school. Expanded after school programs.”

California is also providing two free school meals each day to every public-school student, regardless of family income. The state has served nearly 3.5 billion free meals through its Universal Meals Program, with 2.9 million students connected to California-grown, nutritious food.

The administration says the school investments extend beyond meals and early education. California has committed \$4.7 billion to its Master Plan for Kids’ Mental Health, placed more than 4,000 trained professionals in schools and community organizations, and provided free mental health services to more than 500,000 children, youth and families.

The state is also expanding literacy programs, with more than 800 high-need elementary schools receiving support from literacy coaches and reading specialists. Special education funding has increased by \$2.4 billion, or 43%.

The investments come as California reports academic gains across every tested subject and grade level, with particularly strong gains among Black and Latino students and continued improvement among socioeconomically disadvantaged students.

Newsom said the broader effort is aimed at ensuring students have the support they need before, during and after the school day.

“Every parent wants their child to feel safe, supported, nourished, and inspired when they walk through the school doors,” said Siebel Newsom. “California recognizes that if we want to give our kids the best start in life, we need to invest in the whole child.”

On Aug. 21, Gov. Gavin Newsom and First Partner Jennifer Siebel Newsom announced that families have claimed 1 million accounts through [CalKIDS](#), California’s publicly funded college and career savings program. Launched in 2022, CalKIDS has established more than 6 million accounts containing over \$2.3 billion in savings, with eligible students receiving up to \$1,500 for higher education or career training. The Newsoms also unveiled the California Golden Start Challenge, a public-private partnership aimed at encouraging businesses and philanthropic organizations to contribute additional money to children’s savings accounts.

Gubernatorial Candidate Steve Hilton Blasts

California’s New Tire Rules

Republican gubernatorial candidate Steve Hilton [is criticizing](#) California’s new replacement-tire efficiency standards, arguing they will limit consumer choice and increase costs for drivers.

Gov. Gavin Newsom, however, says the regulations will save consumers money.

Hilton protested [the standards](#) Aug. 20 outside the California Energy Commission in Sacramento, where he and supporters chanted, “Hands off our tires.” The commission unanimously approved the regulations Aug. 17, making California the first state to adopt energy-efficiency standards for replacement tires.

“We are done with these bureaucrats and these politicians in our state, making everything so insanely expensive,” Hilton said at the protest.

Hilton said that, if elected governor, he would eliminate or defund the Energy Commission. His opposition to the tire standards is part of his broader criticism of California’s high cost of living.

Newsom defended the regulations Aug. 19, citing the commission’s projected savings for consumers.

“I think it was a good choice,” said Newsom. “Save a billion dollars a year in fuel. Talk about an affordability agenda, that makes sense to me.”

The [Replacement Tire Efficiency Program](#) sets limits on rolling resistance, which measures

how much energy a tire requires to move along a road. Tires with lower rolling resistance can improve a gasoline-powered vehicle’s fuel economy or extend an electric vehicle’s driving range.

The first phase will take effect in 2029, setting a maximum rolling resistance of 9.1 newtons per kilonewton. A stricter limit of 7.2 newtons per kilonewton will take effect in 2033.

The Energy Commission says the standards will ensure that replacement tires are, on average, at least as energy efficient as those installed on new vehicles. The agency estimates the regulations will save Californians nearly \$1 billion annually in gasoline and electricity costs while reducing carbon dioxide emissions by two million metric tons a year.

Some tire manufacturers, however, have raised concerns about the effect on prices and product availability. Goodyear estimates that about 70% of replacement tires currently sold in California would not meet the 2033 standard and argues that the regulations could increase costs for consumers.

The Energy Commission estimates the standards will add about \$1.50 to the cost of each tire during the first phase and \$6.50 per tire beginning in 2033. The commission projects that a driver with a gasoline-powered vehicle could save about \$179 in fuel costs over the life of a set of tires meeting the 2033 standard.

The regulations exempt several specialty products, including competition, winter, used, retreaded, motorcycle and certain off-road tires.

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Local

Back2School Community Health Resource Fair - Learning & Empowerment for Children and Families

By **Ricky Richardson**
Contributing Writer

Los Angeles, CA- Parents are probably wondering how the summer season went by so fast. It seems like only yesterday that students were singing “School is Out for the Summer.”

The excitement of another school year is upon us. Children have returned to campus to continue their educational journey.

Excitement was in the air as hundreds of parents and their children attended the 21st Annual Back2School Community Health Resource Fair, presented by Special Needs Network, Inc. and Councilwoman Heather Hutt (CD-10). This highly anticipated event was held at the Michelle and Barack Obama Sports Complex, 5001 W. Obama Boulevard (former Rodeo Field).

This free event helped families prepare for the new school year by connecting them with supportive community resources and engaging, family-friendly activities.

Today’s festivities were organized by Areva Martin, Civil Rights Attorney and Child Advocate and partnership with Special Needs Network, Inc. Areva is Founder and President of Special Needs Network, Inc. (SNN), a nonprofit

grassroots organization, and played a pivotal role in organizing the event. Special Needs Network Inc. focuses on advocating for the rights of underserved and marginalized communities, recognizing the intersectionality of individuals with disabilities in the broader context of civil rights and racial justice. This event was about celebrating learning, empowerment, and community unity.

I was fortunate to attend this year’s iteration of the Back2School Community Health Resource Fair, which offered a variety of supportive services and activities aimed at enhancing the well-being of attendees.

Laughter permeated throughout the grounds of the event. It does my heart good to see the smiles of kids and their parents strolling around the park. Everyone was able to access the necessary tools and supportive resources for students to start their academic and educational journey right with confidence.

The program for the day consisted of free backpacks, school supplies, face painting, arts and crafts, bounce house, health and dental screenings, free snacks and lots of water on this hot day, free fresh fruits and vegetables, haircuts, manicures and other beauty salon treatments for the young ladies,

free food and entertainment. Interactive, engaging games consisted of soccer and baseball techniques.

Assemblyman Isaac G. Bryan (California Assembly District 55) and Los Angeles City Councilwoman Heather Hutt (District 10) were a couple of distinguished guests in attendance to show support for this fabulous event!

Derrius served as emcee, providing important announcements and facilitating the ability for guests to walk away with some amazing door prizes. DJ Honey was on deck providing an eclectic soundtrack to enhance the festivities.

Chanel N. Grant, Autism Mom, Advocate, Author, MBA & M. ED, Founder of M.O.D.Y. Manifesto, was on site for a book reading. Ms. Grant is the author of Michael Goes to School, Carla’s Brilliant Brain, and James Finds His Voice.

The crowd and I were treated to the soulful sounds of The D Four. This tight band is making a name for themselves in Southern California and beyond. They wowed an international crowd of soccer fans during a stellar performance at the historic Union Station for the FIFA World Cup Fan Zone or Fan Fest.

“The success of the Back2School Community Health Resource Fair served as a

beacon of hope, bringing together and creating opportunities for all. It showcased the strength of community collaboration and underscored the importance of early intervention for equity and empowerment. This annual gathering continues to be a source of inspiration, reminding everyone that positive change is possible when communities unite for a common purpose.” (Source: Special Needs Network, Inc.)

Special Needs Network Inc. (SNN) is a nonprofit grassroots organization responding to the crisis of autism and other developmental disabilities in underserved communities. SNN recognizes the intersectionality of individuals with disabilities and that their fight for disability rights is inextricably tied to the fight for racial justice and civil rights of all people.

Please feel free to reach out to Special Needs Network, Inc. if you or someone you know might be interested in more information about the organization and the wonderful services that they provide. You can also reach out and connect with the Special Needs Network, Inc. on Facebook and Instagram to find out about upcoming events.



Chanel N. Grant (Photo by Ricky Richardson)



Backpack Giveaway (Photo by Ricky Richardson)



Areva Martin, founder & President, SNN, City Councilwoman Heather Hutt (District 10), and Assemblyman Isaac G. Bryan, California State Assembly District 55 (Photo by Ricky Richardson)



Special Needs Network Resource Booth (Photo by Ricky Richardson)

7th Annual Leimert Park Jazz Festival Returns to the Village

By **Ricky Richardson**
Contributing Writer

Los Angeles, CA- The month of August will be written in the jazz history books with a couple of notations. The entry will include the postponement of two jazz festivals. One of the festivals has been produced for over three decades. The other festival was making a debut with a magnificent showcase of jazz, Latin Jazz, and Caribbean music throughout Los Angeles.

I’m a person who has finally processed all of this. I’m a person who sees this as the glass half full, a Blessing in disguise, or as a silver lining. Yes, ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, this has brought greater awareness and appreciation of the vibrant, thriving jazz scene in the “City of Angels.”

The Leimert Park Jazz Festival, a celebration of jazz, community, and culture, proves the popularity of jazz in Los Angeles and beyond.

This will mark the 7th Annual Leimert Park Jazz Festival, which is Executive Produced by Diane Robertson, in association with The World Stage. Thousands of jazz aficionados, art patrons, and foodies gather each year to enjoy the sounds of jazz, art, and a variety of food options in the heart of the African American community.

You are in for an unforgettable time while

relaxing and dancing to music of an intergenerational lineup of artists, DJ sets between performances, Visual Arts Pavilion, Kid’s Zone with fun, family-friendly hands-on activities, food court, wine and beer lounge, Community Resources Zone, Leimert Park Jazz Festival Merch Booth, and Music Artists Merch Booth. These are the ingredients for a great day in Leimert Park Village.

This year’s iteration of the Leimert Park Jazz Festival is held on Saturday, August 29, 2026, at Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza (Rooftop Parking Deck), 3650 W. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, Los Angeles, CA. 90008.

Rhonda Hamilton and José Rizo, KJAZZ, 88.1FM, return to host the 7th Annual Leimert Park Jazz Festival.

This year’s headliner is José James, celebrating 100 years of Coltrane. José James reimagines the genius of jazz’s spirit father with an electrifying new tribute. Facing East is a soul-stirring homage to the legendary saxophonist, John Coltrane.

Pianist, composer, and cultural steward Bobby West is a living legend and central figure in the Los Angeles jazz Continuum. His artistry is deeply rooted in the legacy of Central Avenue and Leimert Park, where he emerged as part of the lineage shaped by the visionary influence of Horace

Tapscott.

Celebrating the Life and Music of Ryan Porter, West Coast Get Down is the acclaimed, groundbreaking Los Angeles Collective whose genre-defying blend of jazz, funk, soul, hip-hop and fusion helped redefine modern jazz for a new generation. This special performance honors the life and legacy of trombonist, composer, and Los Angeles native Ryan Porter (1979-2026).

Afro-Cuban percussionist, educator, and cultural ambassador, Melena brings the rhythms and traditions of Cuba to the festival. Through her artistry and scholarship, she preserves and celebrates the rich tradition of Afro-Cuban music while bringing its energy to contemporary audiences.

Kenneth Brown II has already performed alongside some of today’s most accomplished artists while developing a distinctive voice rooted in jazz tradition and contemporary Black music. Kenneth is blazing a distinct path as an exciting young artist.

Pullum Center Youth Jazz Band is a legendary cultural institute in Leimert Park. Fernando Pullum has mentored and inspired generations of young musicians throughout Los Angeles, helping launch artistic careers while preserving the traditions and values of jazz.

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Leimert Park Jazz Festival flyer, Courtesy Photo



DODGER Skipper Dave Roberts speaks at the Harold and Carole Pump Foundation dinner



Magic Johnson at Pump dinner

Harold and Carole Pump Foundation Delivers an ‘Awesome Night’ of Giving and Inspiration

By Earl Heath
Contributing Sports Writer

The Harold and Carole Pump Foundation brought together sports stars, entertainers, community leaders and major contributors for an inspiring evening at the Beverly Hills Hilton, raising awareness and support in the ongoing fight against cancer.

The foundation’s mission is to raise funds and awareness for the treatment and cure of cancer. Through partnerships with the community, sports leaders and others touched by the disease, the organization supports cancer treatments, programs, services and advanced medical technologies.

A Legacy of Giving

Magic Johnson helped set the tone for the evening, emphasizing the importance of service and legacy.

“When you bless others, that’s when you’re doing something. That’s gonna be a part of your legacy,” Johnson said while introducing Harold and Carole Pump Foundation co-founders Dana and David Pump.

The brothers have built the foundation in honor of their parents, Harold and Carole Pump. Harold courageously battled cancer before his passing in 2000, while Carole died in 2012. Their lives and legacy inspired Dana and David to dedicate

themselves to helping others affected by cancer.

Working with the Northridge Hospital Foundation, the Pump brothers have helped raise more than \$13.5 million to support the Carole Pump Women’s Center, the Harold & Carole Pump Department of Radiation Oncology, the Pump Family Infusion Center and the Thomas and Dorothy Leavey Cancer Center at Northridge Hospital Medical Center, along with other nonprofit community organizations.

Humanitarian Award Honors Gilbert and Rowley

This year’s Humanitarian Award recognized Dennis Gilbert and Nick Rowley for their commitment to giving back.

“Dennis Gilbert and Nick Rowley have dedicated their lives to lifting others up, and we’re proud to honor them with this year’s Humanitarian Award,” Dana Pump said. “Their generosity and commitment to making a difference reflect the spirit of our foundation and the legacy of our parents.”

Gilbert’s philanthropic work includes serving as founder and chairman of the Professional Baseball Scouts Foundation, which has raised millions of dollars for financially vulnerable scouts and their families. He also financed the development of a baseball field at Southwest Community College and has served on Major League Baseball committees

involving salary arbitration and player diversity.

Gilbert has been a special assistant to the chairman of the Chicago White Sox since 2002. He was recently named commissioner of Perfect Game and founded the Believe in Baseball Foundation to support underprivileged players. Before entering the life insurance business, Gilbert worked as a sports agent from 1979 to 2000.

Stars Share Personal Connections

The evening also featured heartfelt reflections from entertainers and sports figures who spoke about the importance of using their platforms to help others.

Former Lifetime Achievement Award winner Anthony Anderson shared a deeply personal connection to the foundation’s mission.

“We’re supposed to use our platforms to better our community and better ourselves,” Anderson said. “You guys don’t know this about me, but I’ve lost my biological father and four of his siblings to cancer all within three to five years, so your foundation means a lot to me because I believe in what you’re doing — raising money and raising awareness.”

Denzel Washington also praised the Pump brothers for their longstanding commitment to helping others.

“These two men have done more for more

people while asking for less credit than anyone I know,” Washington said. “They have been very kind to me, to my family, to my children. I love them like they’re my brothers from another mother.”

The star-studded gathering included Dodgers manager Dave Roberts and players Mookie Betts, Kiké Hernández, Teoscar Hernández, Andy Pages, Miguel Rojas and Will Smith.

Guests also participated in silent and live auctions featuring sports memorabilia, luxury travel experiences, VIP tickets to major events and other exclusive items.

A Legacy That Continues

Roberts accepted the Lifetime Achievement Award on behalf of the Dodgers and reflected on the longevity of the Pump brothers’ work.

“What David and Dana Pump have done, this legacy doesn’t happen in five, 10 or 15 years. They have the same enthusiasm and motivation 26 years later,” Roberts said.

For the Harold and Carole Pump Foundation, that enduring commitment remains central to its mission: turning personal loss into hope, resources and opportunity for people and families affected by cancer.

Chargers Fall to 49ers, 41-17, in Preseason Loss



Los Angeles Chargers QB Trey Lance In Jeopardy of Becoming Even Bigger Draft Bust

By Earl Heath
Contributing Sports Writer

The Los Angeles Chargers struggled in all three phases Thursday night, falling 41-17 to the

San Francisco 49ers in a preseason matchup that exposed costly mistakes on offense, defense and special teams. The Chargers managed just eight first downs and punted eight times. Their most explosive

play came from Jacob Cowing, who returned a punt 83 yards for a touchdown, helping the 49ers turn a frustrating night into a convincing victory. “We got outplayed and we beat ourselves in all three phases,” Chargers coach Jim Harbaugh said. “We have a lot of things to work on.” Los Angeles, now 1-1 in the preseason, briefly made a push in the third quarter, cutting the deficit to 20-9. Junior Colson intercepted a pass from San Francisco quarterback Adrian Martinez and returned it 16 yards for a touchdown. Cameron Dicker’s extra-point attempt went wide left, however. Dicker later connected on a 21-yard field goal for the Chargers’ first offensive points of the game. Herbert Gets Brief Look

Chargers quarterback Justin Herbert played the opening series in his first preseason appearance. He completed one of two passes, connecting with Charlie Kolar for a 9-yard gain before Los Angeles went three-and-out.

The bulk of the quarterback duties then fell to Trey Lance. The former 49ers first-round pick completed 10 of 16 passes for 73 yards.

Late in the game, Jerand Bradley caught a 28-yard touchdown pass from DJ Uiagalelei. Evan Svoboda then connected with the Chargers’ defense on a 2-point conversion attempt, completing the scoring for Los Angeles.

Penalties Add to Chargers’ Problems

Penalties proved especially costly for Los Angeles. The Chargers were flagged seven times, with four penalties coming on offense.

Early in the second quarter, a 21-yard completion from Lance to Keaton Mitchell was

erased by an illegal-formation penalty. An 18-yard pass to Oronde Gadsden was later negated by an illegal-shift call.

A 5-yard Lance run was also wiped out by an illegal-formation penalty, while a Kimani Vidal run was called back because of another illegal shift.

Those mental mistakes contributed to the Chargers’ inability to sustain drives.

Linebacker Competition Continues

The Chargers’ inside linebacker competition remains one of the areas to watch as the preseason winds down.

Daiyan Henley, Denzel Perryman and Troy Dye have emerged as the primary trio, leaving Junior Colson and Marlowe Wax competing for another roster spot.

Wax has continued to impress the coaching staff with his intensity and effort, the same qualities that helped him make the roster as an undrafted free agent last season.

Colson, meanwhile, is working his way back and will need to demonstrate his potential as an athletic linebacker capable of contributing in coverage. His performance against the Rams could be important as the Chargers make their final roster evaluations.

Injury Adds to Concerns

Chargers left tackle Branson Taylor suffered an injury during the second quarter and did not return.

The Chargers will close the preseason against the Los Angeles Rams at SoFi Stadium. The 49ers will travel to Las Vegas next Thursday for their final preseason game.

Dodgers Get Hot, Ride Six-Game Winning Streak

By Earl Heath
Contributing Sports Writer

The Los Angeles Dodgers caught fire this week, winning six consecutive games — tied for their longest winning streak of the season — before Atlanta ended the run with a 4-3 victory at Truist Park. The streak began with a three-game sweep of the Colorado Rockies, with several Dodgers delivering standout performances along the way. Ohtani, Muncy Lead the Way

Shohei Ohtani continued to make an impact at the plate, hitting three home runs and driving in five runs during the week while posting a 1.066 OPS. He also homered in a 7-6 Dodgers victory.

Max Muncy was another major contributor, belting two home runs and driving in seven runs while posting a 1.312 OPS during the stretch.

On the mound, Tarik Skubal recorded 11 strikeouts in his first victory with the Dodgers.

The series finale against Colorado provided another dramatic finish. Mookie Betts homered and capped a three-hit performance with an RBI single in the 10th inning, giving Los Angeles a 6-4 victory and completing the sweep.

Kiké Hernández also homered, while Kyle Tucker collected two hits as the Dodgers continued their surge.

Braves End the Streak

Atlanta finally stopped the Dodgers’ winning

streak with a 4-3 victory.

The Braves jumped out to a 3-0 lead against Tyler Glasnow, who was making his first major league start in 3½ months. Glasnow settled down after the early trouble, allowing only two additional hits over his five-inning outing.

The right-hander struck out seven, walked none and threw 89 pitches.

Atlanta’s decisive run came in the eighth inning. Matt Olson led off with a double against Dodgers reliever Tanner Scott. Mauricio Dubón moved Olson to third on a broken-bat grounder, and Michael Harris II was unable to bring him home with a weak grounder back to the mound.

Ozzie Albies then delivered the game-winning hit, lining a ball to center field.

Ohtani Nearly Sparks a Comeback

The Dodgers had one final opportunity in the ninth.

Ohtani opened the inning by tripling off the left-field wall against Raisel Iglesias, but Los Angeles could not bring him home. Iglesias closed out the game for his 28th save in 31 opportunities.

Despite the loss, the Dodgers’ six-game run showed signs of an offense finding its rhythm, with Ohtani, Muncy, Betts and others providing timely power and production.

The challenge now is maintaining that momentum as the Dodgers continue their push through the season.



Photo: Ross Turteltaub / Getty Images Sport / Getty Images

The Vision Theatre Performing Arts Center Reopened in South L.A.

Re-branded the Vision Theatre Performing Arts Center (VISPAC). DCA's goals are to provide a performing arts venue for local and professional performing arts presentations and productions; youth arts education and training center for young talent reflective of the surrounding Leimert Park and Baldwin Hills community; to produce and present diverse world class theater, music, film, and dance concert productions, in addition to providing a homeplace for cultural forums and community convenings.



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