In February of this year, DACL did a video series entitled “I am Black History” as part of D.C.’s celebration of Black History Month. (You can check it out on our YouTube channel, @DCAGingNews!) We were planning on continuing the video series before the Public Health Emergency (PHE), but the PHE changed all of our plans.

I’ve been thinking about the concept of I am Black History because D.C. is so rich with history and you — your generation — has an incredible wealth of knowledge and experience that we need to remember.

These days, you, and the lives you’ve led and continue to lead, have been on my mind: the lifetime of experiences and the changes you’ve seen over the course of your lives. Many of you participated in the 1963 March on Washington, and many of you participated again in the 2020 March on Washington.

In a span of 57 years, this city, and this country, has transformed itself. Now, we have a Deputy Mayor of Health and Human Services, Wayne Turnage, who is the son of sharecroppers. Virginia Ali, the owner of Ben’s Chili Bowl, served and was a part of the Civil Rights Movement, including the original March on Washington. Our own Mayor is a fifth-generation Washingtonian. We’ve had a two-term Black president.

When I say that seniors made D.C. the incredible city that it is today, this is what I mean — the deep connection to social justice, the incubation of Black arts and music, the constant reshaping of D.C. to reflect what the Mayor calls D.C. values. Of course, this is the city where a road was named Black Lives Matter Plaza and written in unavoidable letters on the street.

And yet, 2020 has shown us how fragile and illusory progress towards equality really is (if anyone needed to be reminded). There has been so much to grieve. And because of COVID-19, it can feel like we’re alone. But we’re not.

I know this because Washington, D.C. is Black History, and this city continues to add to that history. I haven’t been able to talk to as many of you lately as I’d like, but the conversations I’ve had have been heartening.

I’ve been able to meet centenarians in the past few weeks, and this year, it occurred to me that we’re not just celebrating longevity, even though longevity is certainly worth celebrating! We’re celebrating the lives of ordinary people who have become extraordinary in their own ways. Some are quiet. Some are flamboyant. All of them have done the best they could to live their best lives and continue to do so.

Part of the powerful history of D.C. is how Washingtonians have shaped the city by showing up to vote. At every virtual event we’ve held over the past several months, at least one person has asked about voting — how to do it safely, how to encourage others to vote, how to make sure each vote is counted.

LIVING in D.C. has taught me that voting isn’t just about expressing an individual preference. Voting is really about creating and supporting the
Thank you for attending the Mayor’s 9th Annual Virtual Senior Symposium

In case you missed it, Mayor Bowser’s 9th Annual Virtual Senior Symposium was a blast! Live on DCTV’s Channel 16, DACL hosted the first-of-its-kind symposium, featuring our fantastic host, Shawn Perry of the Senior Zone, a Zumba warm-up from FTT DC, a Year in Review video tribute showcasing our amazing seniors, and a live cooking demonstration with Food Network’s Chef Tregaye Fraser.

All seniors who registered received a delicious meal kit, filled with fresh vegetables to join Chef Tregaye in preparing a grilled vegetable salad. Seniors even got to hear from DACL’s Nutritionist, Charanya Sundar, on the best ways to eat healthy during the public health emergency.

If you tuned in, we hope you enjoyed yourselves, right from the comfort of your homes. To engage in more programming like the symposium, visit dacl.dc.gov to sign up for our virtual events and important workshops.

Calling All Caregivers — DACL wants to hear from you!

In partnership with Age-Friendly DC, the Department of Aging and Community Living is conducting a study to learn more about the experiences of caregivers. Supporting caregivers is a big part of our mission as an agency, and we want to know what your needs are and how we can better serve you. To participate, please complete this brief survey: https://bit.ly/caregiver_survey_dacl.

To request a survey by mail, please contact 202-724-5626.

Mayor Bowser releases “Six-Month Look Back”

Just over six months ago, Washington, D.C. confirmed its first case of COVID-19. It was weeks before that first confirmed case that the District began planning for the pandemic. Since then, the community has done a lot to prevent and respond to the spread of the virus. As a District, the response has been guided by six pillars:
1. Flattening the curve
2. Sharing accurate and timely information
3. Enhancing our healthcare capacity
4. Expanding community support
5. Preserving government continuity
6. Managing the unexpected

Learn more about these six pillars in the Six-Month Look Back report at coronavirus.dc.gov.

Director’s message

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community we want. If you aren’t registered to vote, get registered. The dead-
line to register online or by mail is October 13. Please visit dcboe.org/Voters/Register-To-Vote/Register-to-Vote to get registered. Or, you can register and vote at the same time in person.

Say you saw it in the Beacon

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