

FULTON COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE



2026



# 100<sup>TH</sup> *Anniversary* **BLACK** **OF HISTORY** **MONTH**

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*Jan Willis*  
FANIT WILLIS  
Fulton County District Attorney

# 100 Years

of **BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

One hundred years ago, Black History Month was established to recognize and celebrate the often-overlooked achievements, contributions, and resilience of Black Americans. What began as a dedicated effort to ensure these stories were told has grown into a powerful reminder of the vital role Black Americans have played—and continue to play—in shaping our nation's history.

Today, I stand before you as the elected District Attorney of Fulton County, in the heart of Atlanta, a city known around the world as the cradle of the civil rights movement, and in a role that, not very long ago, a Black woman could not have held.

In this county, in these same courtrooms, the law once enforced segregation, silenced Black voices, and closed the doors of opportunity. And yet, here we are, entrusted with shaping what justice looks like for the next generation. That history guides the work we do.

I am a proud graduate of Howard University, a place that taught me that the law can be both a shield and a sword. A shield to protect our communities, and a sword to cut down injustice. I carry that lesson with me into this office every day. It is why our office created a Conviction Integrity Unit, to examine our own past with honesty. It is why we launched Georgia's first pretrial diversion program, to give people the chance to take responsibility and still hold on to their future. And it is why, throughout the year, we host record restriction events here in Fulton County, because too many doors remain closed long after a sentence is complete.

As a Black woman leading this office, I carry the stories of those who marched in these streets, organized in these churches, and believed that the law could one day work for them instead of against them. As we honor one hundred years of Black History Month, let us remember that justice is a calling—to stand for the vulnerable, to tell the truth, and to build a Fulton County where righteousness and fairness walk hand in hand.



*Fani Willis*  
FANI T. WILLIS  
Fulton County District Attorney

# MARCH

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6 PAY DAY	7
8 DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME	9 WOMEN'S MONTH PROGRAM	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17 ST PATRICK'S DAY	18	19 RAMADAN ENDS	20 PAY DAY EID-AL-FITR	21 HOLI
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29 PALM SUNDAY	30	31	<b>WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH</b>			

# HAMILTON .E HOLMES *Elementary*



On February 10, 2026, Madam District Attorney Fani Willis had the pleasure of speaking with a group of students participating in the Fulton County Sheriff's Office Community Engagement Program. The visit was part of a special courthouse tour designed to introduce young students to the justice system and the important work that takes place within it each day.

The tour was hosted by the Phi Kappa Kappa Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., in partnership with Georgia Noble and the Fulton County Superior Court. Students from Hamilton E. Holmes Elementary School were given the opportunity to tour the courthouse, learn about the different roles within the legal system, and gain firsthand exposure to how the courts serve the community.



# 2026 Leadership TRAINING



Risa Lanier



VERA CAUSA GROUP

Susan C. Ryan



From February 25–27, the Fulton County District Attorney’s Office had the privilege of hosting Risa Lanier and Susan C. Ryan of The Vera Causa Group for a dynamic leadership engagement. During their visit, they met with both established leaders and emerging leaders across the office, sharing valuable insights on the key principles and techniques that define exceptional leadership. Through interactive discussions and practical guidance, they emphasized the importance of clear communication, accountability, strategic thinking, and leading with integrity. Their sessions provided meaningful tools and inspiration, equipping participants with strategies to strengthen their leadership skills and foster a culture of excellence within the office.





# GRANTS CORNER

Michele Henry

At the well-attended Family Justice Center Strategic Planning Event, Melissa Arthur was introduced as the new Site Coordinator of the Family Justice Center. Melissa Arthur, former Vice President of the Partnership Against Domestic Violence, comes with many years of experience supporting victims and survivors.

Survivors of all ages often face overwhelming challenges when seeking help after experiencing violence. The process of accessing support services is often fragmented, requiring survivors to contact and visit multiple agencies, each with its own intake process, operating hours, and eligibility requirements. The complexity of this system frequently leads to delays in receiving critical assistance, exacerbating risks to their physical safety, mental health, and overall well-being. On average, survivors must interact with more than ten separate agencies to obtain necessary resources, creating substantial barriers that further compound their trauma. Many survivors, already in crisis, may become discouraged or give up on seeking help altogether, leaving them vulnerable to continued abuse and instability.

These challenges extend beyond emotional and physical burdens to include significant logistical obstacles. Survivors often struggle with transportation issues, making it difficult to attend multiple appointments at different locations. Many face childcare responsibilities that limit their ability to engage with service providers during regular business hours. Others fear losing employment if they take time off to seek assistance, adding financial insecurity to an already difficult situation. Additionally, practical barriers such as lengthy intake processes, incorrect service referrals, and inadequate parking can further complicate access to resources.

The Family Justice Center (FJC) addresses these barriers and a broad spectrum of issues, including domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, elder abuse, and child abuse. By prioritizing survivor-centered care, the FJC will not only improve outcomes for individuals but also drive systemic change, shaping policies that promote accessibility, efficiency, and trauma-informed service delivery at every level.

Melissa Arthur will provide leadership for the planning, launch, and ongoing operation of the Family Justice Center. This position is responsible for overseeing the pre-opening development and facility build-out of the FJC and, upon opening, transitioning into executive leadership of daily operations, service coordination, and strategic growth.

A special note: The CJCC, Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, a supporter of Family Justice Centers in Georgia, awarded the FCDA's office with grant funding in support of Fulton's FJC.

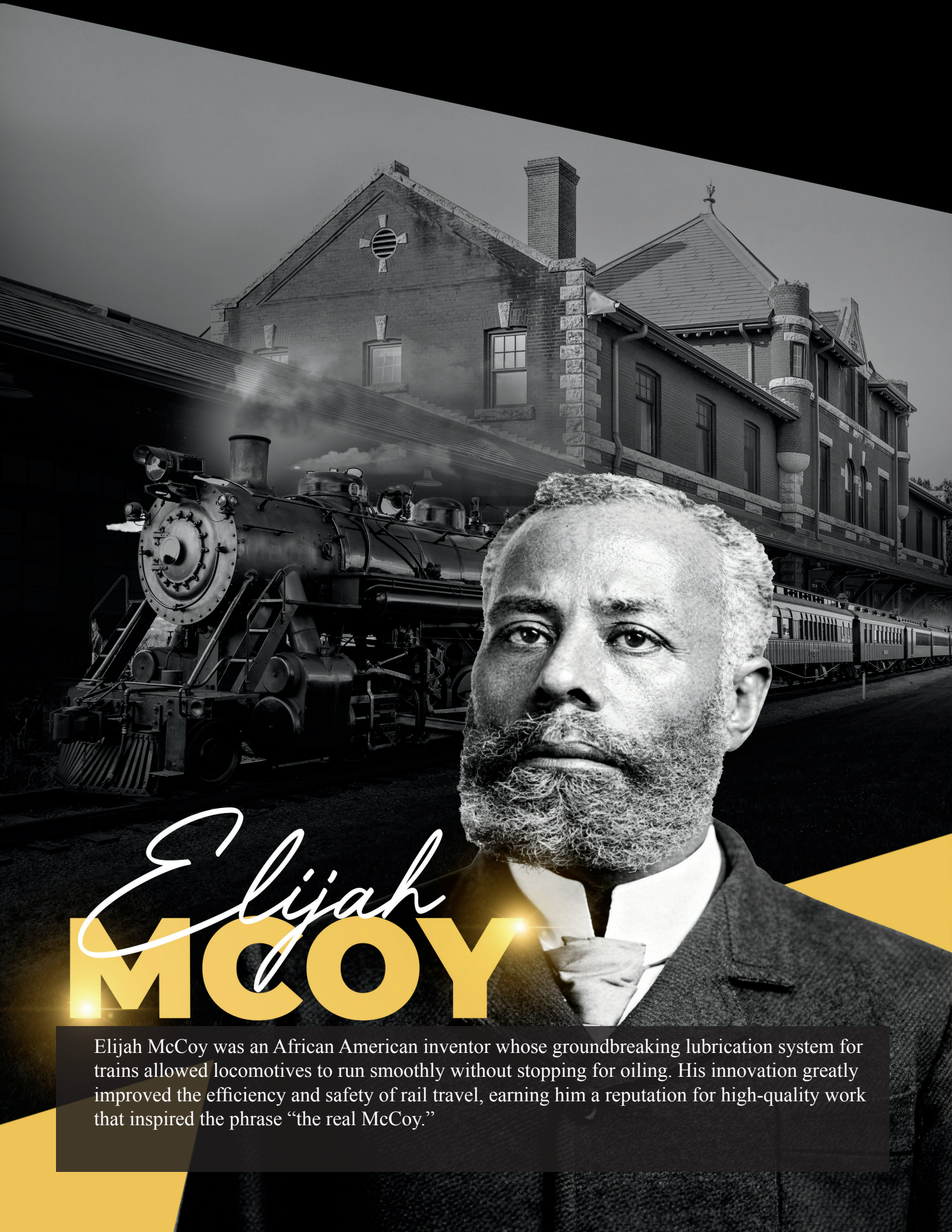


Melissa Arthur

# 100 Years of BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Black History Month marks more than a century of honoring the achievements, resilience, and contributions of African Americans to the fabric of the United States. As we recognize 100 years of this observance, Atlanta stands out as a city deeply woven into that history. From its legacy as a center for Black education, business, and civil rights leadership to its vibrant arts, sports, and professional communities, Atlanta has long been a place where Black excellence is visible and celebrated. Highlighting 100 years of Black history in Atlanta offers an opportunity to reflect on the people, institutions, and movements that helped shape not only the city but the nation.

The impact of this history continues to influence modern-day society in powerful ways. Atlanta's cultural leadership, economic growth, and community activism are rooted in generations of progress and perseverance. By honoring this legacy, we recognize how past struggles and triumphs inform today's conversations about opportunity, representation, and equity. Celebrating 100 years of Black history in Atlanta is not only a look back at where the city has been, but also a recognition of how that history continues to guide its present and inspire its future.



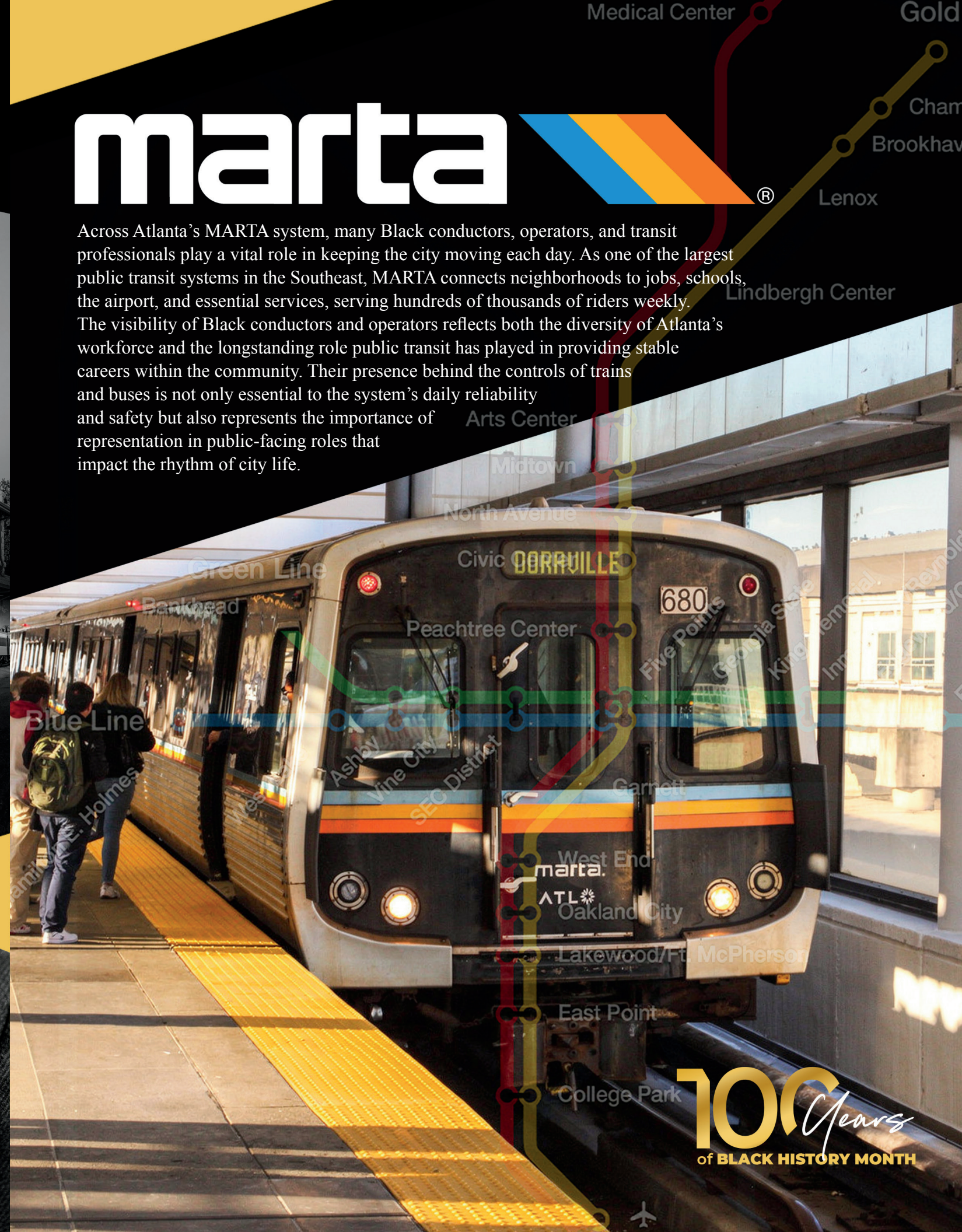
# Elijah MCCOY

Elijah McCoy was an African American inventor whose groundbreaking lubrication system for trains allowed locomotives to run smoothly without stopping for oiling. His innovation greatly improved the efficiency and safety of rail travel, earning him a reputation for high-quality work that inspired the phrase “the real McCoy.”

# marta



Across Atlanta’s MARTA system, many Black conductors, operators, and transit professionals play a vital role in keeping the city moving each day. As one of the largest public transit systems in the Southeast, MARTA connects neighborhoods to jobs, schools, the airport, and essential services, serving hundreds of thousands of riders weekly. The visibility of Black conductors and operators reflects both the diversity of Atlanta’s workforce and the longstanding role public transit has played in providing stable careers within the community. Their presence behind the controls of trains and buses is not only essential to the system’s daily reliability and safety but also represents the importance of representation in public-facing roles that impact the rhythm of city life.



**100** Years  
of BLACK HISTORY MONTH

# Tuskegee AIRMEN



The Tuskegee Airmen were the first African American military pilots in World War II, trained in Tuskegee, Alabama. Despite segregation, they proved their skill and bravery in combat and helped pave the way for the desegregation of the U.S. Armed Forces. Their legacy remains a symbol of excellence and progress in aviation and civil rights history.



## Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport®



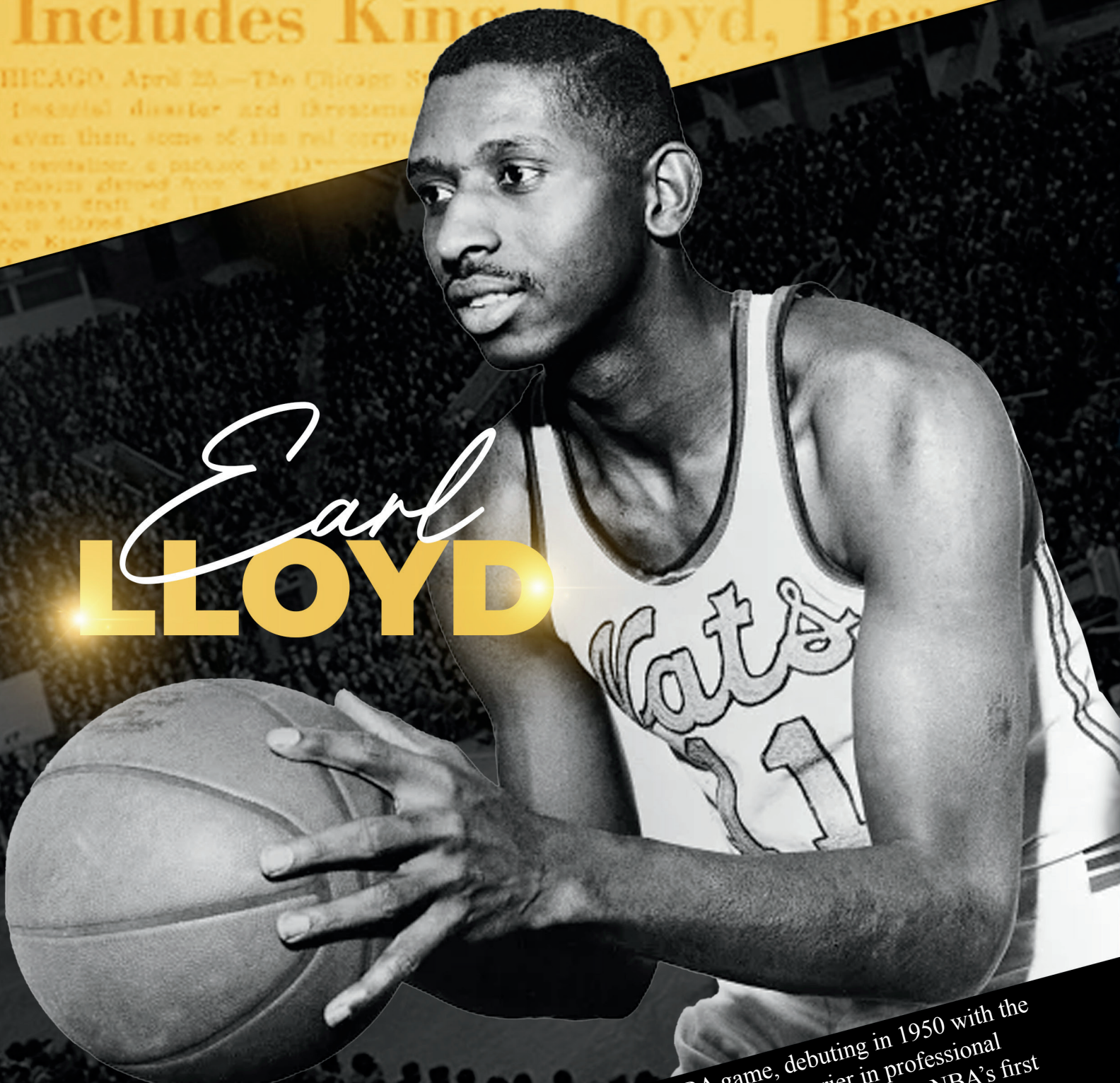
Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, the world's busiest airport by passenger traffic and aircraft movements, has become an important hub for Black aviation professionals, particularly pilots. As the primary hub for Delta Air Lines and a major operating base for Southwest, Spirit, American, and many international carriers, Atlanta's airspace sees thousands of flights daily, creating extensive opportunities for pilots across fleets and routes. Over time, this volume of activity—combined with Atlanta's strong historical ties to Black leadership, education, and business—has helped make the airport a visible center for Black excellence in aviation. Many Black pilots choose to live, train, and work in Atlanta because of its legacy as a city of opportunity and its supportive professional community.



**100** Years  
of BLACK HISTORY MONTH

NBA Draft of 119 Collegians  
Includes King, Lloyd, Beard

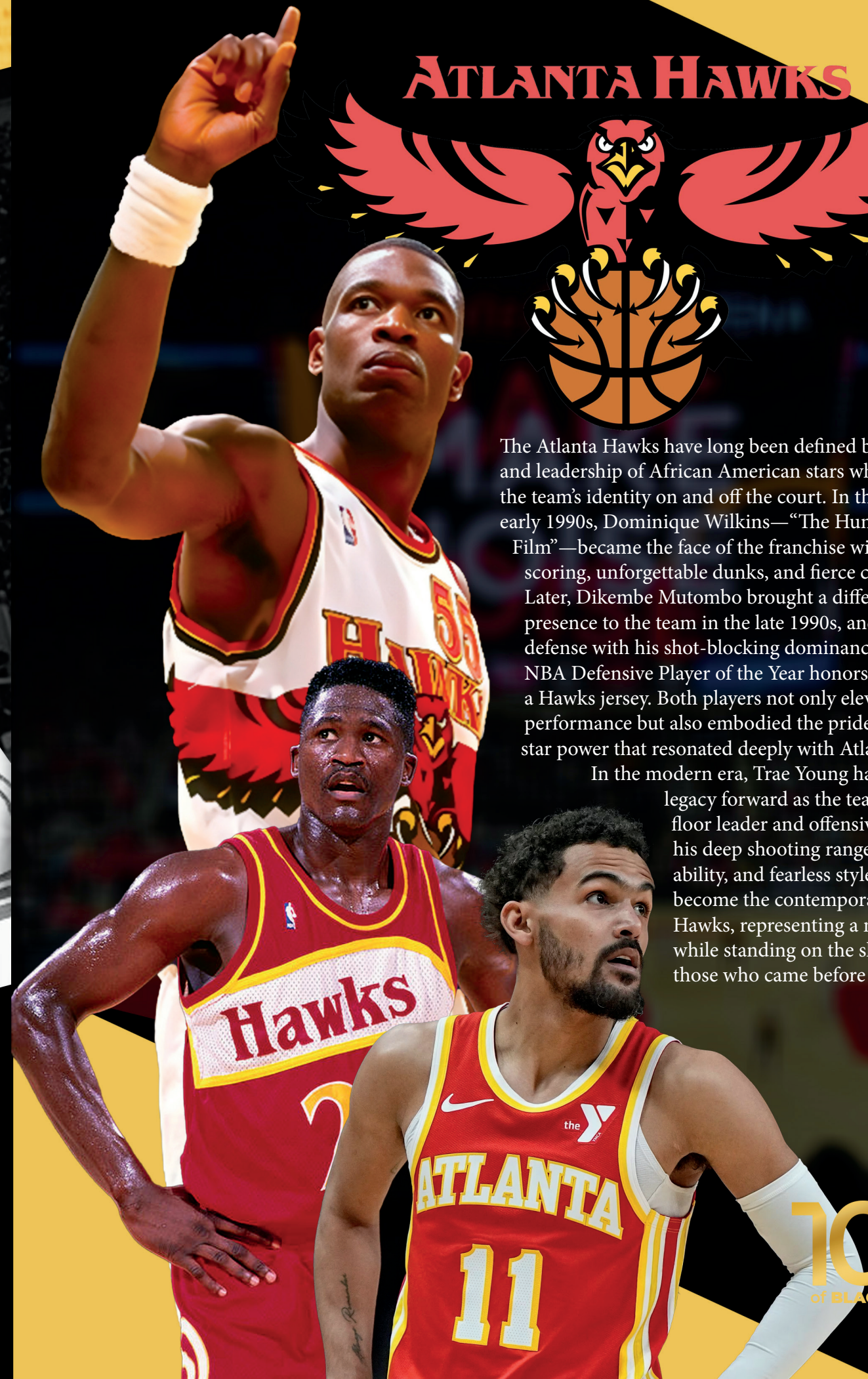
CHICAGO, April 25.—The Chicago Sports Illustrated disaster and Dreamland...  
not even than, some of the real super...  
The revelation, a package of 12...  
new players drafted from the...  
primary draft of 119...  
... King, Lloyd, Beard



*Earl*  
**LLOYD**

Earl Lloyd was the first African American to play in an NBA game, debuting in 1950 with the Washington Capitols. His entry into the league broke a major racial barrier in professional basketball. Lloyd went on to have a successful career and later became one of the NBA's first Black assistant coaches, leaving a lasting legacy in the sport.

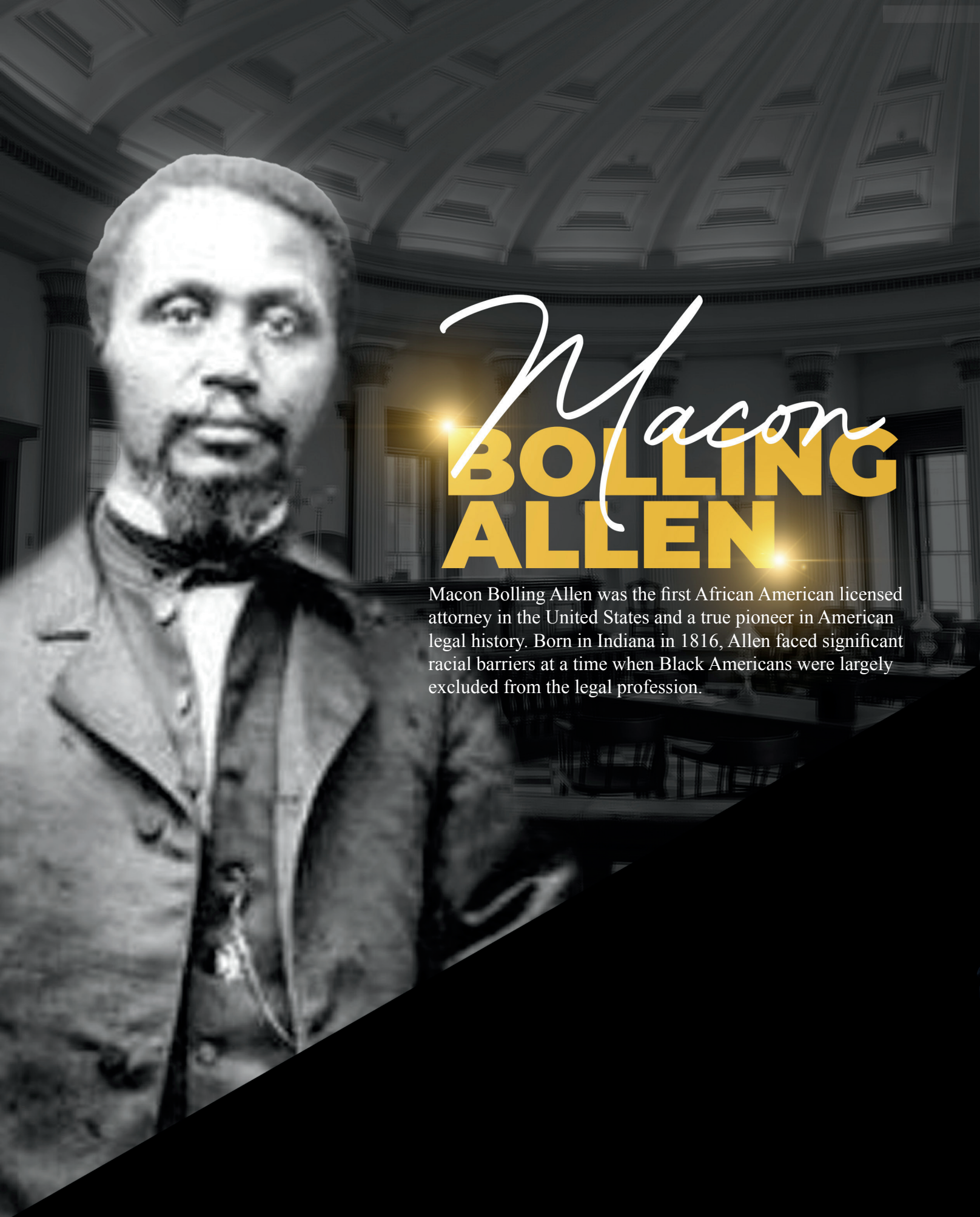
**ATLANTA HAWKS**



The Atlanta Hawks have long been defined by the impact and leadership of African American stars who shaped the team's identity on and off the court. In the 1980s and early 1990s, Dominique Wilkins—"The Human Highlight Film"—became the face of the franchise with his explosive scoring, unforgettable dunks, and fierce competitiveness. Later, Dikembe Mutombo brought a different kind of presence to the team in the late 1990s, anchoring the defense with his shot-blocking dominance and earning NBA Defensive Player of the Year honors while wearing a Hawks jersey. Both players not only elevated the team's performance but also embodied the pride, resilience, and star power that resonated deeply with Atlanta's fan base.

In the modern era, Trae Young has carried that legacy forward as the team's dynamic floor leader and offensive engine. With his deep shooting range, playmaking ability, and fearless style, Young has become the contemporary face of the Hawks, representing a new generation while standing on the shoulders of those who came before him.

**100** Years  
of BLACK HISTORY MONTH



# Macon BOLLING ALLEN

Macon Bolling Allen was the first African American licensed attorney in the United States and a true pioneer in American legal history. Born in Indiana in 1816, Allen faced significant racial barriers at a time when Black Americans were largely excluded from the legal profession.



The Fulton County District Attorney's Office plays a vital role in the safety, accountability, and well-being of the Atlanta community. As one of the busiest prosecutorial offices in Georgia, it is responsible for handling a wide range of cases that impact residents daily—from serious violent crimes to cases that affect families, neighborhoods, and local businesses. Beyond prosecution, the office works closely with law enforcement agencies, community organizations, and advocacy groups to promote justice, public trust, and community engagement. Its work directly shapes how laws are enforced and how fairness and equity are upheld within the county.

The office is also notable for the strong presence of African American attorneys serving in key roles throughout its ranks. This representation reflects both the diversity of Atlanta and the commitment to ensuring that the justice system is informed by varied perspectives and lived experiences. Having a diverse group of prosecutors helps strengthen connections with the community and fosters greater understanding and credibility in the pursuit of justice. Through its legal work and community involvement, the Fulton County District Attorney's Office remains an important pillar in supporting and protecting the people of Atlanta.



**100** Years  
of **BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

# Outstanding

Leadership and Courage  
in Public Service



Big Bethel A.M.E. Church  
"The City Hall of Sweet Auburn"

Proudly Celebrates

The Honorable  
**FANI T. WILLIS**

For Outstanding Leadership and Courage in  
Public Service on #SocialJusticeSunday

February 15, 2026

Dr. Jonathan C. Augustine  
Senior Pastor

**100** Years  
of **BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

On February 15th, Madam DA Fani T. Willis was invited to speak at Big Bethel AME Church during its Blackout Social Justice Sunday as part of the church's Black History Month celebration and was presented by Rev. Dr. Jonathan C. Augustine with a commemorative plaque recognizing her outstanding leadership and courage in public service.

# PROMOTIONS



*Amanda*  
**GREEN**

**DEPUTY DISTRICT  
ATTORNEY - SB440 UNITY**



*Kudonna*  
**PORTER**

**CHIEF LEGAL  
ASSISTANT - TRIAL DIVISION**

# CONVICTION ALERTS



## State vs. Hairston

Congratulations to the Extraordinary Domestic Violence Trial Team in State v. Douglas Hairston, 23SC188908. After successfully picking a jury and preparing the case for trial, the defendant pled guilty to all counts in the indictment, including Murder, Felony Murder (2 counts), Aggravated Assault with a Deadly Weapon (2 counts), Possession of a Firearm During the Commission of a Felony, and Possession of a Knife During the Commission of a Felony.

Assistant District Attorney Jazmin Willingham  
Assistant District Attorney Jazmin Dilligard  
Assistant District Attorney Aleeia Smith  
Investigator Shealane Smith  
Legal Assistant Christina Moore



## State vs. Sparks

Congratulations to the Amazing Domestic Violence Trial Team in State v. Lewis Sparks, 25SC005834. The defendant was found GUILTY of Battery Against a Pregnant Woman, Criminal Damage to Property in the Second Degree, and Cruelty to Children in the Third Degree.

Assistant District Attorney Travis Thomas  
Assistant District Attorney Marquez Jones  
Investigator Harry Stephens  
Victim Advocate Dorsey Jones  
Legal Assistant Priscilla Almond



## State vs. Barkley

Congratulations to the SAKI Team on the conviction in State v. Barkley. The defendant was found GUILTY of Aggravated Sodomy and sentenced to LIFE. Excellent work securing justice

Assistant District Attorney Megan Nix  
Assistant District Attorney Stacey Burke  
Investigator Khristina Sanders  
Victim Advocate Cherillie Tonge  
Legal Assistant Michael Tanks



## State vs. King

Congratulations to the victorious Major Case Unit Trial Team on securing a guilty on all counts jury verdict in State v. Randy King | 23SC192000. The defendant was found guilty on all seven counts, including Murder, two counts of Felony Murder, Aggravated Assault, Entering an Auto to Commit a Theft, Possession of a Firearm During the Commission of a Felony, and Possession of a Firearm by a First Offender Probationer. Following the trial, Judge D. Emerson sentenced the defendant to Life Without the Possibility of Parole plus 20 years to serve. Outstanding work by the team in securing justice for the victim and for our community.

Assistant District Attorney Nalda K. Charles  
Assistant District Attorney Jeffrey Hawkins  
Lt. Investigator Shae Corso  
Deputy Victim Advocate Ilona Rolack  
Legal Assistant Rishia Lee



## State vs. McCary

Please join me in congratulating the Crimes Against Children Unit for securing a GUILTY ON ALL COUNTS verdict in State v. Keyon McCary, 23SC190621-01. The defendant was convicted of Rape, three counts of Child Molestation, and two counts of Incest, and was sentenced by Senior Judge Baxter to Life to serve 25 years.

Deputy District Attorney Caitlin McGillicuddy  
Senior Assistant District Attorney Katie Reimer  
Assistant District Attorney Michelle Williams  
Sr. Investigator Lawrence Vazquez  
Victim Advocate Jasmyn Drummond  
Legal Assistant Cassie Lundy

# HOUSE BILL 1283



**BRENDA BAHAM  
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE DIVISION**



On February 18th and 23rd, 2026, members of the BBDVD and SVD, and some of our partners, traveled to the capitol to support Representative Esther Panitch on House Bill 1283, a bill that formally recognizes and establishes a statutory framework for Family Justice Centers in Georgia. Family Justice Centers provide a multidisciplinary, multi-agency, co-located space where victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, elder abuse, human trafficking, stalking and related crimes can find help navigating a complicated system – all in one place – so they do not have to travel from agency to agency repeating their story.

House Bill 1283 was written by our very own Chief Deputy District Attorney Jill Hollander. Executive District Attorney Julianna Peterson and Site Coordinator for the Family Justice Center Melissa Arthur testified at the Hearing. Special thanks to Chief Executive District Attorney Daysha Young, Executive District Attorney Simone Hylton, Deputy District Attorney Asia Baysah, Grant Director Michele Henry and Community Resource Specialist Kendall Watkins.

Ultimately, the Juvenile Committee voted to pass the bill onto the next steps.



On Thursday, February 5, 2026, the Brenda Baham Domestic Violence Unit held a lunchtime meet and greet with the Atlanta Police Department's Domestic Violence Unit in the FCDA Multipurpose Room. Representatives from the Fulton County Solicitor's Office were also in attendance. The goal was to strengthen interagency collaboration. The meet and greet provided a space to build professional relationships, exchange best practices, discuss investigative strategies, and explore ways to improve victim support services. By fostering open communication and partnership, the meet and greet aimed to promote a more unified, effective approach to protecting survivors and holding offenders accountable across jurisdictions.



**ALAEERE**

*Botu*

*starring as*

**MADAM**

**DA**

In celebration of Black History Month, Alaere Botu proudly honored Madam District Attorney by dressing up as her at school. As the daughter of Chief Legal Assistant Misty Botu, Alaere chose to recognize strong Black women in leadership and public service. Her tribute not only celebrated Black excellence but also highlighted the importance of representation in the legal profession and the justice system.



*Jesse Jackson is an American civil rights leader, Baptist minister, and political activist who has dedicated his life to promoting equality, justice, and economic opportunity. Born on October 8, 1941, in Greenville, South Carolina, he became a powerful voice for social change during the Civil Rights Movement and quickly gained national recognition for his leadership and advocacy.*

*In 1971, Jackson founded Operation Breadbasket (People United to Save Humanity), which later became the National Black Leadership Initiative Project. Through this organization, he advocated for fair access, support minority-owned businesses, and fair hiring practices. His efforts have impacted communities across the country.*

*Jackson also made history with his presidential nomination in 1988, bringing together people from diverse backgrounds and encouraging dialogue.*



*Jessie Jackson*

**1941 - 2026**

**REVEREND**





*Fani Willis*

FANI T. WILLIS

Fulton County District Attorney