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The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

The Substance and Soul of the South • Wednesday, November 4, 2026 • Atlanta, GA • AJC.com • Volume 78, Number 308

HISTORIC

KEISHA LANCE BOTTOMS SHATTERS RACIAL AND GENDER GLASS CEILINGS

Georgia voters make her the first Black female governor in the nation on a day the U.S. elects four Black governors.

Democratic wave ends decades of GOP dominance in Georgia's statewide offices, flips control of Congress.



Keisha Lance Bottoms grew up in Atlanta and served as the city's mayor from 2018-22. Tuesday, the Democrat became the nation's first Black female governor, winning the gubernatorial race by 8 percentage points over billionaire Republican Rick Jackson in a midterm election that saw Democrats win up and down the ballot nationally. ARVIN TEMKAR FOR THE AJC

By Ernie Suggs | ernie.suggs@ajc.com

In 1860, an enslaved man named Sheppard Peek was listed among the possessions of William Peek, a white man in Crawfordville. His value was placed at $1,400. On another surviving document, Sheppard signed his name with an X. More than a century and a half later, Sheppard's great-great-granddaughter, Keisha Lance Bottoms, is Georgia's governor-elect.

The distance between Crawfordville and the Governor's Mansion can be measured in miles. The distance between a man once listed as property and his descendant, now elected to lead the state that sanctioned his enslavement, is harder to comprehend.

Across 250 years of American history, only three Black Americans had been elected governor of a state before Tuesday.

L. Douglas Wilder broke the barrier in Virginia in 1989. Seventeen years later, Deval Patrick followed in Massachusetts. Another 16 years passed before Wes Moore won in Maryland in 2022.

Three men. Three states. Across nearly 2½ centuries.

Now Bottoms has joined that extraordinarily small group, along with Republican Byron Donalds, who won Tuesday's election for Florida governor, and Democrat David Crowley, who won the race for Wisconsin governor.

Bottoms is the first Black woman to do so.

She grew up in an Atlanta where the extraordinary already had become ordinary. She was 3 years old when Maynard Jackson was elected the city's first Black mayor in 1973.

Jackson was followed by Andrew Young. Then Jackson returned. After him came Bill Campbell, Shirley Franklin and Kasim Reed.

Governor continued on **A9**

GEORGIA VOTES 2026 MIDTERM ELECTIONS

Ossoff's U.S. Senate victory in Georgia leads a blue tsunami across the country

Democrats seized control of the Senate and the House on Tuesday night, as voters delivered a blistering rebuke to President Donald Trump in places long considered Republican strongholds, **A3**



U.S. Sen. Jon Ossoff won by double digits. HYOSUB SHIN/AJC

» **SENATE ROMP:** Jon Ossoff cruises to reelection over GOP challenger Mike Collins, **A2**
» **CELEBRITY ENDORSER:** Stacey Abrams returned to the campaign trail to stump for others, **A4**
» **TRUE BLUE NIGHT:** Democrats sweep Georgia's top elected state offices, **A4**
» **'BLOODBATH':** State's political landscape changed dramatically Tuesday, **A5**
» **THE DAY IN PHOTOS:** Georgians take to the polls and make their voices heard, **A7**



Stacey Abrams records a video with Zackory Kirk, an activist and content creator. TIA MITCHELL/AJC