



NLV News and Notes

July 2021

www.nextlevelvision.org

Building networking partnership with our community leaders to share resources, inspire and encourage, organize, strategize and mobilize. Seeking to change the culture of our community from gun violence to love. Sharing the responsibility of taking our generation to the **next level vision**.

Groundbreaking Citywide Conference on Ending Gun Violence

The T.R.I.G.G.E.R. Project and Moms Demand Action DC, along with Next Level Vision (NLV) and other co-sponsors, hosted a powerful, groundbreaking conference on June 1. More than 100 people, some gathering in person and others through video conference, joined in addressing real roots of gun violence.

Rather than focusing on victims on the bullet side of a gun incident, as is more usual in gun violence prevention work, this conference turned to victims on the trigger side. Speakers shared honestly about circumstances and choices that led to them picking up a gun, in keeping with the mission of the T.R.I.G.G.E.R. Project: True Reasons I Grabbed A Gun Evolved from Risk.

Speakers and participants included academics, journalists, community leaders, and many individuals with lived experience around gun violence. Linda Harlee Harper, then still quite new as director of DC's Gun Violence Prevention Emergency Operations Center, was on-hand. The Center launched in February, and Ms. Harper began work May 14. The Back Yard Band performed as well, memor-

ializing those lost to gun violence and launching the day of healing, growing and planning.

NLV member Tia Bell founded the T.R.I.G.G.E.R. Project in 2020. Ms. Bell was assisted in conference preparations by Rachel Usdan, then-chair of Moms Demand Action DC.

Ms. Usdan worked tirelessly in recent years on a variety of gun violence awareness and prevention efforts -- from memorial tree plantings to testimony before the DC Council -- including helping to establish NLV. She will continue to work on gun violence prevention from Pittsburgh, PA, where her family has moved for a few years. See also "Wear Orange" story, p.2.



Find "Moms Demand Action - DC" on Facebook. Learn more about the T.R.I.G.G.E.R. Project and support their work. <https://thetriggerproject.org/>

Center Image Description: "End Gun Violence Partners" graphic from June 1 conference shows DC skyline at the top followed by dozens of logos from co-sponsoring organizations.

Next NVL General Meetings: July 18 and Sep 19 at 4 p.m. (No August meeting)

All are welcome. July speaker: Gail Avent, Total Family Care Coalition.

September speaker: Pastor, Jackie Jackson, Moms Demand Action Memorial Activist

Join virtual meeting, via phone or video. Contact NextLevelVisiondc@gmail.com for Zoom link.

Wear Orange Observances

Moms Demand Action organized virtual events and gatherings in many locations around the country, for "Wear Orange" day this year. The observance is intended to raise awareness about gun violence issues, to mark the birthday of Hadiya Pendleton (June 2, 1997 - Jan 23, 2013), and to memorialize those lost to guns.

Ms. Pendleton was shot to death in a Chicago park, near her home, just days after participating in Obama's Inaugural Parade in DC. The original "Wear Orange" observance in 2013 was organized by the teen's friends in her memory -- orange was her favorite color -- and to highlight, like wearing orange to warn off hunters with guns, the fragility of life amid urban gun violence. Wear Orange has since been adopted by Everytown for Gun Safety and has become a national observance.

Locally, Moms Demand Action-DC held a family-friendly event with food, out-door activities, food, and performances at Oxon Run Park in Southeast

DC. The Wear Orange event on June 12 included recognition of Rachel Usdan, outgoing chair of Moms Demand Action-DC. (See also conference story, p.1)



Photo descriptions: 1) NVL member Brenda Richardson, left, recognizes Rachel Usdan (right) and her years of work on gun violence prevention at "Wear Orange Day." 2) Intergenerational group of community members, many dressed in orange, work on a planting box at Oxon Run Park. 3) "Wear Orange" and rainbow posters festoon a large tree at the same park, with memorial stones among its roots.



Next Level Vision

Executive Committee

Chief Executive Director: DeShola Dawkins
Executive Director: Tyrone C. Parker
Exec. Secretary: Rachel Usdan
Navigator: Beverly A. Smith
Treasurer: Volunteer Needed

Committees and Chairs:

Community Unity, Jenise Patterson
Public Profile, Clarence Miles
Red Flag, Jennifer Massey
Resource Development, Stephanie Mercedes
Social Injustice: Melinda Robertson
Street Justice, Pastor Delonte Gholston

Media - Links and Address

Website: nextlevelvision.org
Facebook: [NextLevelVisionDC](https://www.facebook.com/NextLevelVisionDC)
Instagram: [@nextlevelvisiondc](https://www.instagram.com/@nextlevelvisiondc)
Twitter: [@NextLevelVisio1](https://twitter.com/NextLevelVisio1)

NLV News and Notes:

Virginia Spatz, editor
News items and notes are drawn from NVL meetings
Contact songeveryday@gmail.com with corrections or additional news by Tuesday following general meeting.

Photos: Moms Demand Action-DC Facebook page

National Building Museum Hosts Gun Violence Prevention Exhibit

This exhibit, which is now open at the Building Museum here in DC, seeks to preserve individual memories and communicate the magnitude of gun losses in built space, fostering a national healing process that begins with a recognition of the collective loss and its impact on society. Installations in Chicago and the District are the first steps to recognizing the great need for a national, permanent memorial to gun violence victims.

Individual brick spaces hold items of special significance to those who lost loved ones to guns.

Photo description: Image below, from the exhibit website, shows open bricks holding memories: a toy, books, a shoe, and other small items.



Virtual visitors can learn more about the items and their owners via "Moments that Survive," a digital storytelling project -- <https://tinyurl.com/6rcmyuz2>

On-site, the installation also presents these stories and then concludes with a reflection space and resources for survivors and allies.

Experience the exhibit in person. No ticket is required, thanks to the generous support of Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund. The *Gun Violence Memorial Project* is located on the Museum's ground floor, next to the Museum Shop. More about the exhibit: <https://www.nbm.org/exhibition/gvmp/>

Alliance of Concerned Men and 100 Fathers Honor Leadership

NLV executive director Tyrone Parker helped recognize fathers' engagement, as a key element in addressing root causes of gun violence, at a 100 Fathers/Alliance of Concerned Men event in June, at Union Temple Baptist Church in Ward 8. (Photo 1: Parker is second from left, with winners.) Awardees: Curtis Valentine, Educational Father of the Year (photo 2); Derrick Jones, Young Father of the Year (photo 3).



Clinton Lacey, former DYRS Director (Credible Messenger Initiative), was honored as Outstanding Father of the Year (photo 4).

Photo 3: ACM Facebook page

Photos 1, 2, 4: Clarence Miles

NLV Organizational News

At the June general meeting of NVL, Terrance Staley, of the Alliance of Concerned Men, shared a presentation about conflict resolution and engaged members in exercises to help build relationships within the NVL community.

NVL is delighted to announce Shanika Wright as a summer youth employee, sponsored by Momma's Safe Haven. Ms. Wright will be working with Community Unity and Public Profile committees and is helping with event planning.

↑Level ↑↑Up↑

Shouting Out Committees and Individuals helping NVL reach the next level

June Recognitions:

- **Jo Patterson**/Community Unity
- **Regina Pixley**/Street Justice
- **Diana Milam**/Street Justice
- **Virginia Spatz**/Public Profile

Samaria Rice Calls for Justice in Tamir Rice's Shooting Death

On Friday, June 25, Tamir Rice would have turned 19. Instead, his mother, Samaria Rice, was in Washington DC, at the US Department of Justice, asking for action in his shooting death.

Tamir was 12 years old, playing in a public park, when he was shot to death by Cleveland (OH) Police seconds after the officers arrived. The officers never stood trial. Ms. Rice and supporters are asking that the case be reopened. On Tamir's

birthday, demonstrations were held in Cleveland and DC, to amplify her call.

The DC rally was sponsored by the DC Poor People's Campaign and the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression. Participating were organizers Anthony Lorenzo Green, Makia Green (no relation), and April Goggans as well as NVL member Luci Murphy

Ms. Murphy shared this news item along with this letter-writing action to support Samaria Rice's call for justice in this case:

<https://actionnetwork.org/letters/justice-for-tamir-2021>

Image Description: Image includes an artist's rendering -- attributed to @Sarahrot -- of Tamir Rice, a smiling 12-year-old Black child. Text: "Tamir Rice was shot and killed by Cleveland Police when he was just 12 years old. Officers Timothy Loehmann and Frank Garmback have never stood trial. We demand justice for Tamir."



Follow NVL on Facebook, Twitter, and/or Instagram

Visit <https://nextlevelvision.org> for all links and more about activities.

All are welcome to join email list and get involved

Contact NextLevelVisiondc@gmail.com

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: Tuesday, following the General Meeting.

UPCOMING EVENTS

DC Trauma Break with Friends of Oxon Run Park and Bold Yoga

Break from trauma with monthly yoga and meditation. July 24, 10 a.m. to noon. Family-friendly yoga with Charnal, a Moms Demand DC volunteer leader and founder of Bold Yoga, is free and open to all. Registration required. Sign up here: [registration](#). For questions, contact brendarichardson724@gmail.com.

InspiHer Approach to Stress Reduction

Women Like Us presents InspiHer, a three-part, nature-based workshop encouraging self-awareness, clarity, and courage in stressed women in Ward 8. Saturdays, July 31, August 7, and August 14, 9 a.m. to noon at Oxon Run Park. Childcare provided. \$50 gift card upon completion. Food and supplies provided. **Ward 8 mothers only.** Additional criteria discussed during interview.

Call 202-678-1978 by July 21 to apply.

For These Faces Memorial Event

5th Annual Celebration of the life of Smiley, Lynda, Troy & Steven at Fort Lincoln Cemetery, 3401 Bladensburg Rd, Brentwood, MD.

July 18, 1 p.m. Guest speakers, artists, grab bags, and clothing collection for an infant child of a gun violence victim. Masks required. [RSVP](#)

NEXT NVL General Meetings:

July 18 at 4 p.m.

Speaker: Gail Avent, Total Family Care Coalition

Sept 19 at 4 p.m.

Speaker: Pastor Jackie Jackson,
Moms Demand Action Memorial Activist

All are welcome to participate and learn more.

Join virtual meeting, via phone or video.

Contact NextLevelVisiondc@gmail.com for link.

NLV is preparing a speakers' list for upcoming general meetings. If you would like to share your work with NVL membership, or to suggest a guest speaker, please contact NVL's Chief Executive Director, at NextLevelVisiondc@gmail.com.

Celebrating the Life of Timothy Dawkins EL: A Weekend Event!

NLV is sponsoring three events to honor the life of Timothy Dawkins EL. Friday and Saturday events are free and open to the public. For the Sunday event contact NextLevelVisiondc@gmail.com.

Friday August 27, 7:30 - 9 p.m.

Film Screening Debut, "BLACK BUTTERFLY" by Curtis E. Mozie/C. Webb. DYRS Parent Watch Resource Center, 1000 Mt. Olivet Rd, NE

Saturday, August 28, 1 - 4 p.m.

Tribute to Timothy Dawkins EL "A Community Engagement." DYRS Parent Watch Resource Center, 1000 Mt. Olivet Rd, NE

Sunday, August 29, 1-4 p.m.

"His Legacy Continues," Awards and Fundraising Brunch. Busboys and Poets-Anacostia, 2004 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, SE

Image below includes the above information plus a smiling picture of Timothy and the NVL logo. Flyer created by Theresa Gibson.



"We're going to instill the right kind of confidence in our people and take our community back square mile by square mile"

- Timothy Dawkins-El, 2013

NLV's vision is to change the culture of our community from gun violence to love. We are working with all organizations who are willing to work in unity and share the responsibility of taking our generation to the next level vision.

Our mission is to build a networking partnership with our community leaders. To form and inform our families of available resources and programs. We want to inspire and encourage leaders to organize, strategize and mobilize in unity and love.

NLV has been the inspiration and creation of this organization to honor the life and legacy of Timothy D. Dawkins-EL and many other families that have lost children to gun violence. Timothy was 24 years young at the time of his transition and full of life and love for his family, friends and community. Regrettably, his life was stolen from us on August 21st, 2013 ten days before his 25th birthday. Timothy was murdered in Southeast DC by a stray bullet (9mm Glock) as he walked home to charge his cell phone with a friend.



NLV and Partner Organizations

**All interested
individuals and
and organizations
are urged to
join the effort.**

**For information
or to join, contact:**

NextLevelVisiondc@gmail.com