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Princeville North Carolina founded by freed slaves gets levee help

PRINCEVILLE (AP) - The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has agreed to spend \$39.6 million to help preserve an eastern North Carolina town founded by freed slaves that's been damaged repeatedly by floodwaters from hurricanes.

The project money, which comes from \$740 million allocated to the Corps in a disaster relief funding bill approved in June, should help better protect Princeville, members of North Carolina's congressional delegation said in news releases Jan. 9.

President Donald Trump called Princeville Mayor Bobbie Jones on Jan. 9 to notify him of the project funds, the White House said in a statement.

Princeville, a town with 2,200 residents about 75 miles (120 kilometers) east of Raleigh, was the country's first town incorporated by black Americans. Repeated flooding has made it difficult for residents to remain.

"The protection of Princeville and the preservation of its place in our nation's history cannot be overstated," said Democratic U.S. Rep. G.K. Butterfield, whose district includes Princeville. "The completion of the levee project will ensure the longevity of this historic town for current and future generations."

The money will help increase the elevations of highways and install levees around the Tar River, near where Princeville sits, according to the offices of Republican Sens. Thom Tillis and Richard Burr.

"After the historic damage inflicted by recent hurricanes, it's clear that it's not enough to simply rebuild," Burr said in a release. "We have to rebuild in a way that applies the lessons of the past to mitigate future risks."

In 1999, Hurricane Floyd's rains overwhelmed a dike originally built in the 1960s and submerged the town in water 23 feet (7 meters) deep in spots. Most of the town was submerged in floodwaters after Hurricane Matthew in 2016, with about a third of the town's 750 single-family homes taking major damage. Flood control improvements and efforts to preserve the town have been discussed for the past 20 years.

Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper also praised the funding decision Jan. 10. Writing the Corps' commanding general in July, Cooper sought a commitment on levee funding. The type of aid for Princeville homeowners, such as raising the elevation of their houses, depended on what decision the Corps made, he wrote.

Slaves fled to Princeville late in the Civil War because it was a Union encampment. After the war, these black residents settled on low-lying tracts that white residents, who lived on higher elevations instead, didn't want. The town now known as Princeville was chartered in 1885.

The \$740 million directed to the Corps for flood and storm damage reduction projects was part of a broader \$19 billion emergency funding bill to help states deal with natural disasters.

Buttigieg nets first black congressional backer

Associated Press
WASHINGTON (AP) - Democratic presidential candidate Pete Buttigieg has netted an endorsement from Rep. Anthony Brown of Maryland, the first black member of Congress to throw his support to the former mayor of South Bend, Indiana.

The endorsement is significant for Buttigieg, who has been criticized within the party for his scant support among African Americans.

Brown, 58, belongs to the Congressional Black Caucus, whose membership is courted aggressively by Democratic presidential candidates, and includes a total of 54 lawmakers in the U.S. House and Senate.

Former Vice President Joe Biden has the most endorsements from members of the Congressional Black Caucus among 2020 Democratic presidential candidates - a total of nine.

Brown, also a former lieutenant governor of Maryland, is an Iraq War veteran and vice chairman of the House Armed Services Committee. The former combat veteran has been named a co-chairman of Buttigieg's national campaign.



DR. GWENDOLYN WRIGHT



PROFESSOR WILLIAM DARITY JR.,

The Recipe for Social Equity

The Samuel DuBois Cook Center on Social Equity

By Bailey Clemmons

The Samuel DuBois Cook Center on Social Equity (SDCSE) is Duke University's leading major research locus with a focalization on the dilemma of inequality. Professor William Darity Jr., the founding Director of the Samuel DuBois Cook Center on Social Equity, has prepared a recipe for social equity. "While economic inequality is of paramount importance, it is also vital to have a center that does systematic research on the problem," says Darity. The recipe for social equity includes a researched delineation of remedies for the immense degree of inequality that exist, targeting 5 major areas: (1) inequality associated with employment (2) education (3) wealth (4) health (5) and political participation.

Dr. Gwendolyn Wright has been at Duke for the past 19 years with variegated responsibilities. Not only does she take the lead in administrative functions of the center, but she is the creative voice in the center. Wright has been with the SDCSE since its inception, established in 2014 entitled the Consortium on Social Equity, but later approved in 2015 by the Duke Board of Trustees to be renamed to honor Dr. Samuel DuBois Cook.

Dr. Samuel DuBois Cook is a symbol and expression of the active quest for social justice and equality at Duke University. During his lifetime, Dr. Cook had a distinguished record for many things including but not limited to a political scientist, scholar, educator, author, teacher, administrator, civil and human rights activist just to name a few. Cook became the first African-American professor at Duke University and also the first to hold a regular and tenured faculty appointment at a predominantly white southern college or university.

"We try each and every day to live up to his legacy," emphasizes Wright.

The SDCSE is an interdisciplinary research center within Trinity School of Arts and Sciences at Duke that includes scholars and faculty from across Duke and diverse international groups of affiliated universities, research centers and non-governmental organizations. The mission of the center is to promote equity, across all domains of human interactions through teaching, partnerships, policy and practice. The SDCSE seeks to employ the innovative use of both new and pre-existing data to include voices through civic engagement, create viable collaborations, and engender equity-driven policy and social transformation at the local, national and international levels.

Bruce Orenstein is an artist in residence and group leader on residential segregation at the Samuel DuBois Cook Center on Social Equity. Orenstein looks at issues of inequality at the intersection of humanities and social science. The piece *The Plunder of Black Wealth in Chicago: New Findings on the Lasting Toll of Predatory Housing Contracts focuses on housing inequality in Chicago & is the 1st publication in terms of a larger series that focuses on housing segregation across the United States.*

On October 23-25, the Samuel DuBois Cook Center on Social Equity held a 3-day conference entitled Capital Matters: Race, Gender and Entrepreneurship Conference at the Duke University Fuqua School of Business. The purpose of the conference was to provide people with a road map on how to address inequality and all its complexity.

There were many individuals and organizations excited about collaborating in being provided with tools to help dismantle the issue of oppression. As a faculty member and Director of Entrepreneurship at NC Central University in the School of Business, Dr. Henry C. McKoy, Jr. led the audience as companion piece to the conference in discussing connection with community and policy makers.

New things on the horizon include an important National Institute of Health grant on race, religion and health spearheaded by Dr. Keisha Bentley-Edwards, who is an assistant professor at Duke University's School of Medicine and participant in the Health Equity Working Group for the Samuel DuBois Cook Center on Social Equity.

"Expansion of the Cook Center is a collective effort," says Wright. One of the evolving projects, led by Senior Research Associate and Duke faculty member Adam Hollowell, includes the process of developing a minor within the university on inequality. Next semester a course will proceed, entitled Duke Immerse, a cluster of four integrated courses that incorporates high faculty and student interactions and classroom learning connected with the real world, including a field trip travel to China in 2020. (Continued On Page 12)



SEN. FLOYD MCKISSICK JR.

Sen. McKissick resigns to take NC Utilities Commission post

RALEIGH (AP) - A veteran North Carolina legislator has resigned from the state Senate more than two months after the General Assembly confirmed his appointment to the Utilities Commission.

Sen. Floyd McKissick Jr. of Durham tendered his Senate resignation - effective Tuesday (Jan. 7) afternoon - to fellow Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper, who had nominated McKissick for the seven-member commission back in May. The powerful panel regulates companies that offer electricity, natural gas and other services.

McKissick joined the Senate in 2007 and was a key Democratic voice on legal and civil rights matters.

Now, Durham County Democratic activists must choose someone to fill the remainder of McKissick's term through the end of 2020. The timing on seating a successor is important because the legislature reconvenes Jan. 14, and Senate Republicans are talking about trying to override Cooper's two-year budget veto from last June.

One empty seat from a Democratic district wouldn't secure a Republican override if all GOP senators vote to override, but it would make the job easier.

Three Democrats already are running in the March 3 primary for the 20th District seat held by McKissick. Local party activists are under no obligation to choose among the three to fill out the current term.



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