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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BLACK JOURNALISTS

NABJ celebrates 50 years
at Cleveland convention



President Donald Trump, then the Republican nominee, speaks at the annual convention of the National Association of Black Journalists in Chicago in 2024, with Rachel Scott, Nadia Goba and Harris Faulkner. This year's convention in Cleveland begins Wednesday. Charles Rex Arbogast, Associated Press

About 3,000 media
professionals are gathering
in Northeast Ohio this week
for the first time, with 18
founders attending the
milestone anniversary event.

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Fifty years ago this December, a group of 44 pioneering members of the media met in Washington, D.C., to support and advocate for their fellow Black journalists. Five decades later, a group nearly 100 times that large will meet in Cleveland, a

celebration of past achievements with an eye toward ongoing challenges. The group, the National Association of Black Journalists, will hold its annual convention in Cleveland this week, the first time the organization has gathered in Northeast Ohio. “Journalism is under attack and we really feel the brunt of it,” said Rhonda Crowder, president of the Greater Cleveland Association of Black Journalists. “A lot of progress has been made. But a lot of what the organization has been advocating for is still the same.” Among the organization’s goals: to support and advocate for Black journalists, encourage fair coverage of the Black community and increase diversity in newsrooms across the country. Crowder noted that Black journalists make up only about 10% of contemporary

newsrooms. “And it’s an even smaller percentage of decisionmakers,” she said. Though there is work to do, Crowder said much of the event this week will be celebratory. Eighteen of the original 44 founders are expected to come to Cleveland, along with a total of about 3,000 journalists, public relations professionals and others in the communications field. Among the nationally known journalists who are expected to attend: Craig Melvin, co-anchor of the “Today” show; Yamiche Alcindor, White House correspondent for NBC; Bill Whitaker, correspondent for “60 Minutes”; and ESPN commentator Stephen A. Smith. Non-journalist celebrities including NBA star LeBron James, singer Tamar Braxton and actor Jordan L. Jones are also scheduled to attend. SEE NABJ 50 YEARS, A2

COMMENTARY

MAGA fury over violence appears when it fits narrative

Ohio’s MAGA politicians and right-wing media exploited a Cincinnati street fight for racial and political gain, turning an isolated incident into campaign fodder while ignoring broader causes of violence and the city’s real efforts to ensure public safety.



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A brutal street fight in downtown Cincinnati made national headlines last week, but not because violence of this kind is rare in America. The story exploded because the video appeared to show Black people attacking white victims. That’s the only explanation for why Ohio’s MAGA politicians suddenly found their voices, thundering about crime and chaos as though this single incident revealed some deeper truth about American society. Street brawls happen every day in cities across this country. Videos often circulate

— in fact, a quick search on YouTube pulls up an endless menu of options, like one titled “Intense Street Fight Compilation: Unforgettable Knockouts and Raw Brawls,” with a million views. But unless the images fit neatly into a narrative about race, interest in these violent altercations is generally limited to YouTubers, seeking the footage to satisfy their morbid curiosity. Nobody at Fox News spends primetime lamenting “lawless thugs” when viral clips show white kids stomping each other outside a bar. Nobody demands FBI investigations into brawls that don’t come with such racially loaded optics. SEE COMMENTARY, A2

JUVENILE JUSTICE
CUYAHOGA COUNTY

County receives
a potential
game-changer

Ohio Department of Youth
Services awards Cuyahoga
County \$30 million to build a
Community Correctional Facility.

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Cuyahoga County has secured \$30 million in state funding to build its first Community Correctional Facility, a major step toward keeping young offenders closer to home, where they can receive treatment near their families and, ideally, achieve better outcomes. The Ohio Department of Youth Services announced the award Friday, saying Cuyahoga County beat out Hamilton and Franklin counties to create the 32-bed secure residential treatment center serving both male and female youth. ODYS Director Amy Ast praised the county’s unified commitment and plans for a trauma-informed approach to heal and rehabilitate youth and help them transition back home. “Their vision of community stood out through and through,” Ast said in a news release Friday. “From involving stakeholders, community partners and judicial support, their focus on community is what put their proposal over the finish line.” The new facility, also known as a CCF, aims to address a critical gap in the juvenile justice system. Currently, when judges seek to order youth convicted of serious crimes to a CCF, they must send them to one of 11 existing facilities across Ohio — all located more than an hour from Cuyahoga County. For months, Juvenile Court officials have argued that the distance made meaningful family involvement — a key factor in successful reentry — nearly impossible. By building a local facility that doesn’t exclude youth based on offense history or past behavior, the court believes it can reduce crime and limit the need for transferring young people to the adult system, a controversial process known as bindover. SEE JUVENILE JUSTICE, A2

AMERICAN POLITICS
Party disfavor

According to a new poll, U.S. adults overall hold a dim view of both political parties but results reveal considerable pessimism in the way Democrats perceive their own party. A4

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