

A&M Alum in National PBS Special Feb. 13, p. 2

FREE



Friday
January 31, 2020
Vol. 6, No. 21
ValleyWeeklyllc.com

AKAs Hold MLK Day of Service, p. 3

Scholarship, p. 4

"The best way to keep a prisoner from escaping is to make sure he never knows he's in prison." - Fyodor Dostoevsky



Rocket City Tops Among 'Best Small Airports'

Huntsville Forms Music Advisory Board

New South to Host Candidates Forum

- 1) Huntsville International Airport - Huntsville, Ala. (USA Today 10Best Readers' Choice 2020)
- 2) T.F. Green Airport - Warwick, R.I.
- 3) Wichita Dwight D. Eisenhower National Airport - Wichita, Kans.
- 4) Piedmont Triad International Airport - Greensboro, N.C.
- 5) Bangor International Airport - Bangor, Maine
- 6) Long Island MacArthur Airport - Islip, N.Y.
- 7) Indianapolis International Airport - Indianapolis
- 8) Paine Field - Everett, Wash.
- 9) Manchester-Boston Regional Airport - Manchester, N.H.
- 10) Long Beach Airport - Long Beach, Calif.

Huntsville has appointed nine members to serve on the inaugural Music Advisory Board to help kickstart Huntsville's journey to becoming Alabama's first "Music City."

The Alabama New South Alliance, Madison County Chapter, will be hosting the Madison County Commissioner, District 6 Community Vision Candidate Forum.

The Board will break down existing silos and bring key players together to execute initiatives proposed in a music audit by London-based Sound Diplomacy last year.

The forum will be held on Tuesday, February 4, 2020, from 6-8 p.m., at the Fellowship of Faith Church, 3703 Memorial Parkway NW, Huntsville, Ala.

"The objective of the Music Advisory Board as we see it is to carry forward the recommendations of the music audit and continue to work, in a slow and steady process, on everything that is required to ensure Huntsville's music community, in all its forms, is a part of the growth of the city," said Shain Shapiro, CEO of Sound Diplomacy.

From 6-6:30 p.m. a community mixer and meet and greet will be held. The forum will be held from 6:30-8 p.m.

The members include Judy Allison, Codie Gopher, Crickett Hoffman, Mario Maitland, Chuck Rutenberg, Celese Sanders, DeQn Sue, Brett Tannehill, and Mark Torstenson.

This forum will be structured with an experienced community moderator, and community questions will be submitted via cards.

New South members will discuss volunteer opportunities for this event at the chapter meeting on Sunday, January 26, 3-5 p.m., at St. John AME Church. Please plan to attend the chapter meeting and the forum. Share information with friends, family and contacts!

LIVE RECORDING - ABC Easter Special "The Awakening"
Featuring Pastor Donnie McClurkin and Yolanda Adams
Saturday, Feb. 1 - 11 a.m. - Oakwood University Church

Cyclists Push 'See and Be Seen' Reporting Tool

Roadway safety is key for city's urban development and public safety departments. Together, engineers, planners, and police officers work to integrate new forms of mobility to the transportation plan.

portation on Huntsville streets. As more bicycles enter the roadways, the City recognizes there is still more work to be done to make streets comfortable for riders of all ages and abilities.

road hazards or incidents with motorists where they felt unsafe. The reporting tool, which launched January 23 on BikeHuntsville.com, can also be used by pedestrians and motorists to report similar "near miss" incidents.



traffic enforcement. Submit feedback on the new See and Be Seen report form by emailing Dennis Madsen at Dennis.Madsen@HuntsvilleAL.gov or calling 256-427-5101.

The City will use data from these submissions to inform municipal decision-making on road improvements and to determine areas that need additional

- huntsvilleal.gov



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Woody Anderson Ford Builds Community Coalition for Workforce Development

Woody Anderson Ford, along with Calhoun Community College, Boys and Girls Clubs of North Alabama, Madison County Career Tech Center, Alabama Career Center System, and Ford Motor Company launched the ACE Program (Automotive Career Exploration) - a first-of-its-kind, free online Automotive Tech Youth Workforce Development Program.

The program will help students explore careers in the automotive industry. Starting in high school, students can study Ford curriculum and gain certificates, providing a competitive advantage

when entering the workforce. The uniqueness of this new program is the student's expedited entrance into the workforce while reducing education costs for families. Students can participate in the self-paced program through the Boys and Girls Clubs of North Alabama, Madison County Career Tech Center, and the Alabama Career Center System.

"As our community grows, it's vital that we support and invest in the education and the workforce of our youth," said Cathy Anderson, President and owner of Woody Anderson Ford. "We need to forget the outdated stigma that you won't have a good career if you don't attend college. The average salary of Automotive Techs is \$61,000 a year, and there are Techs in my shop making six figures. That's a great career, no question about it."

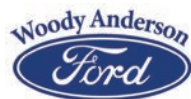
Huntsville Mayor Tommy Battle emphasized the importance of growing the workforce. "As we look 10, 20, 30 years down the line,

workforce development is a top priority, and programs like ACE will help us achieve this goal," said Battle. "We're not just growing an economy. We're growing opportunity." For years education has been a major focus for Cathy Anderson, who was nationally recognized for Drive For Excellence, an incentive program for high school juniors and seniors based on academic performance and attendance. During the five year program, the dealership gave away countless laptops and six Ford Mustangs to students in our community, which increased school attendance and grades across the board.

This past summer, the dealership piloted the New Ford Tech Academy, a three-day summer camp for middle school students, where they learned from Ford engineers and executives about the opportunities available to them in the automotive field. Middle school is the perfect time for young students to explore the industry because once in high school, they'll have opportunities to participate in dual enrollment programs and earn college credit. Planning has already begun for the next New Ford Tech Academy. The dealership is creating an ecosystem for youth workforce development, and each of these programs plays an important role.

As the ACE program begins, one thing is certain: this will not be the last of Woody Anderson Ford's education initiatives.

For more information about participating in the ACE program, visit WoodyAndersonFord.com/ace



A&M Alumnus Conducts Historic Concert Set for APT

Alabama A&M University alumnus Henry Panion III is the key force in the upcoming Alabama Public Television (APT) broadcast premiere and concert documentary of "Dreams of Hope" on Thursday, February 13, at 8 p.m.



Panion is a composer, arranger, conductor and professor in the Department of Music at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

"Dreams of Hope" tells the story of a historic concert at the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, more than 50 years after a hate crime there that killed four African Ameri-

can girls. Conducted by Panion, the concert performance features musical instruments that serve as symbols of hope--violins restored from

Holocaust concentration camps.

The documentary adds behind-the-scenes interviews which help celebrate the resilience of those who have faced hate, discrimination and racism.

Panion produced and

co-directed (with David L. Macon) the documentary, as well as provided original music.

The production will air on PBS stations nationwide. Consult local cable providers or local PBS station for more details.

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A New Generation Of Service

In Recognition of Modern Day Black History



Alice Marie Johnson

Alice Marie Johnson Now a 63-year-old great-grandmother and an ordained minister, Johnson was convicted in 1996 for a first-time nonviolent drug trafficking crime. As a result of the mandatory sentencing laws of the time, she received a life sentence and was expected to live out the rest of her days behind bars. She has a new book of her life's experience "After Life". Her story caught the attention of Kim Kardashian and with Kim's help she was given clemency by the President after 21 years.

Tickets @ Eventbrite

<https://alicejohnsonhsv2020.eventbrite.com>

Product tables available

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27th 2020
VBC SOUTH HALL
700 Monroe Street SW, Huntsville AL 35801
Doors Open @ 5pm Event Time 6pm

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Psalmist
Wess Morgan

AKAs Hold MLK Day of Service Activity

In honor of the life, legacy and sacrifice of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, Monday January 20, 2020, 108 volunteers from Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc., partnered with the Downtown Rescue Mission to render a day of selfless service. The volunteers, members of Epsilon Gamma Omega, Gamma Mu and Omicron Zeta Chapters, gathered to answer the call of the sorority's International President, Dr. Glenda Glover. All chapters were asked to execute a plan of service with local organizations that support the needs of others in our local communities.

This Day of Service answered Dr. King's call, "What are you doing for others?" With a spirit of humility and compassion, the women of Epsilon Gamma Omega, Gamma Mu and Omicron Zeta, served nearly 200 patrons



Members of Epsilon Gamma Omega, Gamma Mu and Omicron Zeta Chapters of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. together after serving lunch at the Downtown Rescue Mission. (Photo by Josie Evans)

for breakfast, lunch and dinner at the Downtown Rescue Mission located in Huntsville, Alabama. The members also worked diligently for several hours sorting

donated clothing that is available to those in need at Agape Thrift Store located on site. Additionally, the women of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., continued

their tradition collecting diapers and wipes for the organization. The ladies were able to donate over 1,000 diapers and over 2500 wipes.

The Downtown Rescue Mission is a nonprofit organization that serves the homeless community throughout the Tennessee Valley. Their mission is to serve as a lighthouse in the community for the poor, homeless, and destitute.

The women of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc, Epsilon Gamma Omega Chapter have been partnering with the Downtown Rescue Mission for many years. Under the leadership of Chapter President Cheryl R. Davis, the ladies of EGO continue a legacy of giving selfless service to make a lasting impact on the community at large.

Scenes from Lecture and Preview Party

"Harlem, Hollywood, Broadway: African American Legends Photographed by Jack Mitchell" Huntsville Museum of Art - January 17, 2020



This exhibition features 36 hand-selected silver gelatin and color photographs of important African American artists and performers taken by Jack Mitchell over a career spanning five decades. Huntsvillians joined the Museum for a lecture and preview party with documentary filmmaker Craig Highberger. Highberger worked with Jack Mitchell for nearly 14 years on his website and licensing his work. Mitchell left his archives to Highberger when he passed away at the age of 88 in 2013.



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Huntsville Bible College

James Smith AllState Agency

Jeff's Barber Shop

Kim's

Kroger's - Oakwood Avenue

Lakeside United Methodist Church

Lucky's Supermarket

Marshall England - State Farm Agent

Martinson & Beason, PC

Nature's Apothecary - Health Food

Nelms Memorial Funeral Home

Oakwood University Post Office

Oakwood University SDA Church (OUCSDA)

Oakwood University Eva B. Dykes Library

OUCSDA Family Life Center

Regency Retirement Village

Rocket City Barber Shop

Sav-A-Lot

Sneed's Cleaners

The Fellowship of Faith Church

Union Chapel Missionary Baptist Church

Woody Anderson Ford

Perspectives on EGO-holism

by tim allston

Black Sprinting vs. Marathon Running: Renaming "Bloody Sunday's" Edmund Pettus Bridge for John Lewis?



With John Lewis' December 29th announcement of fighting his stage 4 pancreatic cancer, initiatives are underway again to honor this civil rights icon and 17-term Georgia congressman.

Recurring petitions to rename Selma, AL's Edmund Pettus Bridge are now focused upon Lewis.

According to the latest petition sponsor OrganizeFor!, "It's an important thing to honor Congressman John Lewis who is the son of Alabama and show that Alabama has changed to understand the importance of civil rights for all people, especially since Congressman Lewis spilled blood on that bridge in 1963."

For some, however, this campaign appears to be another Black short-term sprint instead of striving for longer-term marathon victories.

The Background

March 7, 1965, "Bloody Sunday", occurred when state troopers beat and bloodied voting rights marchers at that bridge - named for a former Confederate general, U.S. senator and KKK grand dragon. Most notably bloodied was Lewis, the 25-year old chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee chairman.

The Sprints

(2015) 180,000+ petition-signatures for a bridge renaming to "Journey for Freedom" passed the state senate but died in the house;

As of January 23rd, OrganizeFor!'s website has received 8,735 of the needed 9,000 signatures to petition the legislature.

The Marathons

Lewis colleague and Selma native Terri Sewell (D-AL) advocates restoring the 1965 Voting Rights Act's full protections and fighting to get the Voting Rights Advancement Act signed into law would be better, more longlasting tributes. "Renaming the bridge in Selma is thoughtfully symbolic, but passing a law that protects the rights of all Americans to vote is the ultimate action that furthers the legacy of Congressman John Lewis."

Al.com columnist Roy Johnson: "If everyone who signed that petition registered to vote and exercised that right in 2020, it would be honor enough."

Life Coach tim allston is the author of the free book, 7 Steps to Manage Ego Problems: The How-to Guide for "Someone Else," downloadable now at www.GetEgoHelpNow.org.

Faith Initiative Scholarships

FAITH Initiative, Incorporated, announces eight \$1,000 scholarships to be awarded spring 2020. The scholarships are open to deserving students from the Tennessee Valley who have been accepted to an accredited university or technical school and who demonstrate the potential to become a productive member of the community.

Recipients are not required to be enrolled or accepted in an institution of higher learning in Alabama to receive the scholarships. The awards will be formally presented at the organization's fundraising event on May 16, 2020.

In addition to the eight scholarships awarded in the spring, The Henderson and Anthony Family Scholarship for Choral Performance is established to provide a scholarship of \$500 per semester (\$1,000 per year) to two sophomore, junior, or senior singers per semester enrolled in a college or university music program or singing in the choir. (This is two \$1,000 scholarships.) The scholarship pays the students to sing in the Fellowship Presbyterian Church's major choir as a soprano, alto, tenor, or bass.

All scholarship applications may be obtained from the FAITH Initiative organization at faithinitiativenonprofit@gmail.com or call (256) 714-9399. Applications must be received not later than April 12, 2020. Date excludes the Henderson and Anthony Family Scholarship. However, deadline for the Henderson and Anthony Family Scholarship for Choral Performance is February 8.

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Look for Changes in Retirement Plans

Congress recently approved some big changes to retirement accounts. If you have an IRA or a 401(k), or you're a business owner offering a retirement plan to your employees, you'll want to be aware of the new rules.

For one thing, you now have until age 72, rather than 70 ½, before you must start taking withdrawals from your traditional IRA and 401(k). And you can now contribute to your traditional IRA for as long as you have earned income. Previously, you had to stop at 70 ½.

If you own a business, you will soon be able to work together with other employers to offer your employees a 401(k) without some of the administrative work and expenses you'd incur if you offered a plan on your own. Plus, depending on the size of your business, you might be eligible for a \$500 tax credit if you set up automatic enrollment in your retirement plan.

Consult with your tax professional and financial advisor to learn more about the new rules. They might just have a real impact on your financial strategies.

Lillian Henderson

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Member SIPC



The Valley Weekly Calendar of Events

Thru March 22

"Harlem, Hollywood, Broadway: African American Legends" Photographed by Jack Mitchell Chan Gallery - Huntsville Museum of Art
Lecture and Preview Party (Jan. 17) - Featuring Alabama A&M University Jazz Ensemble (\$25/\$50)

February 2019

Black History Month 2020 Theme: "African Americans and the Vote"

February 1

Eddie Sherrod Annual Membership Breakfast
Guest Speaker: Dr. Joe L. Reed, State Chairman of Alabama Democratic Conference
Ernest L. Knight Reception Center
Alabama A&M University
Tickets - \$45 (Eva Smith, 256-859-6512)
8 a.m.

Black History Month Luncheon
Madison County Democratic Women
Guest Speaker: David Person
Huntsville Country Club
Oakwood Avenue
Huntsville, Ala.

11:30 a.m.

Bulldog Tennis
Alabama A&M University vs Auburn University

"The Awakening"

Live Recording
ABC Easter Special
Recording with Donnie McClurkin and Yolanda Adams
Speaker: Dr. Carlton Byrd (256) 929-6460
Oakwood University Church
11 a.m.

February 3-6

M.A.L.E. Initiative Summit
Alabama A&M University
Contact: Gary Edwards, (256) 372-4770

February 4 - March 17

"Financial Literacy & Estate Planning for Teens & Adults" (Tuesdays)
Sponsor: Alabama Cooperative Extension System; The Links, Incorporated; and Huntsville Housing Authority
5:30-6:30 p.m.

February 6

"Above the Rim" Basketball Game (Students vs. Faculty/Staff)
Elmore Gymnasium
7 p.m.

February 7-8

"Master Artist Workshop with Leslie Wood"
Huntsville Museum of Art
300 Church Street
Huntsville, Ala.

February 8

Von Brewski Beer Festival
Von Braun Center
1-5 p.m.

Step Back in Time
Burritt Museum
Burritt on the Mountain
1:30-2:30 p.m.

February 10-17

Surplus Property Sale
Calhoun Community College
www.govdeals.com
8 a.m.

February 28

Gospel Fest
Huntsville Campus
Calhoun Community College/Student Center
Sparkman Building
Huntsville, Ala.
6 p.m.

March 6-8

HudsonAlpha Tech Challenge
Contact: Aurielle Anderson, AcclinateGeneics, at (256) 435-2800

Champion Game Plan for Life

by Preston Brown

"DO YOU WANT TO BE HAPPY?"

Psalm 1:1 says, *Blessed (happy) is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night.*

Question: Do you want to be happy in 2020 ?

You know, in the 1920s, an author by the name of William Lyon Phelps published a book

entitled "Happiness".

In this book, he talks about people who wished to either become happy or remain happy.



ourselves.

In other words, it's not what's going on around us; it's what's going on inside of us. And, more importantly, it is the condition of our spiritual health and the degree of intimacy with God.

I've seen many older people look physically unhealthy, but spiritually in great shape. It was because of this spiritual intimacy with God that made them extremely happy.

So, if we want to be happy in 2020, we need to develop a more spiritual intimacy with God ... Stay encouraged, my brothers and sisters!

Now, the writer of Psalm chapter 1 does not attempt to define happiness., He illustrates it. He shows us that happiness is not in our circumstance, it is in

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Valley Deaths

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Funeral services for MRS. BOBBIE ANN FLETCHER (b. 1948) and MR. CHRISTIAN D. WILLIAMS (b. 1995) will be announced at a later date.

Memorial service for MRS. MILDRED NEMBARD (b. 1929) was held Tuesday, January 21, at Nelms Memorial Funeral Home Chapel with Pastor Robert Lester officiating.

ROYAL FUNERAL HOME - 4315 Oakwood Avenue - Huntsville, AL 35810 - (256) 534-8481

Graveside service for BABY GIRL ZAYLEE ALIZAH LESLIE (b. 2019) was held Tuesday, January 28, at Meadowlawn Garden of Peace (450 Mount Lebanon Road, Toney, Ala.) with Minister Sarah Curry officiating.

Memorial service for MR. MAKIETH KAWUSI CRAYTON (b. 1981) will be at 12 noon, Saturday, February 8, at Antioch Baptist Church, in Mount Meigs Community, 738 Gibbs Road Pike Road, Ala.

Memorial service for DR. LAWRENCE BARRELL HUNDLEY, JR., (b. 1931), celebrating a life well lived, was held Saturday, January 25, at Palm Mortuary - Cheyenne (7400 W. Cheyenne Avenue, Las Vegas, Nev.) with Elder Shelton E. Kilby, III, officiating.

Funeral service for MS. VELMA ACKLIN EVANS (b. 1953) was held Saturday, January 25, at New Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church, 2562 Bob Wade Lane, Harbest, Ala., with Pastor Ricky L. Sykes officiating.

MRS. RUBY MAE JONES (b. 1931) will be held Saturday, January 25, at Syler Tabernacle, 904 Oakwood Avenue NW, Huntsville, Ala., at 1 p.m.

Funeral service for MR. IVORY CORTEZ STRONG (b. 1974) was held Thursday, January 23, at the Royal Chapel of Memories (4315 Oakwood Avenue NW, Huntsville, Ala.) with Pastor Derrick Langford officiating.

SERENITY FUNERAL HOME - 2505 University Drive NW - Huntsville, AL 35816 - (256) 539-9693

Funeral service is incomplete for MR. DAVID WILLIAMS, 55, of Decatur, Ala.,

A Good Read



by Jerome Saintjones



Andre Dubus' "A Father's Story"

Luke Ripley lives alone and operates a farm in New England. He allows youngsters to offer horse riding lessons there, and he receives visits from a friendly priest. The divorcee's sons have families of their own and rarely visit their father, but his college-age daughter still finds time to visit and to rekindle her childhood friendships during her summer stays on the farm.

One night on her way home from visiting friends and having drinks, she fatally wounds a man. Shakened, she tells her father, who goes back into the windy night to find the man, who later dies.

The father fakes an accident by running into a tree, effectively masking the car's previous damage from striking the unknown man.

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The Valley Weekly

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"While I've said that there are plenty of things I dislike about the South, I can be clear that there are things I love about the South."

- Jesmyn Ward

Called 2 Preach

by Pastor/Founder Michael D. Rice
Grace Gethsemane Mission Church

The Things Which Have Happened to Me

Philippians 1:12-14; 19

Anyone at anytime can, in a moment of reflection, list in seriatim succession, things which have happened to them; both good and bad.

Someone has rightfully said, that "people don't see THINGS as they are, they see things as THEY ARE."

In other words, it is

one's own perspective that determines how the things which happen to them are assessed.

The Apostle Paul is an amazing example of how to rightly see the things which happen in the life of the believer, so as not to be weighed down and worried by events as opposed to being one who sees their

lives from the perspective of purpose. Paul viewed his life only one way: what is God's purpose for allowing such things to happen. Because of that, he saw his imprisonment, not as a hindrance of the gospel, but it served as a furtherance of it.

Paul could have put the spotlight on himself and complained and sought the pity of those who loved him, but he knew that kind of thinking was too narrow.

Therefore, prison for him, instead of being constrictive, served as a way for him to communicate the gospel to others

to the point that many of those who guarded him in his cell, became disciples of Christ. Others who were a bit timid about preaching the gospel, became confident.

Paul's personal and transparent perspective gives both information and inspiration concerning how to handle what happens.



Few people have the imagination for reality.

- von Goethe

Spotlight on Our Elders ... Featuring

Mrs. Judy Link

Mrs. Judy Link is a native of Maryland. Since her husband was a military officer, she got to travel a lot. She moved her household 26 times in 30 years as an Army wife. After three tours at Redstone Arsenal, there was no doubt that Sweet Home Alabama would be her permanent home when husband Lt. Gen James Link retired from the Army in 2000.

She has been very active in the Huntsville community and has given her time and talent to many charitable and civic activities. Mrs. Link has served on many boards and has joined numerous organizations. Among these are the Burritt Museum, Early Works Foundation, School Foundation,

Alabama Science Center (now SCIQUEST), United Cerebral Palsy, where she served as president, as well as the American Red Cross, the Arts Council and the Arthritis Foundation Advisory Council.

She is a graduate of Leadership Huntsville Focus Group #8. She was the Quality of Life day chair for Leadership Huntsville Masters Program, and she is involved with the Greater Huntsville Human Society. She is a past co-chair of the Annual Dog Ball and is currently the Dog Ball Arrangements Chair. She is an associate member of the Botanical Garden Guild.

When Medal of Honor recipients visited Huntsville, she arranged a tour of the



city and arranged a luncheon for them. Mrs. Link has served as a Panoply volunteer and sponsored the VIP hospitality tent. As a member of the Symphony Guild, she has worked as a docent in Huntsville City Schools. She also served on various Arts Council committees, which prepare students for the Young People's Concert.

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JANUARY 31 - JACKIE ROBINSON was born in Cairo, Ga. In 1947, Robinson became the first Black American major league baseball player of the modern era, when he signed with the Brooklyn Dodgers.

- BlackinTime.info

Side Hustle: Taking Advantage of the 'Gig Economy' in The Valley

(BPT) - Freelancer, passion projects, side hustles are all synonymous with the gig economy - which has grown substantially over the past decade. The economic downturn of 2008 led many employers to recruit gig/temporary workers to control costs. The explosion of rideshare services and other contract employment has increased the awareness of gig as a steady work stream.

According to MetLife's 17th Annual U.S. Employee Benefit Trends Study, almost 30 million Americans receive primary income from gig or part-time work - nearly one-fifth of the total workforce. An additional 15 million supplement "traditional" full-time work with gig work. The study found that 85% of gig workers were interested in continuing their contract work over the next five years, instead of seeking a traditional work role.

What does it mean to go 'gig'?

The gig economy is defined as work based on a fixed-term contract, or that's paid per project by a company, third party or via an online marketplace. Those who use gig work to earn extra

money part-time include full-time employees looking to boost their income, students, people who want to pursue a passion project, stay-at-home parents, job seekers and retirees. Others consider gig work as their full-time employment.

It may be surprising to learn gig workers are well distributed across all demographics in today's workforce, according to the study:

- * 21% Gen Z (ages 21-22)
- * 34% Gen Y (ages 23-36)
- * 21% Gen X (ages 37-52)
- * 25% Boomers (ages 53 and up)

What makes gig work so attractive?

Gig work is appealing for many reasons, to many people. According to the MetLife study, 67% of full-time employees reported interest in gig work as opposed to their current jobs, and 49% of employees expressed the intent to leave their current employer for contract or freelance work in the next five years.

* Pursuit of the ultimate

work/life blend

Flexibility over one's time is probably the top attraction of gigging. In the study, nearly half the respondents (49%) said that not being able to work remotely was the reason they left full-time work. Flexible schedules

offer workers a compelling work/life blend of their choosing. Due to the flexibility and ease of communication provided by technology today, more jobs are becoming open to remote work and adaptable schedules - across many sectors - which may help companies retain full-time employees tempted by the gig lifestyle.

* Autonomy, fulfillment and a sense of purpose

Gigging allows workers more choice in the work they do, and freedom to pursue a variety of projects. They can choose where they work and who they work for. Gig workers tend to see work as more than just earning a paycheck. The study found nearly half of gig workers (48%) said they work to gain a sense

of fulfillment, and 47% said that a significant influence in working was to feel a sense of self-worth.

The challenges gig workers face

While there are many appealing aspects of gigging, it also presents unique challenges.

* Financial stressors

The main stressor for all employees - gig or traditional - is finances. Gig workers may experience more financial stress than traditional full-time workers, however, since their work may be less steady than a traditional position. Gig workers need to constantly keep up with obtaining and maintaining clients, ensuring their next project (and

paycheck) is lined up. They also need to pay their own self-employment taxes and Social Security, among other expenses.

* Employer benefits

Gig workers are usually responsible for obtaining medical insurance and other benefits normally provided by employers. In fact, only 4% of gig workers reported that employers offered insurance, and only 5% said they were offered a retirement plan. People who choose to "be their own boss" must also procure their own benefits beyond health care, such as short- or long-term disability, accident insurance and more. Gig workers who want or need benefits may have to pay the full cost of coverage themselves. In the

survey, 65% of gig workers said that they would be interested in a wider array of non-medical benefits that they could pay for on their own.

* Co-workers and career development

Unlike traditional employees with daily access to networking with colleagues and continuing education through their employers, gig workers wanting to develop their careers must find and pursue those opportunities on their own.

Interested in gigging? Read "The Gig Economy: Opportunities, Challenges, and Employer Strategies" report to learn more about MetLife's insights into the evolving gig economy.

Millions Mourns Death of Lakers' Basketball Great Kobe Bryant

Lakers' fans and basketball enthusiasts throughout the world are still reeling from the Sunday, January 26, death of basketball great Kobe Bryant.

Bryant and his 13-year-old daughter Gianna were among the five involved in the crash of a private heli-

copter in Calabasas, Calif.

Kobe Bryant has long been considered one of the greatest NBA players of all time. He made 18 All-Star teams during his 20-year career with the Lakers. He was



a first-round pick in the 1996 draft, winning 5 NBA championships, 2 NBA Finals MVPs, and he was the league MVP in 2008.

He is survived by his wife Vanessa and three daughters.



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