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NBC News to visit Madison for report on racial inequalities

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May 27, 2014 1:30 pm • By [Jessie Opoien](#) | [The Capital Times](#)

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Michael Johnson, CEO of the Boys & Girls Club of Dane County, during the Together Apart: Talking Across the Social Divide event at the First Unitarian Society in April. Photo by Michelle Stocker

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Madison and Dane County will be the focus of another national news report on racial disparity — this time on NBC News.

Michael Johnson, CEO of the Boys and Girls Club of Dane County, was called by an NBC News producer on Tuesday who told him a team would like to visit the area to report on its challenges in addressing racial inequalities.

The producer told Johnson that after reading his personal essay, "**Driven to Act**," and Rev. Alex Gee's essay, "**Justified Anger**," both published by the Cap Times last winter, she was intrigued by their stories. That sparked her team to look into the **Race to Equity report** and to call Johnson.

Johnson said he'll have another phone conference with the producer on Wednesday. During their first conversation, she told him her crew would like to spend about a week in Madison and Dane County in the second week of June.

Johnson said he'll recommend people for them to talk to, including Mayor Paul Soglin, Dane County Executive Joe Parisi and Madison School District Superintendent Jennifer Cheatham. He also wants to put her in touch with the **United Way of Dane County**, and with Tami Miller, founder of **Friends of the State Street Family**.

The producer told him the crew planned to interview families and children from the area, as well, he said.

"I want to make sure we share our challenges, but we also

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share the great things we do in this city," Johnson said. "I think we can utilize this as an opportunity to share what our issues are and find some support. I think it's important that people hear from not just me and from Alex Gee, but that they hear from other leaders in the community as well."

PBS NewsHour conducted interviews in Madison and Dane County earlier in May for a segment on how the community addresses race relations. That segment has not yet aired.

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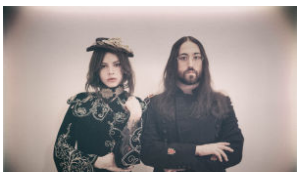
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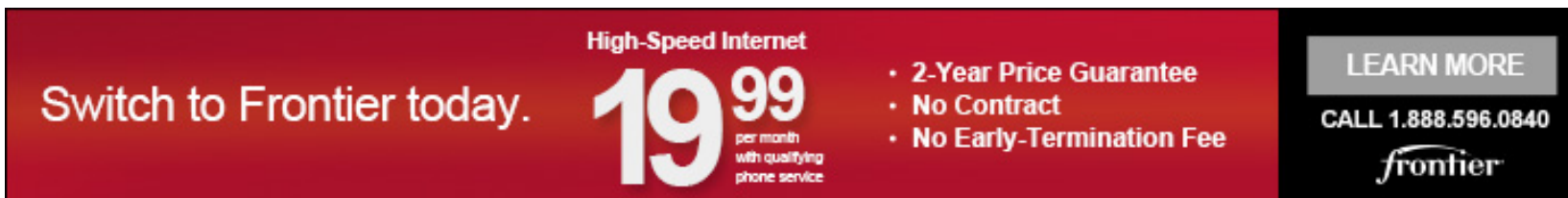
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