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## Child dies from asthma attack at clinic

By CAMERON SHEPPARD  
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Kaloni Bolton, 12, suffered a severe asthma attack and died waiting for care at a busy medical clinic — and now her family wants answers.

On Dec. 29, 2020, Kaloni called her mother, Kristina Williams, and told her that she was having a hard time breathing — a symptom of an asthma attack, which was not uncommon for Kaloni.

Williams was not with Kaloni and was unable to take her to receive medical attention. Kaloni's 24-year-old sister took her to Renton Landing Urgent Care.

Kaloni and her sister arrived at

the Renton Landing Urgent Care Clinic and told staff that she was experiencing distressed breathing consistent with an asthma attack. The staff told Kaloni's older sister that they did not have a respiratory specialist and turned Kaloni away before referring her to North Benson Urgent Care.

Upon arriving at North Benson Urgent Care and checking in with staff, Kaloni and her sister were told to wait in their car before their turn to receive attention from a health care provider. They waited in the car for a half-hour without receiving attention. Kaloni's older sister contacted Williams out of concern to explain the situation.

Williams was confused, as

Kaloni had been a patient at the clinic for over 10 years. Williams said typically, during one of Kaloni's asthma attacks, she would be given an Albuterol nebulizer, a common treatment for asthma symptoms.

According to Williams, over an hour had gone by before any health care providers attended to Kaloni.

"No one came out," she said.

Kaloni used her sister's phone to call her mother. Williams said her daughter sounded highly distressed and was patiently waiting to be seen. She said she had seen several people go in and out of the facility and asked "Why are they seeing everyone else but me?"

At this point, Williams was on her way to the clinic.

Panicked by Kaloni's escalating symptoms, her older sister pleaded to the staff for help.

A staff member brought out an oxygen tank for Kaloni, something that Williams said was not a typical treatment for an asthma attack in her experience with Kaloni's asthma. Kaloni became highly distressed as she struggled to breathe.

The oxygen tank was not initially working for Kaloni as she continued to struggle for air. Eventually, Kaloni turned pale and lost consciousness.

Kaloni's sister pleaded for someone to check Kaloni's pulse

as she lay unconscious. She then called different family members to explain the worrisome situation.

Eventually, a doctor came in to give Kaloni CPR before an ambulance was called.

Williams said she arrived at the clinic after Kaloni was unresponsive.

Kaloni later passed away. Williams said a typical Albuterol nebulizer treatment would help Kaloni recover from an asthma attack in about 30 minutes.

"I put faith in this clinic," Williams said. "They didn't do the proper treatment for an asthma patient."

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## Roundup of local candidates for 2021 elections

REPORTER STAFF

For the first time since she sought and won the office of Auburn mayor in 2013, Nancy Backus will run unopposed, this time for a third term in office.

Backus is Auburn's first and only female mayor since the city's incorporation in 1891.

She did respond to the Reporter's repeated requests for comment.

That was one of the flourishes that closed the state's filing week for public office on May 21.

With Deputy Mayor Claude DaCorsi deciding not to seek re-election for Auburn City Council Position 2, two candidates filed to run for the position, Kate Baldwin and Wendee R. Odell.

Yolanda Trout-Manuel, who is running for re-election to Auburn City Council Position 4, attracted two challengers, Hanan Amer and Andrea Niemeyer, guaranteeing an Aug. 3 primary election to settle which two among the three will appear on the general election ballot in November. A third challenger, Evan Sipple, filed for the seat, but later withdrew.

Larry Brown, who holds Auburn City Council Position 6, is running unopposed in his bid for a second term.

Running for re-election to Auburn School District Director in District 5 is Tracy Arnold.

LaShund M. Lambert, pastor of Resurrection Church Auburn, filed to run for the Position 2 seat now held by Deputy Mayor Claude DaCorsi. Lambert, however, doesn't actually live in Auburn, but in an area called The Bridges near Mountainview High School, which, although surrounded by Auburn, is actually part of the city of Kent, meaning he does not meet the necessary residential requirement.



ROBERT WHALE / AUBURN REPORTER

Mari Borrero and to the right, husband, Aaron, flanked by a handful of staff and employees.

## Contractor helps her employees rebuild their lives

By ROBERT WHALE  
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Mari Borrero has been a United States Marine, a Kent School District teacher, a hospice care worker and a mentor with a big heart.

About five years ago, Borrero got to thinking about her fellow veterans who have left the military and are struggling to transition to civilian life.

She also got to thinking about ex-convicts like her husband, Aaron, beset with their own hurdles as they try to re-enter a world that moved past them when they were behind bars — a world that in many cases wants as little as possible to do with them.

"We were just one family impacted by incarceration, but what if we could help three or four more families impacted by it?" Mari Borrero recalled asking herself. "How would it change their lives, their way

of living, being able to provide for their families, and especially for their kids who are also impacted by it?"

She realized she wanted to found a business to help both sets.

"The system is not really set up for those easy transitions to a work space and re-entry," Borrero explained. "One day, Aaron said to me, 'Hey, we can do this,' and I said OK, to help our community, I will be an employer of those who were previously incarcerated and of veterans who are out of the service and seeking another opportunity."

Two to three weeks ago, the business they founded five years ago, American Abatement and Demo general contractor, moved from its cradle in their home to the southeast corner of East Main Street and Auburn Way North.

The business specializes in asbestos and lead abatement, mold removal, structural

and interior demolition on the residential and commercial sides. Their goal is to help people not only as an employer, but as a whole person. It does this by offering little accommodations, such as a vehicle to get to work on time or lending help to get their driver's license, and if they can't get it right away, getting the person to a local bus point where work trucks will pick them up.

And, crucially, to provide a support system outside of work to help people with their personal lives, which can negatively affect even their getting to work.

"From that came this," Borrero said in her new office, "but I never expected it to be what it has become right now and what it's growing to be. But I knew that we had to find a way to give back, and that's really how we help our community — by being an employer that helps to meet their needs

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# Rebuild

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because they have a lot of needs. A lot of the guys who have been previously incarcerated probably didn't have a father in their lives, didn't even have a first job."

"I am a veteran myself, and I know some of the hardships on transitioning from the military, and even just finding employment afterward in a field," said Borrero. "I had that experience, and also my husband was previously incarcerated, and he was granted clemency by Gov. Inslee and released. It was difficult for him to find employment. As teachers, we learned that kids are most successful when they have five close relationships early on. I don't think it's any different now that we're adults, that we need to have at least five people vested in us being successful. And personally, as a business owner, I feel like I have a handful of people who are

vested in my success."

To be certified as an asbestos worker in Washington state, all of her employees must take a four-day, 32-hour course and pass a test. At the end of that process, the employee earns a Washington state asbestos worker certification. They also take lead classes that allow them to do lead renovation and repair work.

Bruce, who served on a construction battalion with the U.S. Navy and completed one tour in Afghanistan, described his experience transitioning back to civilian life.

"When I got out of the military, the biggest struggle was finding a job. I had quit a job to deploy, and when I came back, that job was no longer available, so I had to find a new one," said Bruce, an estimator, project manager and supervisor for the company who asked that his last name not be used. "I have been out for a few years, but coming here, they look for veterans to help them out."



Photos of Kaloni Bolton.

COURTESY OF KRISTINA WILLIAMS

# Child

From Page 1

Since Kaloni's passing, community members have gathered in support for her family. On March 21, a march and candlelight memorial was held in Renton to honor Kaloni's life.

Williams said she was overjoyed by the abundance of community support and the outrage that the community shared in her child's tragic death in a place that promises "urgent" health care.

"It meant a lot to me," Williams said. "They felt the same pain I felt seeing medical professionals acting negligently."

Now, Williams is trying to raise awareness of the healthcare tragedy that left her daughter struggling to breathe without care.

"As a mother, this is unacceptable," she said. "It is not a pain any parent should go through."

North Benson Urgent Care and Valley Medical Center spokesperson Liz Nolan said patient treatment and triage priorities are made on a case by case basis, and investigations are being made into the incident.

"Whenever an unanticipated outcome occurs, we undertake a

comprehensive review to assess whether errors occurred, determine if there are gaps in our process and learn everything we can as we seek continuous improvement. Internal and independent investigations are being conducted in Kaloni's case because of the devastatingly unfortunate outcome. Because of allegations made by the family, we have also taken action to assess whether race was in any way implicated in the care provided," Nolan wrote.

Williams believes Kaloni is gone because of the circumstances created by the clinic and its staff.

"Kaloni had a lot to look forward to," she said.

Williams hopes Kaloni will be remembered as a bright, loving girl and a friend to many. Kaloni played the violin, did ballet and gymnastics, and was a role model and a young leader. Her mother said she was excited to begin middle school and was looking forward to college.

"There is no one like Kaloni," Williams said. "She was really an angel, beautiful inside and out."

Williams said she civil rights attorney James Bible is her lawyer, and her family plans to take legal action against the healthcare providers.

# Visitors can explore state parks for free on Juneteenth

BY OLIVIA SULLIVAN  
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The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission recently announced Juneteenth will now be a Discover Pass free day.

Juneteenth — honored on June 19 — is the oldest celebration recognizing President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, which freed all enslaved individuals in the United States and signifies one of the most important days in Black American history.

Two years ago, Gov. Jay Inslee recognized Juneteenth in a statewide proclamation. In April this year, the Washington Legislature passed a bill making Juneteenth a paid state holiday for state workers beginning in 2022.

Visitors will not need to display a Discover Pass for day-use parking at Washington state parks and on recreation lands managed by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Saturday, June 19.

The new designation reflects a commitment among state lands agencies to promote diversity, equity and inclusion as core values, according to Washington State Parks.

Discover Passes cost \$30 annually or \$10 for a one-day permit and are required for vehicle access to

state recreation lands managed by Washington State Parks, WDFW and DNR.

In addition to this new free day, June also has three established free days: Saturday, June 5, in recognition of National Trails Day; Saturday, June 12, in honor of National Get Outdoors Day; and Sunday, June 13, for Free Fishing Weekend. (WDFW has designated both June 12 and 13 as Free Fishing Weekend.)

The Discover Pass provides parking access to state parks and lands. Day users at state parks must display a Discover Pass in their vehicles — on the dashboard or hanging on the rearview mirror.

Overnight visitors to state parks pay fees for camping and other overnight accommodations, and day access is included in the overnight fee.

On days that are not free, visitors must have a Discover Pass to park on WDFW and DNR lands.

The remaining 2021 Discover Pass free days are: Wednesday, Aug. 25 — National Park Service Birthday

Saturday, Sept. 25 — National Public Lands Day

Thursday, Nov. 11 — Veterans Day

Friday, Nov. 26 — Autumn Day

For information about the Discover Pass, visit [www.DiscoverPass.wa.gov](http://www.DiscoverPass.wa.gov).

## AUBURN REPORTER

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