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New Orleans

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News Weekly

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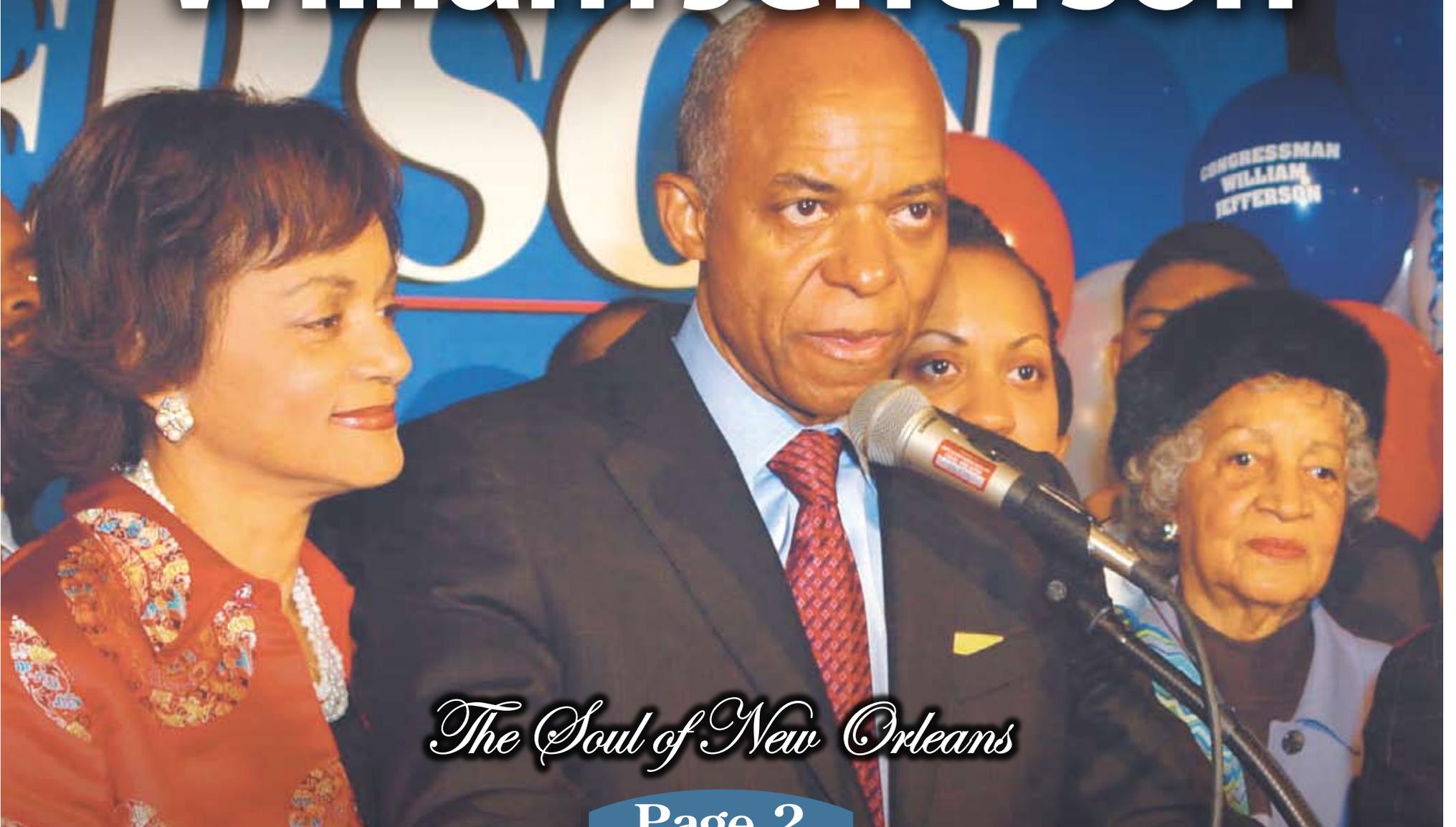
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Learning Mardi Gras History

June 23, 2007 41st Year Volume 37 www.ladatanews.com

The Many Faces of William Jefferson



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The Many Faces of William Jefferson



By Edwin Buggage
Photos by Glenn Summers
and Jamie Jones

Prologue

As his indictment was read, people from all over the Crescent City from barbershops, to restaurants and streetcornes were discussing Congressman William Jefferson and what the future may hold for he has been indicted on 16 counts of corruption, fraud and bribery. As his fate is unknown until his trial which is set in Jan. 2008 where his innocence or guilt will be determined. As this story unfolds there will be many things said about Jefferson, but as Washington attempts to clean up its image this case may have far reaching consequences that may change the way politics are done in the nation's capitol.

Symbol of Hope

Congressman William Jefferson is a Horatio Alger type figure one who pulled himself up by his bootstraps from the poverty of the cotton fields and dirt roads of Northern Louisiana to him and his daughters receiving Ivy League educations and where he has become a powerful figure in business and politics. For some he has been a shining symbol of hope as the first African-American elected to the U.S. Congress since the end of Reconstruction. He has for nearly two decades been a political workhorse who has seemingly got the job done in an understated way and for his constituents he represents the antithesis of those in power in a state where more colorful figures are more common fixtures on the political landscape.

Over the years he has made an impact and has become a key player in the nation's capitol. His ascendance was part of a shift in the political tide for African-American politicians according to long-time community activist Rev. Samson "Skip" Alexander, "Bill Jefferson was someone who was very impactful, who caused elected officials to have a chance of winning versus just making the runoff." Saying Jefferson was a trailblazer in New Orleans politics as the city's demographics started to shift, "He was a new breed of politician, when he defeated Frederick "Fritz" Eagan who was a millionaire and unseating him in the election for a seat in the state senate was very important, because segregation was beginning to wind down, and Blacks and Whites were beginning to look at each other in a manner other than with a rope and they began to try to outmaneuver one and other, and Bill Jefferson was an important figure in Blacks seizing political power and influence in New Orleans."

As Jefferson profile rose he became a powerful figure in the world of politics his star rose in the business community as well. While it is popular lore that Louisiana has been known as a place where, politics, corruption, and malfeasance is part of a historical legacy that lends itself to the popular notion that this state is a banana republic run by incompetent people who major in graft and greed. Over the years Congressman William Jefferson albeit given the nickname "Dollar Bill" has been able to mostly stay above the fray, working for the constituents of Louisiana's Second Congressional District eventually working his way onto the powerful Ways and Means Committee, and also forging a relationship with former President Bill Clinton cementing

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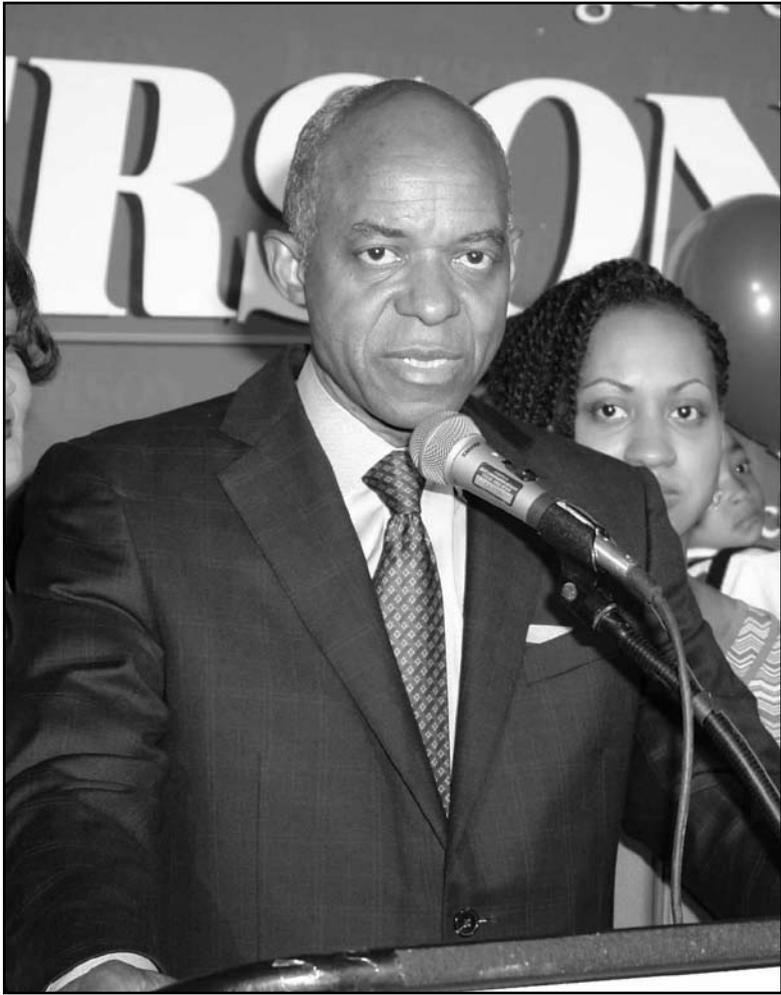
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his role as a savvy player in the inner sanctum of higher government. A born dealmaker he leveraged his relationship to the White House to push legislation that has benefited the state. Since 1990 when he won his Congressional seat against former New Orleans Mayor Marc Morial he has been lauded as an effective leader and advocate for the state on Capitol Hill; so much so that he hasn't faced any serious challenge to his seat until recently.

Change of Fate

In March of 2005 the FBI began a corruption probe targeting Congressman Jefferson. And on

July 30, 2005 they allegedly videotaped him receiving 100,000 dollars from Lori Moody who was wearing a wire and an affidavit states that Jefferson was also videotaped receiving a stock from Mody to set up a company in a Nigerian Technology Company that he projected would generate 200 million dollars after five years. And on August 3, 2005 FBI Agents raided Jefferson's Washington D.C. home and seized 90,000 dollars placed inside frozen food containers that matched the serial numbers given to an FBI informant.

As the probe continued two of Jefferson's associates Brett Pfeffer, a former aide entered a

guilty plea to a charge of aiding and abetting bribery of an elected public official and conspiracy, and Vernon Jackson a Kentucky businessman who had business dealings with Congressman Jefferson also entered a guilty plea in connection to paying 400,000 dollars in bribes to a phony company headed by Jefferson's wife, Andrea and family members in exchange for political favors. Mae Jefferies, a New Orleans resident says of William Jefferson and his dilemma, "I don't think that anyone can question his ability as a legislator, because I feel he has done an excellent job, but I feel bad for him because it's not just him but his family may also be in jeopardy."

charged with a crime and it was just something his opponents were dredging up because they could not dispute his effectiveness as a legislature.

Troy Carter, who was one of Jefferson's opponents and is a former elected official holding seats in both the city council and Louisiana legislature says on the heels of Congressman Jefferson's indictment, "I don't think he should have run because of the cloud of suspicion that hung over his head legally and the predicament it put the voters of the Second Congressional District in." "If I were in a similar situation I would not have run, and I think it would have probably better served the district had he not and

not surprised that he's been indicted."

As to the question of more far reaching issues of how the Jefferson case may impact the way business is done in Washington D.C. Raspanti says, "The search of the congressman's office may have an impact on what is physically kept in a their offices, as to how they do business I would hope that they would try to do business ethically." There are some who believe Congressman Jefferson was singled out, Raspanti disagrees and thinks this case will have an adverse effect on how people outside of the city and state perceive Louisiana politics. "I don't think Congressman Jefferson was singled out and there seemed to be enough evidence against him that the U.S. Justice Department moved forward." "Unfortunately this trial will probably shed a negative light on us, so that's the tragedy of this whole thing besides the personal tragedy is that the state will suffer because in the short term because he is no longer on the Ways and Means Committee he can't be very effective, but in the long term as far as the reputation of our city and state we just have to wait and see what happens."



Re-election and Redemption

During his re-election campaign one which usually finds him without any serious competitors, but this time he found himself in the fight of his political life as several candidates of note vied for his congressional seat including a Derrick Shepherd, a state senator, former New Orleans city councilman Troy Carter, and his most formidable challenge was from State Representative Karen Carter. While Jefferson was forced into a run-off he handily defeated Rep. Carter. During the campaign questions concerning his integrity, ethics, and honesty were the issues many of his opponents spoke about, while it was a concern, Jefferson claimed his innocence and said in an interview with Data News Weekly during the election that he had not been

we would have been spared what we're going through now." "We could have gone forward with a renewed sense of leadership in Washington D.C. particularly during this time when recovery is so critically important we can't afford to have any distractions."

Indictment

On June 4th 2007 nearly seven months after Jefferson's convincing victory over State Representative Karen Carter he was indicted on sixteen counts which includes, racketeering, wire fraud, money laundering, conspiracy, soliciting bribes, and obstruction of justice. Joseph Raspanti a local attorney and legal analyst for Fox 8 New Orleans have been following the case was not surprised by the indictment. "I wasn't surprised, they have a witness that seems to be credible, they had the marked bills that were confiscated, so I

Epilogue

The question of who is William Jefferson and is he innocent or guilty and how will history judge him is presently a query that is unanswerable. As his story unfolds in a case where the search of his congressional office is unprecedented and the results of the case may change the way government elected officials do business. His trial is also one with more far reaching consequences than that of him and his family. It is two branches of government: the legislative and the executive and a U.S. Constitutional provision known as the Speech and Debate clause that protects members of congress from being questioned by the president, a prosecutor, or plaintiff in a lawsuit concerning their legislative work. We will not know until this case is closed as to whether our government as we know it may be altered slightly, but in this critical time for the citizens of New Orleans and Louisiana if that is the case hopefully it is for the better.



JMJ Foundation TRAILBLAZERS

Kimberly Dilosa: Envisioning a New Orleans for Teens

By Eddie Francis



If anyone believes that no one cares about New Orleans area teens, they have not met Kimberly Dilosa. Dilosa has rallied area teenagers to create a safe environment for each other, she has grabbed the attention of prominent organizations, and she has recently initiated an aggressive campaign to make New Orleans a more teen-friendly city. With the help of a group of teens she affectionately calls "Kim's Kidz" Dilosa is watching her dream develop.

A native of the Westbank, Dilosa did not exactly have youth enrichment in mind as a career goal. On her way from Xavier Prep to Tuskegee University, Dilosa had dreams of becoming an architect. She attended the legendary HBCU only to find that matters in New Orleans were much more pressing. Working towards her degree in architecture, her concern for her peers and the teen population plucked her nerves.

Dilosa's journey began when she was an intern with the Port of New Orleans. She and fellow interns would voice their frustrations with each other about the seemingly endless violence in their native city. In 1994 the catalyst that would solidify her commitment to enriching the lives of New Orleans youth was the murder of James Darby. She acted as soon as she could physically do so.

Upon receiving her degree from Tuskegee in 1997, she returned home on a mission. Dilosa recalls, "I didn't want my younger cousins to fall prey to what was going on in the streets." With that, she formed a group of teens that would meet every weekend to find pleasant distractions from the streets. Although she held a stable job in her field, Dilosa's heart grew for her younger contemporaries.

What Dilosa did not know was that her simple gatherings had created a snowball effect. "I was worried about a few kids and the next thing you know, they're telling their friends and their friends are telling friends," she says with a chuckle. She accepted the group's growth as both a challenge and a joy. More and more her attention focused primarily on the needs of youth so much so that even her promising architecture career became secondary. "Actually I was happier with the kids!" she recalls gleefully.

Dilosa, known to her teens as "Miss Kim", became fully invested in her cause. What started as weekend gatherings turned into field trips to anywhere the teens could think of—movies, a mall, etc. What started as van trips soon became bus trips. It was then that she realized it was time to make her group an organization.

On September 1, 1997 Miss Kim formed the YOUTHAnasia Foundation. YOUTHAnasia was so-named because of Dilosa's philosophy that they would "kill the problems that are killing teens." Besides the activities, what made YOUTHAnasia so attractive to teens was Dilosa's letting them take responsibility in guiding the organization. From there YOUTHAnasia aimed to focus on "effective leadership development, community service, cultural arts enrichment, health and life skills education and emotional nurturing." The organization's formula was to listen to the teens express their wishes, and then hold them to their plans both organizationally and individually.

Dilosa's efforts have been so consistent that she has grabbed the attention of local, regional and national organizations. She has been recognized by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana as an Angel Award finalist and also the New Orleans Saints as a recipient of the Community Quarterback Award. Most prominently Dilosa received a \$125,000 grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and was designated a "Gulf Coast Hero" for her efforts.

Organizationally YOUTHAnasia has won its fair share of recognition. The organization was nominated by New Orleans CityBusiness as a 2006 Non-Profit Innovator of the Year and was named Point of Light No. 2381 by President George W. Bush. During his mayoral administration Marc Morial awarded the organization the Golden Hammer Award, and the Jefferson Parish Martin Luther King, Jr. Task Force awarded YOUTHAnasia the Community Excellence award.

The youth have also been recog-

nized for their talents, also. Making their presence known as the Citywide High School Task Force, YOUTHAnasia acquired funding from the Louisiana Public Health Institute and Louisiana Campaign for Tobacco Free Living to spread the message about the dangers of tobacco use among teens. Dubbed the "Smokeout Tour" the effort featured the talents of teens who have been singing, dancing and rapping to help the worthwhile cause.

Despite the awards, Dilosa continues to fight for New Orleans area teens with a tenacity matched by a precious few. "New Orleans is adult-friendly but not teen-friendly," she barks. "The kids constantly say, 'There's nowhere for us to go or nothing to do,'" she emphatically says. Rallying her troops, as usual, Dilosa allowed them to formulate plans for the future. From those plans has come the Teen Center for Non Violence, which opened its doors in June.

With the center's opening comes a list of things to do. YOUTHAnasia is in the thick of its campaign to "Rebuild a Teen-Friendly Greater New Orleans" with the center's opening and the launch of www.teenfriendlygno.com. The organization is also planning its "Final Fridayze", their answer to the popular 1st Friday gatherings. Whoever is in the mood for a celebrity look-alike competition can see it at the Teen Center for Non Violence. As if that is not enough, the teens plan to enjoy their version of the Essence Music Festival with the "Teen Summer Fest". Says Dilosa, "All we're trying to do is fill the void."

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We'll be here to help you with the process in the months to come. The July 31 deadline is for new applications only. You will have more time to schedule your appointment with a *Road Home* advisor and to complete other steps in the process. Plus, there's plenty of time to take advantage of *Road Home* Advisory Services.

Unsure if you registered or applied?

The Road Home began accepting applications on August 20, 2006. Even if you registered for the program before then, you need to apply. If you are unsure if you have applied, you can call 1.888.ROAD.2.LA to see if you have an application on file with the program.

Already applied?

Tell your family and friends who haven't applied and may be eligible for the program to apply today!

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Director of the Office of Emergency Preparedness Unveils City Assisted Evacuation Plan



By Edwin Buggage

In the wake of another hurricane season the director of the New Orleans Office of Emergency Preparedness Lieutenant Colo-

nel Jerry Sneed and his office is getting ready by simulating an evacuation. He says of the exercise, "We have developed a city assisted evacuation plan. We will be picking up those citizens that

do not have any other means to get out of the city." Unlike the situation with Hurricane Katrina which at times were chaotic, Sneed says this plan is a concerted effort between the city, state and federal government and there won't be a problem with resources getting to those in need. He says that previously there was not a plan in place to evacuate the neediest citizens and says that he hopes this will solve some of the problems the city faced in 2005. Director Sneed says that communications failures will not be a problem as he unveiled a plan using cell phones via text messaging

to make citizens aware of updates of plans for evacuation; also he says that there is a plan in place for those with special needs and those who own pets to be evacuated as well. While the city has an assisted evacuation plan in place he says that citizens need to be more proactive in having a plan to leave the city, and he also voiced concern about what some call the 'sit, wait and see', "This is a mentality that we need to break in this city where people don't evacuate or wait until the last minute, we need citizens to take heed to the Mayor's evacuation order." Lt. Col. Sneed also warns citizens that there will not be any shelters of last resort in the city of New Orleans. Another concern he addressed are citizens who stay behind because of the fear that their property may be vandalized or looted, "I understand that some

stay because they fear their property will not be protected, but the National Guard will be in place as well as a strict curfew that will be enforced."

He says of the exercise that this is a team effort and is asking citizens and community leaders to do whatever they can to help their neighbors, "This is an opportunity for local officials, volunteer organizations, and concerned citizens to take part in the planning and preparing for future evacuations."

For more information on the city's Evacuation plan and the City Assisted Evacuation Plan for special needs residents, to contact you can call the information hotline by dialing 311 or (504) 658-2299. To register for the notification text system which will alert citizens of emergency weather situations, log onto www.nolaready.info
Photo caption: Director of the Office of Emergency Preparedness of New Orleans Lieutenant Colonel Jerry Sneed.

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Redbone: Money, Malice, and Murder in Atlanta

by Ron Stodghill

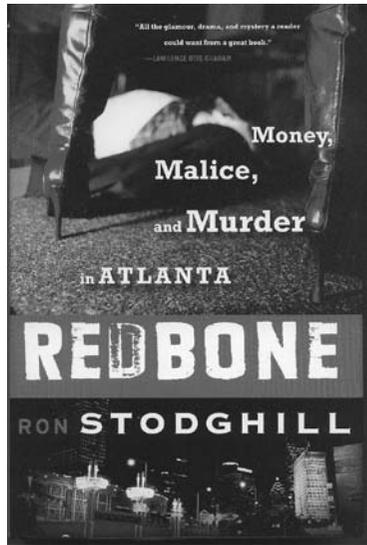
What would you do if you were on the edge of losing something important?

Would you try to reason with the one denying your wish? Would you fight for it, plead for it, or would you give up and try again later?

Would you kill to keep from losing that which you craved?

Because of greed, Lance Herndon lost his life. In the new true-crime book "Redbone: Money, Malice, and Murder in Atlanta" by Ron Stodghill, you'll see that the greed wasn't Lance's, but the riches were. So was the blood on the walls of his million-dollar home.

Everybody who knew Lance Herndon – and it seemed as though everybody did – knew him to be a master networker. He had an amazing ability to see



potential. He loved to put people together, and he made sure to follow up on every contact. People who knew Lance well knew how fussy he was about his appearance, his schedule, the way he managed his employees, and the down-to-the-minute details of the

successful Atlanta-based business that he created.

Unfortunately, Lance wasn't quite as discerning about his women. Everybody who knew him knew how much Lance loved women, especially "redbones", or light-skinned African American women. Thrice divorced, he seemed to collect girlfriends and mistresses like some people stamps or spoons. Those rumors about Lance being on the DL? Those were just rumors.

When two of Lance's employees showed up for work in his lower-level office on a hot Atlanta summer morning, they thought it strange that there were no detailed instructions from their boss to start their day. One employee paged him. Herndon's mother was called. When Jackie Herndon arrived at Lance's home, she went to check on Lance's grandmother, who was staying at the

house. What she found sent her, screaming, to the phone.

Lance Herndon lay dead in his bed, his face caved in. A bloody pillowcase was floating in the toilet and clocks were unplugged. Forensic evidence showed that Lance had had several ladies in his bed in recent weeks.

Which one of them killed him?

Do you love a good mystery? Author Ron Stodghill must know you do, because his writing flirts with all the possible killers that might have bludgeoned Lance Herndon to death; unless you're familiar with this true crime story, you won't know whodunit until about halfway through the book. Just don't be tempted to peek ahead at the pictures be-

cause the answer is there, which spoils the solving.

Stodghill also lets tension build in his recounting of this entire story, which I really appreciated. Time and again, his writing allowed me to be surprised by things that happened during the investigation, the arrest, and the trial, and he made me gasp once last time at the afterword, in which he writes of where the murderer is today.

Filled with glamour, passion, and edginess, "Redbone: Money, Malice, and Murder in Atlanta" is great for true crime aficionados, courtroom fans, and mystery mavens. It's the perfect book in which to lose yourself this summer.

Redbone: Money, Malice, and Murder in Atlanta

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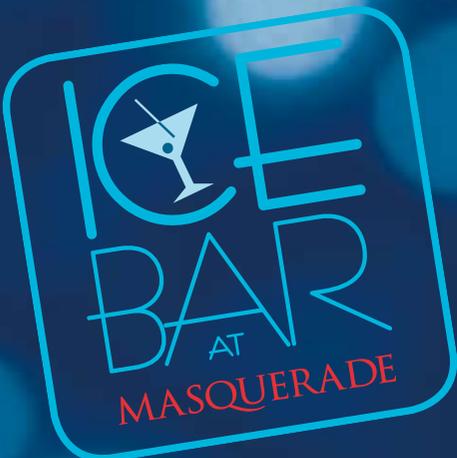
Students Learn Mardi Gras Indian Culture in Unique Summer School at Xavier



Youngsters in Xavier University's Mardi Gras Indian Arts Summer School are getting hands-on experience in a unique program focusing on Mardi Gras Indian costume design and tradition. The summer course, offered by Xavier's art department and held in the Art Village, includes lectures, video screenings, and conversations with guest speakers to help students understand the rich costume and parade traditions of Mardi Gras Indians, including Native American and African-Caribbean influences. Shawn Vantree is the program director. Students recently had a session with Chief Larry Bannock of the Golden Star Hunters tribe. PHOTO captions: 1. Chief Larry Bannock of the Golden Star Hunters, with students Lerhon Edwards and Tyrelle Henderson working on a purple Indian suit. 2. Taylor Ranson gets a hands-on sewing lesson from Chief Larry Bannock.



Wynton Marsalis for the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism
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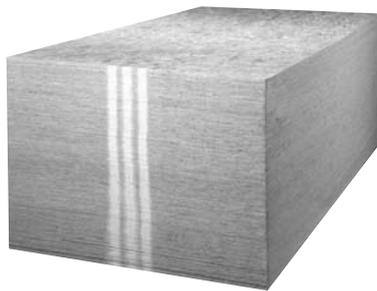


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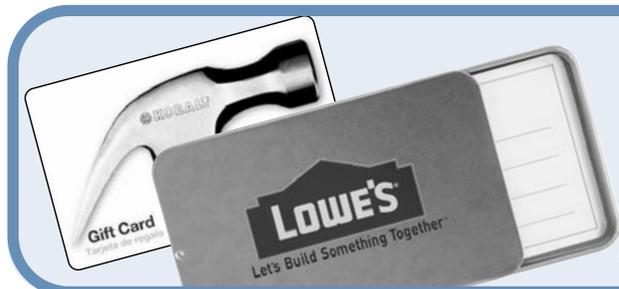


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"A Celebration of Black Fathers" featuring Carol Ross' portraits will be on display at Gallery Guichard thru June 30, 2007.
The Gallery is located at 3521 S. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Chicago, Illinois

A Time for Healing

Part 2



Dr. Aaron E. Harold
Data Columnist

Friends, it will be two years this August, since Katrina. Many of us are still facing some difficult challenges and changes in our lives. Everyday when we get up and start our day, there are decisions that we have to make. Some of us have gone on with rebuilding our lives and that's great.

On the other hand, some of us are struggling just to make it day to day.

Many of us are experiencing stress and anxiety after Katrina and Rita. However, some of us feel that there is no hope. One of the main causes of anxiety that many people are now suffering from is "Post-Traumatic Stress" disorder. This type of stress comes after a person has been in a series of devastating events. This type of stress can be triggered after an earthquake, after military combat, rape, airplane crashes, and for many of us, Katrina and Rita. The question now is, "How do we deal with these problems?"

Anxiety and stress are part of everyone's life. Who will experience these problems? Well, everyone will from time to time in their lives. Even the best and strongest of us, who may think that they are a superwoman and superman must realize that stress and anxiety does not exclude anyone. Some lives are afflicted by these conditions for more overwhelmingly and painfully than others. Researchers estimate that almost 20 percent of the population meets the criteria for some form of depression at any given time.

Depression is the second most costly disease there is. This costs in terms of direct treatment, unnecessary medical care, lost productivity, and shortened life span. It is estimated at 44 billion dollars a year. It is second only to cancer in terms of economic impact. It also leads to many suicide deaths each year. There is no question that major depression is a serious illness. If you have it, most likely you have real trouble going through your daily routine. This also makes communicating with people very difficult.

Depression is not going to go away on its own. However, there is good news for all of our sicknesses and diseases. The answer to all of our problems is in the word of God. In Matthew Chapter 4 verse 23, says that Jesus healed all kinds of sicknesses and diseases amongst the people. In Exodus Chapter 15 verses 26, God himself tells Moses to tell the people, "I am the Lord that heal you." Take the time to put yourself in the presence of God, because in God's presence you will experience the fullness of his joy.

King David went through much difficulty with the lost of some of his children and other personal issues, but he found joy in God. In Psalms Chapter 16 verse 11, Jesus and his disciples many times got away from time to time from ministry work to go fishing, and to enjoy each other. Learn to get with people that are positive and that will encourage you. Take more time to meditate on the goodness of God, and not what you lost. God cares for you and me (John 3:16 & 1 Peter 5:7).

My brothers and sisters, if you are suffering from these conditions, seek a professional, but don't hesitate to get some spiritual help and counseling. God Bless you, and have a healthy recovery and don't let anything or anyone stop you from living this life to the fullness. Remember this, it's your life, God gave it to you, now start enjoying it.

Dr. Aaron E. Harold is the pastor of New Millennium Breakthrough Ministries. To contact him with your comments or suggested topics he can be reached at rharold1@cox.net

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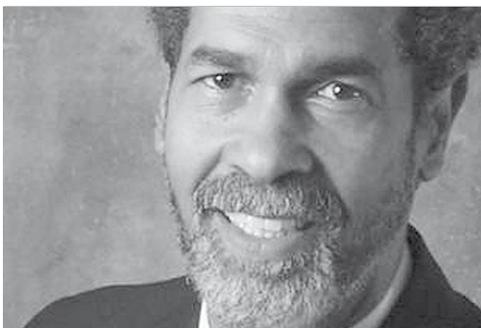
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Opinion

Forgot Fun?



The Love Dr.
Data Columnist

One of the things I missed most after Katrina was the music, but lately, I've been getting my fill, and then some. Lately the performances I've absorbed have been over the top. Perhaps the performers also missed playing for people they knew, or maybe we all just missed Sweet Lorraine's.

Fun is a major part of a great relationship. The ability to have a good time in the same place at the same time gives the later years of marriage a wonderful flow. For Boo and me, in addition to a shared appreciation for good company we share the sensual pleasures of delicious food and great music and are a bit adventurous about both. Even when we travel the fun is about those shared pleasures and of course the ongoing courtship that really keeps life interesting..

What's really funny is that, we differ on almost everything else, but we can always have a good time if there is great music, delicious food, good company or any combination thereof.

I'm sort of a "geek". I love people, but if left unattended, I can spend days at the computer writing, tweaking the machine, editing video, or photoshopping someone's portrait perfect.

On the other hand, Boo would rather be out in the hot sun, preferably on a perfect beach but routinely fussing with our stuff, or playing with the grandchildren, and more recently reading (outdoors on the swing). That's probably what we like about cruising and have begun to enjoy the "at sea" days more. I sleep late have lunch and take an afternoon nap while Boo explores every inch of the ship, walks her laps briskly, and goes swimming. I meet her at the pool as the sun goes down, we get dressed up for dinner, a show and dancing and hanging out and stuff.

I also figured out that being a geek all the time leads to a lonely life, so I come out of my cave with a vengeance every day and since the children are grown, and business is good, "we be jammin". Our kids say we are "balling out of control", and that brings me back to Sweet Lorraine's.

A good part of that "ballin" happens at Sweet Lorraines, because it's as intimate as it gets. Paul has taken the "hole in the wall" to world class. Same feel. It's a "everybody knows your name" kind of place, especially

if you tip well, and treat servers with respect. (And if you don't why would anyone want to remember your name?). You can also get delicious food at very reasonable prices, and you get to hang out with nice people and people of note (Oliver Thomas was in the house last night), but let me get back to the music.

Angela Bell was awesome last night. Lately, every time we've seen the woman at the club, Boo and I have been completely blown away, but I also believe Angela was blown away. The relationship between performers and audience (which included some brothers in law) was part of the show. Angela had sweat her hair out in the first set.

Now let me tell you about second sets at Sweet Lorraine's. When the audience hangs (as it did last night) the musicians show their appreciation, often with performances on a whole different level with anything that could have been rehearsed because they had never played it before.

Last week we caught Marlon Jordan, whose trumpet was on fire. Marlon is an intense virtuoso whose music can be as complex and forceful as it is tonal and melodic at other times.

The week before that Gina Brown tore it down. Gina's show is polished and well rehearsed, but a packed house at Sweet Lorraine's drove her and the band crazy. The second set was something to behold as an uninhibited audience and a tight band did that Sweet Lorraine's thing on one another.

I'm writing this because I had lost the music. I had become so business, so focused on "getting there" that frolicking around in my mind with rhythms and harmony was a forgotten pleasure as was feeling a common sense of time and space as everybody else in the room, in concert, if you will. Fortunately, its like riding a bike and about five or six years ago Boo and I just stopped in and the rest is a history that led to Boo and I rediscovering something else we shared as fun, live music. And no, Sweet Lorraine's is not the only place we go, but dammit, Paul has created a "vibe", something not easily described but once felt easily understood.

And speaking of "Vibe", when Boo and I want to get our dance on, we check out Captain Charles, because "there ain't no party like an old school party" and if its not on the positive he just doesn't play it and somehow that seems to attract people who just want to have a good time, and dance, a safer party. Yes, we try to dance at least once a week. Sometimes that's the only exercise I get, and while I love live music, for dancing I like the mix because it keeps coming, and I can sing along without missing and messing up a great live performance.

We usually rest on Sundays,Ä¶ so its time for my nap. We were out late last night, Two hours of Angela Bell will wear you out! Life is good. You know as well as I that there's no tired that feels as good as when you are tired from having fun!

Health News

Cardiovascular Health Isn't Just a "Man's Issue"



Larry Lucas
Data Columnist

I'm a lucky man. At least that's what my wife and daughter tell me. For more than 25 years, I've been happily outnumbered in my household of women. And, one thing is for sure - the health and well-being of the women in my family mean everything to me.

For many men, women are a mystery. Maybe this stems from the fact that U.S. women are living an average of 79.8 years - more than five years longer than men, according to the National Institutes of Health (NIH)! But that doesn't mean women - or men, for that matter - can afford to be asleep at the wheel when it comes to their health care.

The top three killers of women in the U.S. are heart disease, cancer and stroke, according to the Mayo Clinic. When you think of someone having a heart attack or stroke, you might think of a middle-aged man. The truth is cardiovascular health isn't just a "man's issue" Seventy million Americans have heart disease, which is the leading cause of death in the U.S. But did you know that over half of those - 54 percent - are women? Surprised? You're not alone. Many women believe that cancer is more of a threat to their well-being, but they're wrong. The American Heart Association (AHA) reports that nearly twice as many women in the United States die of heart disease and stroke as from all forms of cancer, including breast cancer.

Much of the burden of heart disease and stroke could be eliminated by reducing its major risk factors, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Those risk factors include high blood pressure, high blood chole-

sterol, smoking, diabetes, lack of exercise and poor nutrition. You've heard it before, but I'm going to say it again - lifestyle choices, like what you eat and how much you exercise, play such a critical role in preventing all kinds of potentially devastating diseases, not the least of which is heart disease.

For many women, it's a fear of breast cancer that worries them. Every three minutes, a woman is diagnosed with breast cancer, according to the American Cancer Society (ACS). But there's a silver lining: breast cancer survival rates are on the rise as more women are detecting and treating breast cancer at its earliest stages.

It's critical that African American women, especially, know about the importance of early detection, diagnosis and treatment. Even though African American women are less likely to get breast cancer, they are 28 percent more likely to die from it than white women, according to the ACS.

Pharmaceutical companies are zeroing in on these diseases. According to a recent survey by the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America, more than 600 new medicines are in development to help improve the quality of life for women everywhere.

This includes 111 new medicines to help treat cancer (breast, ovarian and cervical cancer) and 146 new medicines for cardiovascular disease.

Patients who need help accessing their prescription medicines can turn to the Partnership for Prescription Assistance. In the last two years, the Partnership for Prescription Assistance has helped connect more than 3.6 million patients in need to programs that provide either free or nearly free medicines. For more information, patients can call 1-888-4PPA-NOW or visit www.pparx.org.

Like the women in many men's lives, my wife and daughter will always be the center of my universe. Improved lifestyles, early detection, regular screenings and proper medications will help all of our mothers, daughters and wives continue to be the heart of my - and your - households.

Larry Lucas is the vice president for Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA).



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As we rebuild, what do we hold most dear?

By Terrell P. Clayton

Post Katrina it is high time that we begin to examine the history and future of our beloved neighborhoods. Natives and admirers agree: New Orleans is unique, charming and eclectic. Our city is not a neat, homogenous subdivision, not a glass and concrete jungle but an old soul with many generations of growth, development and architectural contributions.

The Crescent City is world renowned for its hospitality, simplicity and multi-cultural architectural influences. How do we maintain that balance and diversity moving forward?

As we rebuild, what do we hold most dear? The preservation of buildings or the preservation of our City's soul? Why does preservation of buildings appear to rank

higher than preservation of quality of life? Are affordability, safety, efficiency, diversity and economic investment secondary as we look to the future?

On the surface, many violently contend that old buildings with good bones should never be sacrificed. Yet simmering beneath the altruistic appearance of preservation is a scalding debate on constraining, confusing and costly Historic Landmark District Commission ("HDLC") development conditions placed upon property owners.

Imagine the following: an elderly resident fearing for her safety installs iron bars on windows and doors, after incurring the expense, is told that bars do not comply with HDLC and must be removed; young family eager to save money on utilities, invests in storm windows only to learn

that they do not meet historic requirements and must be removed or face fines of \$500.00 per day, pioneering investor acquires a run down double for investment and is cited for his roof is the wrong color. A young, hip couple acquires a vacant lot and would like to build a solar, art deco home in the heart of the city, incorporating energy efficient building materials, namely a "green roof", only to learn that their design cannot or will not fit. How about the family that owns their home and would like to acquire the small, blighted property next door to build an addition, and add more side yard for their children to play and off street parking to alleviate parking constraints on their narrow street?

Aren't these residents' noble intent worthy of acceptance? Have we forgotten that long before historic districts many innocuous and positive developments occurred?

In all fairness to preservation, the ravages of fires, bulldozers, utter neglect and economic decline took its toll on many urban cities in the twentieth century only to be met with protective preservation movements. Saving old buildings and neighborhoods from federal highways and dense building towers have served many old cities well and currently offer strong heritage tourism draws via nationally supported and recognized "main street" efforts.

In fact, New Orleans owes a great debt to early preservationists that blocked the demolition of the Pontalba in favor of an expressway to link New Orleans to Chalmette.

As we reflect on the charm of our neighborhoods, our forefathers were not consumed with making history only a home. With the local creation and designation of historic districts, it is important to weigh our gains, losses and opportunities for transparent, unconvoluted compromise.

Many questions abound in the designation of historic districts: do all residents fully understand

the imposed, unrelenting limitations their personal property may be subject to? Do the economics associated with specialized or customized building materials help or harm a native, low or fixed income population. Many preservationists will tout that federal historic tax credits are available to those to properly apply, qualify and perform historic renovations. Let that sink in. A tax credit. A credit to reduce the taxable income you may personally earn that may be carried forward for a number of years. Hmmm, for this to be attractive your income would likely have to be in the top third of income generated in the country. What if it isn't? Are you to move, sell, and suffer penalties? Should you be subject to historic guidelines at all, if you were there first?

Does ignoring the costs associated with historic redevelopment projects suggest that federal policy is incentivizing gentrification via historic preservation or have our local leaders been blind to the underbelly of the historic preservation movement? Many studies and reports have pointed out that the HDLC has too much autonomy and subjectivity, too little transparency or standardization and imposes requirements that have been ruled in violation of the US Constitution, yet they survive.

Mansions are mysteriously demolished on St. Charles, individual properties are landmarked outside of historic districts against owner's wishes, projects die in the backroom of the ARC, stop work orders are slapped on permitted projects due to minor infractions, property owners lacking energy and resources are frustrated and bullied. All of which beg the questions: Whose definition of preservation are we trying to serve? Is there a difference between preservation and restoration? How does this movement bend to accommodate the existing, unforeseen and future investment? What quality of life issues are more important than buildings? Where does the preservation of community effort fit in? Do we really want the future of our city defined by inches, colors and whims? Or do we want clear policies and procedures?

What if we simply created a moratorium for pre-designated owners, established criteria for new construction and demolition?

What if we simply did away with the politics of the HDLC Not the HDLC itself? Why can't we adopt a master plan and zoning code that acknowledges and articulates historic guidelines?

Many believe the preservationists have a stronger lobbyist than the average New Orleanian: elite, wealthy, Junior Leaguers and/or social club aristocrats, who by the way, do not all live in historic districts....

I ask how many members of the arc live in a historic district?

I ask does the arc represent the demographics of the historic districts, does the HDLC itself represent the demographics of the historic districts?

As we look to the future we need to honor history, encourage quality development, fiercely protect the property rights and quality of life for our residents and embrace environmentally sound and efficient building technologies.

On a more conscious level, it may be time to muster the courage to push back against subjective and economically burdensome building requirements and examine whether preservation is a class issue cloaked in cultural clothing before New Orleans loses her soul, style and authenticity forever...

The irony with preservation in our City is that it has become an unfunded mandate: added responsibility without any additional resources.

Homes that we now revere as historic were built to meet the needs of families during their respective time period. With the evolution of time and lifestyles, New Orleans' redevelopment focus must evolve as well or we will forever deter sound investment and families of modest means from repopulating neighborhoods.

Katrina had made it opportune for New Orleans to create a new history: housing for a new generation, capable of lasting for another two hundred years that can be designed, built and enjoyed without the undue, arbitrary and political posturing of our Historic District Landmark Commission...if not, are we ready to concede that the HDLC stands for Housing Dictators Lacking Consistency!



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Back Home



MAYOR C. RAY NAGIN

Deadline to Apply to the Road Home Program is July 31

BATON ROUGE, La. (May 30, 2007) - Louisiana homeowners affected by Hurricane Katrina or Rita who have not yet applied to The Road Home program have until July 31, 2007 to file an application for assistance, officials announced today.

"Homeowners with damages to their homes who have not yet applied should do so right away," said Michael Taylor, director of

the Disaster Recovery Unit, Office of Community Development. "We want to ensure that homeowners who need assistance apply before the deadline so as not to miss out on potential program benefits."

Louisiana homeowners who owned and occupied their homes at the time of Hurricane Katrina or Rita, and suffered damage as a result of one of the storms, may be eligible to receive assistance

through The Road Home program. Owners of single-unit, double-unit, condominiums and mobile homes are encouraged to apply.

Any Louisiana homeowner who has yet to apply to the program can start the application process by visiting www.road2LA.org or by calling 1.888.ROAD.2.LA (1.888.762.3252 or TTY: 1.800.566.4224).

Program officials stressed that

this is a deadline to apply, not a deadline for the entire program. Those who have already applied can call the same numbers to check on the status of their application and get additional information - even after the deadline.

"July 31 will be the final day for those homeowners that suffered damages to their homes as a result of Hurricane Katrina or Rita to apply for the program," said Taylor.

"The Road Home program will continue to process applications and move applicants through the process to closing, but those that need to start the process must do so by July 31."

This application deadline applies to applications for the Homeowner Assistance program only. Applications for the Rental program will be accepted during the time that rounds are open.



Round 2 of The Small Rental Property program is open until July 5th!

The Small Rental Property program offers financial incentives to rental property owners who make affordable housing available to Louisiana residents in the most storm-affected areas.

The program offers property owners:

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**You can now apply online!
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- Picking up an application at a Housing Assistance Center.
- Picking up an application from a participating bank.
- Calling to request an application be mailed to you.

Governor Kathleen
Babineaux Blanco's
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**Even if you were deferred in Round 1
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With support from the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (ETA), the Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS) in partnership with the Louisiana Department of Labor (LDOL) have launched the Pathways to Construction Employment Initiative to promote the economic recovery of Louisiana in the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.