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New Orleans

Data

News Weekly

"The People's Paper"

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Kerry Washington

Addresses Serious Issues On and Off Screen

October 4 - 17, 2008 41st Year Volume 37 www.ladatanews.com

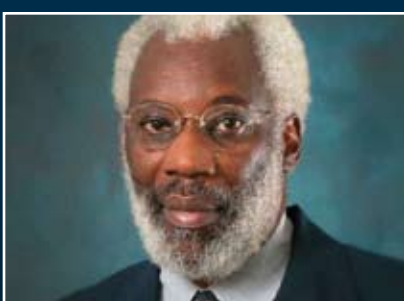
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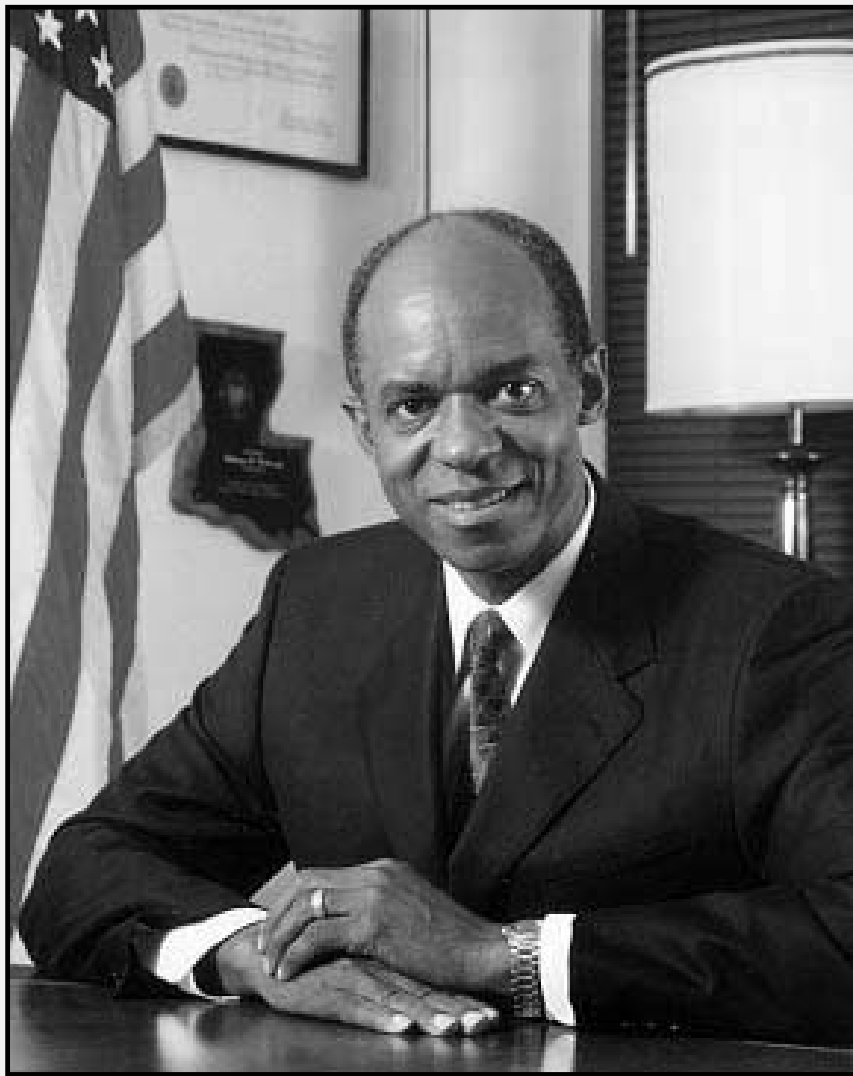
Former Saints Player
Joe Johnson Gives Back



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Race for Congressional Seat in District Two Heats Up

by: Edwin Buggage



Congressman William Jefferson Photo Credit: www.jefferson.house.gov

For nearly two decades, William Jefferson has held the seat in the House of Representatives for Congressional District 2. Over that time he has become a powerful figure on Capitol Hill. After Hurricane Katrina much has changed for the nine-term congressman as he became the subject of a federal investigation that led to his indictment. Today, Jefferson continues to deny any wrongdoing.

During his last race two years ago, a crowded field of candidates vied for the post. The campaign came down to a slugfest between Jefferson and the rising star in the Louisiana Democratic Party, State Representative Karen Carter, where Jefferson bested the formidable challenge of Carter in a run-off that turned bitter and personal.

Turn the clock two years later and Congressman Jefferson is again in a fight for his political life as he is once again challenged by a slew of candidates in the Democratic primary. Jefferson's platform is based on his experi-

ence as a legislator and record of helping the people of the Second Congressional District and helping bringing resources to the city after Hurricane Katrina he should be re-elected to finish the job he is doing.

There are many contesting to unseat the once powerful but now seemingly vulnerable Congressman Jefferson. State Representative Cedric Richmond who is the former Chairman of the Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus has been endorsed by the Times-Picayune, The Alliance for Good Government, and the Young Democrats of New Orleans. His platform includes continuing the fight to get the resources to bring New Orleans to a full state of recovery, promote an economy that is more diverse and ready to move the city into the 21st century model for an efficient and economically viable city, he pledges to fight for affordable healthcare and a quality education for all the citizens of District 2. "We need to have someone who can provide real leadership and who can go to

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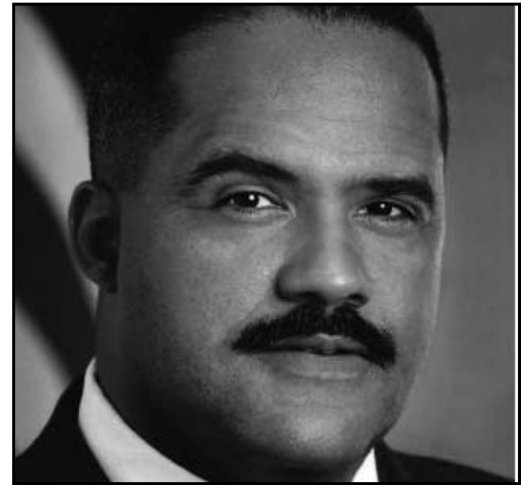
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Jefferson Parish Councilmember Byron Lee. Photo Credit: www.electbyronlee.com



New Orleans Councilmember James Carter. Photo Credit: www.jamescarter.us



Kenya Smith. Photo Credit: www.kenya2congress.com

the nation's capitol and get what the district needs as we recover," said Richmond. "At the state level I have done that and now I feel it is important for us to send someone to Washington who can get the job done and I feel I am the best person for the job."

Another of Jefferson's opponents is former WDSU news anchor Helena Moreno, who is running on a campaign that pledges to fight corruption, she says if elected "I will be an honest leader who will conduct myself with the utmost integrity, and I will speak out openly against corruption," said Moreno. In addition her platform she says she will work to speed up the recovery, fight for affordable healthcare, energize the Port of New Orleans, restore coastal marsh to protect the city from storms in the future, and put in place a comprehensive category 5 levee protection plan for the region.

Before the deadline for qualifying passed a late entry into the race was City Council member James Carter who has been a rising star for initiatives to help fight crime. His platform includes fighting for affordable housing as the city recovers, world class levee protection, bringing the troops home from Iraq and giving them the resources and help they need as they re-enter civilian life, and provide more funding for researching alternative fuels. He has received endorsements from the Jefferson Parish Democratic Executive Committee, The New Orleans Coalition, The Orleans Parish Democratic Executive Commit-

tee and IDEA of New Orleans.

Another candidate vying for the seat in congress is Troy C. Carter who is a former city council member and member of the Louisiana Legislature. Since leaving political life he has been involved in the private sector. Two years ago he ran for the seat occupied by Jefferson, this time he is running again with a theme centered on restoring confidence in leadership in Louisiana he says has been lost under the incumbent. His platform he promises if elected to restore public confidence in honest effective government, to ensure the American Dream of home ownership, to lead the charge for safer streets and a better quality of life, and a better environment for business and economic development and expansion of opportunities for good paying jobs.

Kenya Smith, former Director of Intergovernmental Affairs under Mayor Ray Nagin, is running on a platform of change. He says that politics as usual has not worked and it is time to move the city forward. According to Smith, his experience and work both within the public and private sector make him unique in this race. He says that reforms are necessary and that government being run like a business has not done the things it was supposed to do—serve the people. During the critical time after hurricane Katrina he says he was at the forefront of leading a team to develop federal legislation to provide emergency funding as well as long term recovery funding

in the areas of levees and hurricane protection systems, housing and infrastructure, public safety and infrastructure development.

Byron Lee is presently a member of the Jefferson Parish City Council District 3 where since 2003 he says he has been an advocate in the areas of, economic development, public safety, and education. During his campaign he is running on his record saying he has helped to bring in more than 100 million dollars in federal, state and local funds and helped to implement legislation to address quality of life issues as articulated by his fellow parish residents. According to Lee, as a member of the Parish Council he has worked with fellow council members to reduce crime rates, provided recreational and academic opportunities for youth, built senior citizen and community centers, created medical clinics for the underserved population, improved roads and other infrastructure assets throughout the parish and created a pro-business environment to spur economic development and job initiatives. He says if elected he will bring the same dedication and vigilance to get the job done.

The Democratic Primary for the 2nd Congressional District Seat will be held Saturday, Oct. 4.

Long Time Director of Total Community Action Dies at 65

(The New Orleans Agenda)- Peter W. Dangerfield, Ph.D., long-time director of Total Community Action (TCA), one of the city's premier social service agencies, passed away at his home on Monday night, Sept. 29. He was 65 years old. Dr. Dangerfield, TCA's director since 1979, was diagnosed with acute leukemia in October, 2006. On leave of absence since his diagnosis, Dr. Dangerfield fought his illness, dividing his time between Ochsner Medical Center, in New Orleans and M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. Highly respected and recognized as one of the city's top administrators, Peter Dangerfield spent his life fighting poverty and working to empower people.

Dr. Dangerfield was born at Charity Hospital in New Orleans, but would spend his formative years in Baton Rouge where he worked shining shoes in his father's barbershop. His summers were spent with his mother in

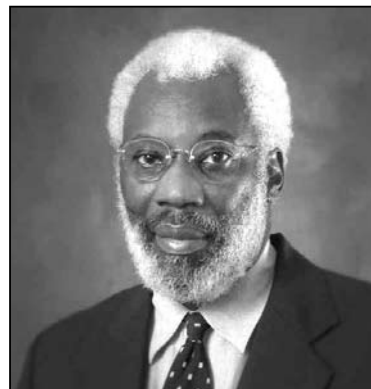
Woodville, Miss. on the farm that had been in the family for generations.

Dr. Dangerfield's academic career started at Grambling State University in 1961. He would go on to receive a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from Southern University in Baton Rouge, a Master's Degree in Political Science from the University of Southern California, a Master's Degree in Quality Management from Loyola University, a Master's Degree in Liberal Arts from Tulane University and a Doctorate in Public Administration from the University of Southern California, with a concentration in Citizen's Participation in Public Policy Making. He was a fellow of the John F. Kennedy School of Public Policy at Harvard University, studied organization research at MIT, survey research at the University of Michigan, and was an instructor of Public Administration at Southern University for more than ten

years.

Dr. Dangerfield was a member of the Masons, and an avid civil rights activist. He served as Research Assistant to the Legislative Black Caucus, Urban Policy Specialist for the City of New Orleans, and he was instrumental in advising many elected officials on policy issues, including former Councilman Jim Singleton. He was a key policy advisor to Dorothy Mae Taylor, the city's first African American woman to serve on the New Orleans City Council, in the development of the Open Access Policy for the inclusion of minorities and women in government spending.

Dr. Dangerfield took over as Executive Director of TCA in 1979. His erudition was exceeded only by his determination in the fight against poverty. An advocate for the poor and underserved in New Orleans, programs under his direction included the Earned Income Tax Credit program,



Peter W. Dangerfield, Ph.D.

which provides income tax assistance to thousands of low-income families annual; the Individual Development Account program that matches the savings of low-income workers to support asset building; and the Telephone Tape Library which provides information to thousands of citizens on issues ranging from child support to HIV/AIDS.

Dr. Dangerfield developed TCA's Eight-Point Poverty Reduc-

tion Plan, and produced the landmark video of the same name in 2006. The comprehensive plan is a guide for policy makers to help eliminate poverty in America.

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, Dr. Dangerfield turned the agency's attention to repopulation and rebuilding, opening the City's first child development centers and producing informational videos on hurricane protection, rebuilding, and the availability of services for all displaced citizens. In 2006, Dr. Dangerfield co-authored the book, Voice of the Poor: Citizens Participation for Rebuilding New Orleans.

Dr. Dangerfield was married to the former Judith Williams. He was the father of four children, stepfather to two. He had seven grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Burial arrangements are currently being made.



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Congressional Black Caucus Weekend Clouded by \$700 Billion Bail Out Bill

Hazel Trice Edney

WASHINGTON (NNPA) – Members of the Congressional Black Caucus walked the red carpet in tuxedos and gowns here Saturday night. They grooved to Patti LaBelle and gave a standing ovation to keynote speaker Sen. Barack Obama.

But their minds were far from the glitz and glamour of this year's big dinner that drew thousands to the Washington, D.C. Convention Center as their emails and voice mails were packed with mostly Black constituents decrying the proposed \$700 billion Wall Street bail out that failed on its first vote on Monday.

"This is the hardest thing I've

ever had to try to deal with. But, we're holding on," said Rep. Edie Bernice Johnson (D-Texas), a former CBC chair. "My feeling is that if you've been making eight, ten, twelve or twenty million dollars a year, why should we bail you out? You should have saved something. I think we ought to be talking about saving people who have lost their homes."

Johnson, like approximately half of the CBC members ended up voting for the bill, because of changes that were made in it between Saturday and Monday. Those changes included several oversight groups that would assure the \$700 would not be just a giveaway, but more of a loan that would be paid back to taxpayers

over a course of years. Also, the bill ultimately included assistance for people about to lose their homes.

Still, pressure was on from CBC constituents who insisted that every day taxpayers not bear the burden of Wall Street deficiencies.

"I had both offices to tally up the calls. One thousand and fourteen said No," said Rep. Diane Watson of California, sparkling as she exited the Ball Room. "People have been calling, detailing their foreclosures in tears. And we're going to spend \$700 billion to bail out the guys that got us into this?"

A clear answer of what would ultimately be done was still up in the air early afternoon on Monday

as the House initially voted down the bail out 205-228 with 433 of the 435 members of Congress voting. Leaders were bent on negotiating or even pushing fellow lawmakers to change their vote. Late Monday afternoon, the bill was expected to be revised for a new vote.

CBC members were conflicted, hearing the sentiments of their primarily Black constituents saying the bail out in any form would be unfair as they struggle with every day expenses.

President Bush, who had pushed for the failed bill said he was "very disappointed" that it did not pass. Presidential candidates Barack Obama and John McCain, members of the U. S. Senate, had no vote on Monday. Neither had

stated clearly what they would have done had the bill - in its initial form - made it to the Senate. Both said it depended on the language.

Meanwhile CBC members took the pressure of their constituents for the entire four days of the Annual Legislative Weekend.

"They really don't believe that we ought to be bailing anybody out," said House Majority Whip Jim Clyburn (D-S.C.) at his "Carolina Reception" in a Downtown D.C. hotel Sept. 25. "They are nine to one against it."

However, Clyburn said the failure to do anything at all could be even more detrimental.

The repercussions could be far-reaching, he says.

"This is not just about Wall

See CBC, Continued page 10.

Louisiana has a fighter in the Senate. Let's keep her there.



Nobody fights harder for Louisiana than Senator Mary Landrieu. She gets things done by using her seniority and never giving up. She's a strong, determined voice for all of Louisiana. She brings people together and works to make our communities more livable, prosperous and safe. The following Louisiana Mayors support her re-election:

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Daniel P. Alario, Sr., Westwego
Martha W. Andrus, Grambling
Ron Animashaun, Napoleonville
Eddie Beckwith, Jr., Tallulah
Roger Boudreaux, Church Point
Herman P. Bourgeois, Gramercy
Carol Broussard, Delcambre
Vern Breland, Sterlington
Edward Brown, St. Joseph
Maurice A. Brown, White Castle
Marshall Brumfield, Folsom
Charles Caillouet, Thibodaux
David Camardelle, Grand Isle
Gregory D. Clark, Lecompte
Hiram Copeland, Vidalia
Justin Cox, Fardoche
Robert Crafton, Elizabeth
Donald Cravins, Opelousas
Danny Cupit, Westlake
Billy Joe Cupp, Baskin

Judy Daniels, Campi
Billy D'Aquila, St. Francisville
Randy Dupree, Provençal
George Dupuis, Erath
Jimmy Durbin, Denham Springs
Clarence Fields, Pineville
Louis Fitzmorris, Abita Springs
Mayson Foster, Hammond
Kenneth A. Freeman, Many
Cedric Glover, Shreveport
George Grace, St. Gabriel
Jack Hammons, Winnsboro
Ron Harris, Gretna
James Haskin, Jr., Lucky
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Joe Hicks, Bernice
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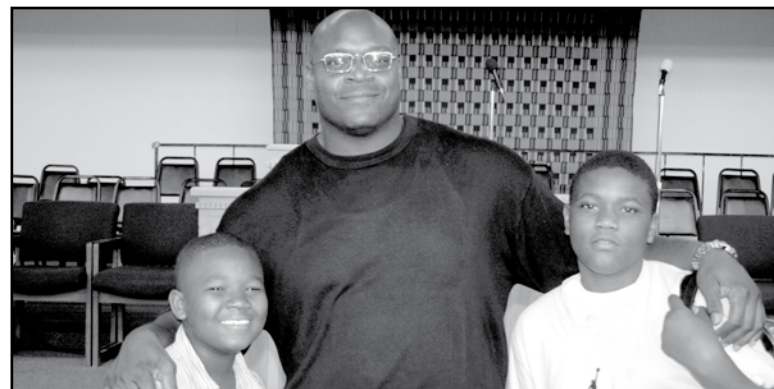
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Derek Lewis, Port Allen
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Roger Dale Lopez, Zwolle
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Eugene Smith, Arcadia
Kenneth Stinson, Vinton
Leroy J. Sullivan, Donaldsonville
Leslie Thompson, Jonesboro
Deano Thornton, Winnfield
Rydell Turner, Clayton
Candace Watkins, Covington
Betty Westerchil, Leesville
Robert Zabbia, Ponchatoula

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You can register to vote until October 6 • Early Voting October 21-28

Retired Saints Player Joe Johnson Spearheads Efforts to Help Rebuild Upper Ninth Ward Community



All photos: Former Saints Player Joe Johnson takes time to give back to the New Orleans community by spending time with area youth.

A retired NFL player has teamed up with The New Upper 9th Ward to help the community with its rebuilding efforts. Former Saints player Joe Johnson's foundation, Built 2 Last, will host the "New Upper 9th Ward Community Festival" along with the Who Still Got It Foundation Oct.

10 through Oct. 12. The event will also include a celebrity golf tournament.

The best of the best, is lacing them up for one more game, to go out there and support a community that seems as though care has forgotten it. The 9th Ward community was one of the most

devastated communities in the city of New Orleans. "The New Upper 9th Ward" is a low income, family-oriented community filled with people who love and look out for one another. Built 2 Last hasn't forgotten about the people of this unique and loving community, where can't is a word that



does not exist. Residents of the upper 9th Ward know that they can do all things together if given a chance.

"Who Still Got It" and "Built 2 Last" is hosting the "New Upper 9th Ward Community Festival" in support of the upper 9th Ward. It will benefit the development of a devastated community. The community festival will also benefit the "Built 2 Last" housing and assistance program, which helps put individuals back in their homes, and assist them through education programs to assure that they stay in their homes.

Built 2 Last will host the celebrity golf tournament on Oct. 10 at the North Course at City Park.

The tournament will feature retired professional athletes such as Jonathon Ogden, Willie Roaf Pat Swilling, Jamal Anderson, Steve Atwater, and of course Joe Johnson with many others. Registration starts at 9 a.m., shotgun start at 10 a.m.

The community festival on Oct. 11 and Oct. 12 will be held from Noon until 8 pm at the corner of Desire and Law streets. It will feature games, rides, food, live music, youth instructional sports clinics, and city and state booths with representatives that will answer questions and provide information about assistance programs and funding that are available to the people.

"Who Still Got It" as an organization formed under the direction of "Built 2 Last," a 501(c)(3) organization. Joe Johnson founded "Built 2 Last" in 1999 in efforts to help develop communities and youth in New Orleans. Johnson, a retired NFL player, played 10 years with the New Orleans Saints (1994-2001) and the Green Bay Packers (2002-2003) as a defensive end. He was named to the New Orleans Saints Hall Of Fame in 2007.

Professor Mark Anthony Neal



will serve as the **Pierce-Butler Visiting Professor in the Department of English at Tulane University** in Fall 2008. Professor Neal is the author of four books, *What the Music Said: Black Popular Music and Black Public Culture* (1998), *Soul Babies: Black Popular Culture and the Post-Soul Aesthetic* (2002), *Songs in the Keys of Black Life: A Rhythm and Blues Nation* (2003) and *New Black Man: Rethinking Black Masculinity* (2005). Neal is also the co-editor (with Murray Forman) of *That's the Joint!: The Hip-Hop Studies Reader* (2004). Neal is Professor of Black Popular Culture in the Department of African and African American Studies at Duke University. A frequent commentator for **National Public Radio's News and Notes with Farai Chideya**, Neal also contributes to several on-line media outlets, including **NewsOne.com**.

Joint!: The Hip-Hop Studies Reader (2004). Neal is Professor of Black Popular Culture in the Department of African and African American Studies at Duke University. A frequent commentator for **National Public Radio's News and Notes with Farai Chideya**, Neal also contributes to several on-line media outlets, including **NewsOne.com**.

Please note the following events associated with his residency:

Tuesday, October 14th 6:30 pm (Kendall Cram, LBC, Tulane University): Lecture "'Obama, Lil' Wheezy, the 'Katrina-Politans' and other Markers of Modern Blackness" by Professor Mark Anthony Neal. Reception to follow.

Thursday, October 16th 5 pm (Kendall Cram, LBC, Tulane University): Panel Discussion: "There's Misogyny in Hip - Hop: So What?" Moderated by Shayne Lee (Sociology/ADST, Tulane). Panelists: Mark Anthony Neal (Duke), DJ Soul Sister, (DJ and Community Organizer), Charles Belonge, (Former DJ with WYLD), Angeletta KM Gourdine, (English and Director of African & African Diaspora Studies, LSU) and Benjamin Brubaker, (Senior, Philosophy, Tulane)



It's Not Rocket Science

Strategies for Engaging Hip Hop Generation Students in the Study of Science and Related Areas of Instruction A Professional Development Workshop for K-12 Teachers

In 1982, Hip Hop artists Afrika Bambaataa & The Soul Sonic Force released "Planet Rock," a song that enjoyed both critical and popular success in its time and functions, today, as a classic indicator of the infectious, enduring appeal of hip hop music, especially on youth coming of age in America. Throughout the song, allusions are made to the sciences; indeed the song not only takes as a given that the hip hop generation—the song's presumed audience—knows the history of planet Earth but also that this generation recognizes

that the ability to "Rock, Rock to the Planet Rock," or to "be what you wanna—be free," depends on the continued protection of the Earth and preservation of its natural resources.

The song establishes an alliance, or understanding, between the hip hop generation and the sciences that is largely lacking in K-12 educational settings. The goal of this professional development workshop is, thus, to explore strategies for engaging hip hop generation students in the study of science and related areas of instruction, such as math and

technology, by taking cues from hip hop music and other forms of hip hop expression.

The workshop will provide teachers with information and resources needed to understand the cultural, social, and expressive knowledgebase of hip hop generation students so that teachers can, in turn, draw from this knowledgebase in building students' capacities (1) to understand how science, math, and technology relate to their lives

and (2) to meet and exceed state and national performance standards in these areas of instruction.

The workshop is sponsored by the English Department at Tulane University and will take place Friday, Oct. 17, from 9 a.m.-Noon, at Tulane. Continental breakfast will be provided. Dr. Mark Anthony Neal, Pierce-Butler Visiting Professor in the English Department at Tulane, and Professor of African & Afri-

can American Studies at Duke University, will direct. While participation is free and open to K-12 teachers statewide, registration is required. Workshop participants will receive three (3) continuing education units.

For more information, please contact Dr. Nghana Lewis at (504) 862-8179, or nlewis2@tulane.edu.

Criminal Justice Leaders Urge Citizens to Support Bond Initiative

Edwin Buggage

In addition to several important elections on Saturday Oct. 4, there is a ballot proposition with respect to the criminal justice system. It is a \$63.2 million bond initiative that would assist in repairing the infrastructure that was damaged during Hurricane Katrina. It is supported by New Orleans Criminal Sheriff Marlin N. Gusman, Coroner Frank Minyard, Paul Sens of Orleans Parish Municipal Court and the New Orleans City Council Criminal Justice Commission.

"It is important that we get this passed as we move forward," said Gusman. "We are still in the mode of rebuilding and there are things we drastically need in terms of improvements to facilities that were damaged."

Gusman said that the money would go to the rebuilding of Orleans Parish Criminal District Court, The Criminal Sheriff's Office, Orleans Parish Coroner's Office, District Attorney's Office, Juvenile Court and Municipal Traffic Court. The funds would be allocated as follows:

\$40,890,000	Jails/Facilities for Criminal Sheriff
\$3,290,000	Facilities for District Attorney
\$2,825,000	Facilities for Clerk of Criminal District Court
\$3,720,000	Facilities for Juvenile Court
\$7,500,000	Facilities for Municipal and Traffic Court
\$5,000,000	Facilities for a New Orleans Forensic Center

Gusman said these repairs are necessary in helping in the fight against crime and keeping the streets safe. He said he hopes that the citizens vote to support the proposition.

"We in the criminal justice community have come together because we all understand that having adequate and modern facilities [are necessary] to do our jobs better and serve the citizens of New Orleans," said Gusman.

Local Organizations and Businesses Team Up for Voter Registration Drive



The Greater New Orleans Chapter of the National Coalition of 100 Black Women will partner with Omicron Lambda Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Ponchartrain Chapter of the Links, and Harrah's New Orleans Casino, for a Voter Registration Drive on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Lowe's Home Improvement, 5770 Read Blvd., New Orleans.

New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Foundation Hosts Second Annual Congo Square Rhythms Festival

From traditional African dance to the latest hits by R&B singer Cupid, drums ancient and modern will beat at the second annual Congo Square Rhythms Festival.

The festival, which will be held on Bayou St. John at Orleans Avenue on Saturday, Oct. 4, and Sunday, Oct. 5, celebrates the historic role of Congo Square as the birthplace of American music. It was there that African slaves gathered on Sunday afternoons to practice their ancestral traditions – influencing all of the styles that would emerge from New Orleans' cultural melting pot.

"Congo Square is literally the place where it all began," said Don Marshall, executive director of the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Foundation, the non-profit organization that produces the Congo Square Rhythms Festival. "It is an honor for us to be able to pay tribute to Congo Square's role in history – and to keep it relevant by presenting music that derives from those early traditions."

The festival was initially scheduled to take place at Congo Square in Louis Armstrong Park. It had to be relocated because of ongoing construction and electrical work in the park, which created safety hazards. Bayou St. John is an area with deep ties to the local community. It is the site of the annual Mardi Gras Indian Super Sunday parade, among other events.

The Congo Square Rhythms festival begins on October 4 with a traditional African drum circle. From there, it explores the youthful sounds that have evolved from New Orleans jazz and rhythm & blues.

Da Truth, one of the youngest groups on the New Orleans marching band scene, will kick-start a second-line parade. Neo-soul singer Tondrae and contemporary R&B vocal duo



Elysian Fieldz also will perform, as will two of New Orleans' most popular disc jockeys, Raj Smoove and DJ Bombshell.

Dance troupes the Show Time Boyz and the Doubletime Boyz will square off in a friendly competition of hot stepping.

Bounce, a uniquely New Orleans style of rap that borrows heavily from Mardi Gras Indian chants and second-line rhythms, will be explored with performances by hit-making artists whose popularity spans from the origins of bounce in the late 1980s to today. DJ Jubilee, Partners In Crime, Fifth Ward Weebie, Miss Tee, Big Freedia & Sissy Nobby and several others will appear.

Donald Harrison, Jr. – the modern jazz saxophonist who was named Jazziz magazine's 2007 Person of the Year – has deep roots not only in New Orleans traditional music (he comes from a long line of Mardi Gras Indians) but also in

contemporary hip-hop (he has worked with rappers including the late Notorious B.I.G.). He will combine his influences in a performance that features guest spots by hip-hop lyricists Truth Universal, Jimi Clever and SES 4-5.

Cupid – who emerged from Lafayette, La., to take over dance floors nationwide with his platinum-selling "Cupid Shuffle" – will close the show Saturday.

As a special treat, the Congo Square Rhythms Festival has created a contest powered by YouTube for Cupid's latest single, "The Happy Dance." Contestants who make a video of themselves doing the Happy Dance can submit it online through on YouTube.com (see <http://www.youtube.com/group/cupidhappydance>). The winner will be able to get onstage to perform the dance with Cupid at the Congo Square Rhythms Festival.

On **Sunday, Oct. 5**, the festival being with another African drum circle, followed by a dedication and libation to commemorate the sacred ground of Congo Square.

Then follows a full day of performances featuring African dance troupes, the unique Mardi Gras Indians of New Orleans, jazz and funk.

Among the highlights:

- Segeunon Kone, from the Ivory Coast, brings his colorful drumming and dancing Ivoire Spectacle to New Orleans.
- Two new groups will make their festival debuts at the Congo Square Rhythms Festival: Africa Brass, which blends avant-garde jazz with traditional African rhythms; and Voices of the Big Easy, featuring the poetry of Chuck Perkins and Mardi Gras Indian street funk.
- A drum summit featuring many of New Orleans' top

- Four tribes of Mardi Gras Indians – those unique New Orleans performers who dress in elaborately feathered and beaded costumes, and whose music has influenced artists from Dr. John to the Neville Brothers. Appearing will be Fi Yi Yi, the Wild Mohicans, the White Cloud Hunters and the Yellow Pocahontas tribes.

- A full afternoon of kids' activities, including drum and mask-making workshops sponsored by the Louisiana State Museum.
- One of New Orleans' most popular performers, the jazz trumpeter and singer Kermit Ruffins with his band, the BBQ Swingers.
- Big Sam's Funky Nation, whose frenetic, horn-driven R&B is a New Orleans party favorite.

The Congo Square Rhythms Festival also includes a Health Pavilion, where numerous local health care providers and public health organizations will provide information as well as free screenings. This effort is supported by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, the African

public health organizations will provide information as well as free screenings. This effort is supported by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, the African



percussionists, including: Stanton Moore of Galactic, Shannon Powell, Luther Gray, Michael Skinkus, Curtis Pierre of Casa Samba, Alfred "Uganda" Roberts and Kenyatta Simon.

- Several of the top African dance troupes from the New Orleans region, including the Kumbuka, Takrema, Culu and N'Kafu ensembles.

American Healthy Marriage Initiative, the City of New Orleans Health Department, Communities of Color and the Louisiana Campaign for Tobacco-Free Living.

Actress Kerry Washington Addresses Serious Issues On and Off Screen

Edwin Buggage

Since bursting on the scene in 2001 in the film *Save the Last Dance*, Kerry Washington has become a force to be reckoned with in Hollywood. Washington's latest film *Lakeview Terrace* is a suspense thriller about an interracial couple who moves into a new house only to find out that their next door neighbor has problems with their relationship. Washington and her on-screen husband, played by Patrick Wilson, soon realize that their neighbor will stop at nothing to force them out of their new home. The film co-stars Samuel L. Jackson as the next door neighbor, who is a psychopathic LAPD officer whose racial animus causes the young couple problems and turmoil.

Talking about the film and what attracted her to it, Washington said, "There were a couple things that really drew me to the script the first time I read it. One is that I've never seen an African-American woman like this on the screen before. I really liked the idea of this kind of progressive, Berkeley graduate, Birkenstock-wearing, really kind of different woman. I've just never really seen anybody like this, and I thought it would be fun to play this woman and to represent this woman, because I know girls like that. I have lots of friends like that. So that was exciting for me."

Washington has risen to stardom playing opposite two Oscar winners — Jamie Foxx in *Ray* and Forest Whitaker in *The Last King of Scotland*. She also starred with funnyman Chris Rock in *I Think I Love My Wife*. In *Fantastic Four* she was cast in a role that was not race specific. Although she has found recent success, Washington said she feels problems still arise for blacks in Hollywood and in the country. She is vigilant about transcending stereotypes and being a positive force for change while paying homage to those who came before her.

"I think there are people who have bravely walked before me who would just be astounded at what I've been able to do in my life and in my career, people that I owe my career to — all the incredible women who have come before me like Lena Horne and Dianne Carroll and Rita Moreno, all these amazing women of color who have built this ground that I'm walking on."

In a year where race has come to the forefront with the ascendance of Barack Obama's historic run for the presidency, Washington has been out in support of him and expressed that while this



Kerry Washington appears with Sen. Barack Obama and R&B singer Usher.

moment is historic and progress has been made, racial intolerance is still a problem in this country.

"I have a hard time in life when people say that race is not a part of the dialogue, and that it shouldn't be. That it doesn't have a place in our national dialogue or in our international dialogue. You cannot look at the footage of what happened after the flood in New Orleans and think that race was not a factor. People would say, 'no, economics was a factor,' and you'd go, 'yes, but how about the fact that disproportionately, the poor people were black people?' What does that say about our country and how well we are standing up to the idea of equal rights and equal access for all people? We're getting there, but we're not there."



Kerry Washington

Washington also has a special connection to New Orleans where she narrated the documentary *From the Mouthpiece on Back* that chronicles the story of the Brass Band *To Be Continued* and their story of tragedy, struggle and triumph.

Regarding her career, Washington said she is blessed and hopes to continue to have the opportunities to play strong progressive characters that can show that black women can play challenging roles and hopefully open doors for other women of color.

"I feel like part of my responsibility is to keep growing and to have my goals get bigger, and to just kind of keep working, and to keep telling stories about all different kinds of people and all different kinds of black people and all different kinds of women and all different kinds of young people and — just all different kinds of people in the world," said Washington.



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Relationships

"Let Go of the Drama"



Dr. Aaron E. Harold
Data Columnist

Folks, you need to get rid of all that drama. Yes I said it, so many of you have so much drama in your relationship that you can win an Academy Award. So many of you are acting out your feelings instead of talking about it, and are at war with one another and living in the same house. Some of you have started World War III right

amongst yourselves. Come on people; get rid of all that drama.

Many of you that are in relationships have so much drama going on, you can start your own soap opera. For instance, here we go again, "The Young and the Screaming," or "The Bold and the Get Out of My Face." Come on, let me ask you this question, and be honest with yourself—Aren't you tired of all that craziness in your relationships? Look folks, life is too beautiful and wonderful to always be miserable.

Ask yourself this, "Can the drama stop in my relationship?" Let me encourage you. It can stop if you want it to stop. Folks, do you remember the song that Mary J. Blige wrote, "No more drama?" However, she was really referring to her personal life. She had failed relationships that made her life miserable. Mary J. said that she had gotten to a point in her life that she didn't like herself. You would have thought that the queen of R&B had it going on.

Mary was successful with hit records

and good living, but yet she was still unhappy in her relationship. Mary made a decision to get out of her abusive relationship. Mary recorded a hit record called "No More Drama," that was very popular. It had an important message to people young and not so young to get out of an abusive relationship. There may be some of you that are in an abusive relationship and it is draining you emotionally and spiritually. Maybe some of you are in an abusive relationship where there's too much drama. Screaming at each other instead of talking to one another may seem like the normal way to handle disagreements. Instead of taking that route, maybe you should give the other person time to hear you out, instead of getting angry at what they are saying and running out of the house or the apartment with an attitude.

Come on folks, you know I'm right. That's drama, I mean big-time drama. What about when one person says that he or she is going out, and the other person suggests going out together but is turned down? Then, the person who goes out doesn't come home until almost the next morning! Hey family, you know that's not right. There's a quote in the Bible that says

"Do unto others, as you would like for them to do unto you." There must be a level of respect in a relationship to survive and be healthy.

For some of you who like to fight and hurt one another, guess what; it doesn't solve anything. It only makes matters worse. Anyway, if you love that person, you won't give that person a black eye, or a broken nose, or send them to the hospital or worse. Everyone gets angry from time to time, but you have to restrain yourself. Look folks, some of you may have to make a decision to end your relationship with one another, but it's something that may have to be done.

It won't be the end of the world, because you can find happiness again if you have faith in God. On the other hand, those relationships that are not too far gone can be salvaged and saved if you get rid of the drama, and work together on fixing your love life. Try talking more, because when you talk more you can learn to understand one another better. So remember folks, get rid of all that drama. God Bless you.

For comments or suggested topics you can reach Dr. Aaron Harold at rhareold1@cox.net

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CBC, continued from page 5.

Street. It's about community bankers, local banks, credit cards, trying to buy a house, trying to buy a car, all of those things could get tied up if we don't do something," Clyburn says. "And so, because people do not understand that, they think that all we're trying to do is bail out Wall Street. And that is what the White House is doing. But, we're trying to make sure that we can restore confidence in the market and that we protect the taxpayers as we do it."

Complicating the situation is the fact that every member of the House of Representatives is up for re-election unless they are retiring or stepping down. Therefore political fear also played a role as members prepare to adjourn Congress to go home and campaign.

"Ninety-nine percent are opposed to the bail out," said Rep. G. K. Butterfield (D-N.C.). "We get a variety of statements when they call. But, most of them are in three words: What about me? My family is hurting. My kids are not able to go to college. My grandmother is not getting sufficient access to health care. What about me?"

The pressure worked.

"It seems like the country's priorities are totally misplaced," said Rep. Barbara Lee (D-Calif.). "This is Bush's legacy and

I hope that we don't do this. There are other ways to stabilize the financial markets."

House Ways and Means Chairman Charles Rangel said CBC constituents are clear on the Caucus' claim as the "Conscience of the Congress."

He said, "They understand that our job is to protect them, their jobs, their savings and not to protect Wall Street."

Still reeling from the damages and heartaches of Hurricane Ike in Houston, Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee said the bail out drew more response than she has seen any issue in years.

"It is generating the most interest that I've seen since the Iraq war and the mood that the country was in," she said. She says she believes the Congress should simply take a break before voting any further in the matter.

"Let us just stop, just pause for a moment, let us go home and engage our constituents, talk to our banking community, our real estate persons, find out what is happening in our particular communities, come back over a period of time and address the questions of the market in a comprehensive landscape," Jackson Lee said. "My position is whoa. That's a term that we use in the state of Texas. Horses stop when we say whoa."



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Taxpayers Subsidize America's Corporate Welfare Queens



George C. Curry
NNPA

There is growing evidence that the Wall Street bailout will definitely help Wall Street, provide some token assistance to Main Street, and totally bypass Dr. Martin Luther King Drive.

For example, Clinton administration Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich, now professor of public policy at the University of California-Berkeley, thinks the best way to improve the economy is by extending unemployment insurance, freezing mortgage rates and passing a stimulus package that creates more jobs.

Moreover, he feels the bailout plan didn't travel far enough on Main Street or Dr. Martin Luther King Drive.

"Here's Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson's and Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke's logic, made explicit on Tuesday. There's only a certain amount of bad debt on Wall Street's books, left over from the wild and woolly days of lax mortgage lending. Once removed from the Street's books, credit

will flow again. And once credit flows again, Main Street can breathe a sigh of relief," Reich wrote on his blog.

But there's a problem with that kind of thinking, Reich notes.

"Paulson and Bernanke failed to mention that bad debts are growing even among people recently considered good credit risks. At the end of August, 6.6 percent of mortgages were at least 30 days past due. That's up from 5.8 percent at the end of June. We're also seeing a growing amount of credit card and auto payments past due."

Reich concluded, "Bailing out Wall Street's bad debts when millions more Americans can't pay their bills is like bailing out a rowboat springing more leaks while the ocean is rising. Many of the average taxpayers being asked to take on Wall Street's bad loans are the same people whose incomes are dropping, which means they're struggling to pay their debts and potentially creating more bad loans."

What's overlooked in the discussion of the bailout is that taxpayers subsidize profitable Fortune 500 companies to the tune of \$92 billion a year. Presidents from Ronald Reagan, who during his 1976 presidential campaign spoke of a welfare queen who purportedly used 80 names and 30 addresses to defraud the system, an assertion that was never verified, to Bill Clinton, who proudly boasted of wanting to "end welfare as we know it," have picked on defenseless welfare recipients while expanding corporate welfare.

In a 2007 report titled, "The Corporate Welfare State: How the Federal Govern-

ment Subsidizes U.S. Businesses," the Cato Institute reported, "Supporters of corporate welfare programs often justify them as remedying some sort of market failure. Often the market failures on which these programs are predicated are either overblown or don't exist."

"Yet the federal government continues to subsidize some of the biggest companies in America. Boeing, Xerox, IBM, Motorola, Dow Chemical, General Electric, and others have received millions in taxpayer-funded benefits through programs like the Advanced Technology Program and the Export-Import Bank. In addition, federal crop subsidy programs continue to fund the wealthiest farmers."

In a 1995 study, the Cato Institute listed what it called the more egregious taxpayers subsidies to big business:

- Through Sematech, a consortium of very large U.S. computer microchip producers, the Pentagon provides nearly \$100 million a year of support to the industry. Originally designed to help U.S. firms compete against foreign competition, Sematech now subsidizes the largest producers (Intel and National Semiconductor) to help fend off small domestic competition.
- An estimated 40 percent of the \$1.4 billion sugar price support program benefits the largest 1 percent of sugar farms. The 33 largest sugar cane plantations each receive more than \$1 million.
- The Department of Agriculture Market Promotion Program spends \$110 million per year underwriting the cost of advertising American products abroad.

In 1991, American taxpayers spent \$2.9 million advertising Pillsbury muffins and pies. \$10 million promoting Sunkist oranges, \$465,000 advertising McDonald's Chicken McNuggets, \$1.2 million boosting the international sales of American Legend mink coats and \$2.5 million extolling the virtues of Dole pineapples, nuts and prunes.

- In 1994, a House of Representatives team discovered that taxpayers had been subsidizing millions in entertainment, recreation and party expenses. Martin Marietta Corporation (now Lockheed Martin) charged the Pentagon \$263,000 for a Smokey Robinson concert, \$20,000 for the purchase of golf balls, and \$7,500 for an office Christmas party.

On top of direct and indirect subsidizes, companies receive liberal tax breaks – expanded in recent stimulus packages – that, according to Citizens for Tax Justice (CTJ), allows them to pay little or no taxes. From 1996 to 2000, 10 large companies enjoyed profits of \$50 billion, allowing them in one year to pay a rate of only 5.9 percent of their profits.

The bailout plan does not begin to address corporate abuse of the system. The government will never have credibility on this issue until it ends corporate welfare as we know it.

George E. Curry, former editor-in-chief of *Emerge* magazine and the NNPA News Service, is a keynote speaker, moderator, and media coach. He can be reached through his Web site, www.georgecurry.com

The Long Hard Road to Race-Free Politics in America

Marian Wright Edelman
Child Watch® Column

A cartoon published in the early 1960s depicted a Black boy saying to a White boy: "I'll sell you my chance to be President of the United States for a nickel."

The cartoon summed up how much most Black people felt the chances of a Black child growing up to be President were worth. At the time the cartoon appeared, Barack Obama was a toddler. There were only five Black Members of Congress and about 300 Black elected officials nationwide.

The Voting Rights Act hadn't been passed and the overwhelming majority of Black Southerners were disenfranchised. It was difficult for anyone to visualize a

time when a Black person would be elected to the highest office in the land.

That changed. With the nomination of Illinois Senator Barack Obama as the Democratic Party's standard bearer for the 2008 presidential campaign, there's a good chance that a Black man may occupy the Oval Office in the White House this January.

This historic nomination is the culmination of a long evolutionary struggle for Black political empowerment that reached a high point when the Civil Rights Movement pressed Congress to pass the Voting Rights Act of 1965. That led to the dramatic expansion of the Black electorate. Black people began to fill a broad range of elected posts at every

level of government: from sheriff to school board, from mayor to state legislator and on to higher offices such as U.S. Representative, Senator and Governor.

With the power of the ballot, Black voters have achieved major electoral gains throughout our nation. In 2002, there were 9,470 Black elected officials in the United States according to the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies. The Old Confederacy states of Mississippi and Alabama had 950 and 757 Black elected officials respectively in a broad variety of positions. The 41 Black members of the U.S. House of Representatives have nearly approached parity in that body compared with the percentage of Black people in the U.S. popula-

tion.

The growth of a Black presence in America's political realm has helped Black elected leaders gain acceptance among the general public. Sen. Obama garnered nearly 18 million votes in this year's primary elections. Americans of all races have looked past his skin color to consider his presidential candidacy on the basis of his vision of inclusive change as a way to move the nation forward as well as his intelligence and political experience.

The question remains, however: Have we arrived at a post-racial era where the election of the President can take place on a "colorblind" basis? Regrettably, race remains a factor in American politics. It is still difficult for Black

candidates to win statewide offices—Governor or U.S. Senator—which are threshold positions for a run for the White House. Barack Obama is currently the only Black Senator in Congress and only the fifth Black person to hold that office. And over the history of our nation, there have been only four Black governors.

Candidates for these offices face what may be a daunting campaign appealing to a majority White electorate, a significant component of which may not be open to voting for a Black person. A recent Associated Press-Yahoo News poll revealed deep-seated racial misgivings among some Whites toward Blacks and found that one-third of White Democrats harbor negative views to-

Taxes and Iraq Top Topics in First Presidential Debate

Special to the NNPA from the St. Louis American

(NNPA) - The University of Mississippi was the venue for the first of three scheduled debates with less than six weeks remaining until Election Day for people to decide on either Obama or McCain. For the inaugural debate the main arguments were surrounding the war in Iraq and taxes.

McCain accused Obama of an "incredible thing of voting to cut off funds for troops in Iraq and Afghanistan," a reference to legislation that cleared the Senate more than a year ago.

Obama disputed that, saying

he had opposed funding in a bill that presented a "blank check" to the Pentagon while McCain had opposed money in legislation that included a timetable for troop withdrawal.

Obama opposed the invasion of Iraq in 2002, before he was a member of Congress, while McCain voted in the Senate to authorize the war.

"You were wrong on Iraq," Obama repeated three times in succession. "John, you like to pretend the war began in 2007."

It was a debate that almost didn't happen. McCain decided a few hours in advance to attend, two days after announcing

he would try to have the event rescheduled if Congress had not reached an agreement on an economic bailout to deal with the crisis now gripping Wall Street.

McCain sought to depict Obama as naive on foreign policy. He also criticized Obama for having said he would sit down without precondition with Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

Obama said Henry Kissinger, the former Republican secretary of state and a McCain adviser, shared his view on talks with Iran.

The two men also differed on federal spending. McCain said a freeze on most government

spending was worth considering, except for veterans, defense and "some other vital issues."

Obama said the problem with that was that some programs needed more money. He mentioned early childhood education as an example.

Moderator Jim Lehrer's opening question concerned the economic crisis. While neither man committed to supporting bailout legislation taking shape in Congress, they readily agreed lawmakers must take action to prevent millions of Americans from losing their jobs and their homes.

Both also said they were pleased that lawmakers in both

parties were negotiating on a compromise.

They are scheduled to debate twice more, at Belmont University in Nashville on Oct. 7 and at Hofstra University in Hempstead, N.Y., on Oct. 15.

Vice presidential candidates Sarah Palin and Joe Biden will meet next week right here in St. Louis (Oct. 2 at Washington University) for their only debate, and Obama and McCain each put in a plug for his own running mate.

Information from the Associated Press contributed to this report.

Senate Judiciary Committee Seeks Answers: How will the Justice Department Handle Voting Rights Violators?

Jamisha Purdy

WASHINGTON (NNPA) - In the presidential primary elections Keshia Anderson attempted to vote twice. After parking problems thwarted her first attempt, she returned after work and stood in line for more than two hours. She voted. But like many of the Chesterfield, VA residents her vote didn't count. Her precinct had run out of democratic ballots. As instructed by election officials, Anderson wrote her candidate of choice on a torn sheet of paper.

These are the types of problems that the Senate Judiciary Committee says should be prevented by the Department of Justice.

The judiciary committee had one question for the justice department at a recent hearing: "What steps they are going to take before the elections to ensure that all eligible votes are counted and that voters are not disenfranchised?"

"I want to - again - ask the justice department if they have the tools necessary to combat deceptive practices in the upcoming election," said Senator Benjamin Cardin (D-MD).

Primary Problems

During the primaries, Cardin said that there were widespread voting issues in minority neighborhoods. He also said that in

an effort to try to diminish the importance of minority voters, "misleading information" was distributed in Maryland, New Jersey, New York and many other states.

"That goes well beyond what is acceptable in American politics," he said.

Cardin outlined some of the problems seen at last year's presidential elections.

"There was literature that was targeted at minority communities that gave the wrong date of elections," he said. There was information handed out in California to [legal] immigrant communities ... warning them that voting in a federal election is a crime that could result in incarceration and possible deportation. There was information given out giving the wrong voter date in my own state of Maryland."

Grace Chung Becker, acting assistant Attorney General for the justice department's Civil Rights Division, defended the department saying they are prepared. She cited many cases the department has filed against violators of the Voting Rights Act in their efforts to protect citizens' right to vote.

"The justice department is doing its part," said Becker. "We're fortunate to have a tremendously talented and hardworking team ... and I'm proud of their accomplishments."

She continued: "Since 2006, we have filed seven cases under section 2 of the voting rights act involving vote dilution and vote intonation."

Section two of the Voting Rights Act prohibits discriminant voting practices.

Becker added that the civil rights division "will take action" if any voting law is enforced in a discriminatory manner.

Military Personnel

Residents like Anderson, aren't the only type of U.S. citizens the judiciary committee wants to have a fair chance to vote this November. Senators Tom Coburn (R-OK), John Cornyn (R-TX), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) and Cardin all agreed that the percentage of votes received from military personnel living abroad was "shameful."

According to the 2006 Election Administration and Voting Survey, only 5.5 percent of uniformed and overseas military voted.

Brian O'Leary, Capitolink director who served in the marines as an F8 hornet pilot, said this low turnout is because of the lack of information and a "burdensome" military voting process.

"I saw these problems first hand as a voting assistance officer in the marines," said O'Leary. "Our military men and women serve around the world and risk

their lives in defense of freedom and yet their own ability to exercise their fundamental rights are being obstructed."

O'Leary suggested that the "Department of Justice press the Department of Defense and state election officials" to ensure that oversees citizens are given enough time to receive and return their ballots on time.

Cornyn said that the department of defense has "failed to adequately educate" enlisted men and women about how to vote.

"Because they do much to protect our rights, I think justice demands that we do everything in our power to protect theirs," said Cornyn. "The department of defense has a legal duty to educate and assist our service members in voting and the evidence has shown that the department of defense has failed."

He continued: "Far too often, these very same women and men who are wear the uniform of the United States of America and who are fighting to sacrifice, in some cases everything, to protect our civil rights, are themselves not able to exercise their right to vote."

Becker said that the department of justice is working with states to ensure that soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines and other overseas citizens have the "full opportunity" to participate in the

presidential election.

"Last month I joined the Department of Defense in sending letters to all 50 states emphasizing the need to provide at least 45 days for absentee ballots to be mailed and returned," said Becker. "We'll continue to work with the states and if necessary file lawsuits."

Election Day Tactics

On election day, Becker said the division has a plan to help counter discriminatory acts.

"The divisions election monitoring program will ensure that federal voting rights are respected on election day," she said. "On Nov. 4 we will coordinate the appointment of hundreds of federal government employees in counties, cities and towns across this country."

After Cardin voiced concern about residents level of comfort if they thought they were being watched, Becker said that the government employees will blend in with everyone else and will not look like police enforcement.

The department will also have a toll free hot-line for reporting problems.

Becker said that the justice department and the Senate Judiciary committee "share a common ground" to ensure that discriminatory issues are "actively" handled and that on Nov. 4 every vote counts.

NAACP Uses Web to Register Voters

Larry Miller

(NNPA) - With most voter registration deadlines only days away for the historic 2008 presidential election, record numbers of new voters are still expected to register and vote for the first time.

Many of those new voters will be young African-Americans, casting ballots in their first presidential election.

To facilitate and encourage those potential voters, new NAACP president Benjamin Todd Jealous unveiled an online voter registration initiative this week for a generation weaned on the technology of the Internet.

The initiative, Upload to Uplift, uses Web 2.0 technology to encourage visitors to register and upload the e-mail addresses of family and friends who are not registered.

Jealous said the new initiative is the perfect way to reach out to the estimated 8 million unregistered Black voters.

"We took a standard voter registration form and hooked it up to the technology," Jealous said. "People can go online and basically canvas their friends through the Web and encourage their friends to vote. This is my third decade of doing voter registration and this is beyond the bare knuckle, walking the streets tactics. This technology is one more way to reach the 8 million Blacks who are not registered to vote. This combines old school NAACP tactics with new school technology. We're very excited about this."

According to Jealous, who has been doing voting registration since he was 14, visitors to the NAACP Web site, www.naacp.org, can connect to the Upload to

Uplift link and complete, print and mail the registration form before the Oct. 6 deadline.

Corporate, community partners and bloggers are also encouraged to download the widget and place it on their site.

"The technology will capture information like e-mail addresses and cell phone numbers and individuals will get text messages encouraging them to vote," Jealous said. "That's the whole thrust of this effort — registering your friends to vote. The NAACP has had a history of transforming this country and we will transform the electoral process. We can do it by registering every last voter, verifying every last voter, mobilizing every last voter, protecting every last voter and ensuring that every last vote is counted."

While unprecedented numbers

of African-Americans and young people are expected to register in this year's election, voters in swing states like Pennsylvania are going to have a tremendous impact on the 2008 election.

"People say that the Black vote is a shoe-in for the Democratic Party, but especially in swing states that should not be taken for granted," Jealous said. "Swing voters need to be motivated and anyone doing voter registration in those states needs to fight hard for the Black vote. There should be kitchen table discussions and community meetings discussing the needs of Black voters, which aren't insignificant at all."

Jealous also said the 8 million unregistered Blacks were transients, people who moved around a lot and forgot to re-register, college students, young people who are not rooted in a particular

community and also people who might be confused about the status of their right to vote.

"For instance, people in California who are in jail and awaiting trial might not know that until they are convicted of a crime, they still have the right to vote," Jealous said.

According to the United States Census Bureau, only 69 percent of African-Americans are registered compared to 75 percent of their White counterparts.

"Every 20 years or so there's a major election — the 2008 presidential election," Jealous said. "We see this as our responsibility to get as many people as possible engaged in the political process."

Walgreens Pays U.S. \$9.9 Million to Settle Medicaid Prescription Drug Allegations

WASHINGTON—Illinois-based national retail pharmacy chain Walgreens has paid the United States and four participating states \$9.9 million to resolve allegations of falsely billing the Medicaid program, the Justice Department announced today.

Walgreens submitted claims to Medicaid agencies in four states for prescription drugs dispensed to persons covered both by Medicaid and by private third-party insurance. The retail pharmacy chain allegedly charged the four state Medicaid programs the difference between what the private insurance companies paid for the drugs and what the state Medicaid programs would have paid for the drugs in the absence of private insurance.

The government alleges the claims were false because the drug chain was entitled to reimbursement from the Medicaid programs only for the amount the Medicaid beneficiary would have been obligated to pay Walgreens had the claims been submitted solely to the private insurers, typically the co-payment amount, yet it knowingly

submitted claims to the Medicaid programs in excess of the co-pay amount. As a result of this improper billing, Walgreens received reimbursement amounts from the states' Medicaid programs that were higher than it was entitled to receive.

"This settlement confirms that we will vigorously pursue allegations of fraud and abuse in state Medicaid programs, which are funded, in part, by the federal government," said Gregory G. Katsas, Assistant Attorney General for the Department of Justice's Civil Division.

The United States initiated the investigation in response to a lawsuit brought by two pharmacists at Walgreens, Daniel Bieurance and Neil Thompson. Under the False Claims Act, private individuals can bring such actions for fraud on behalf of the United States and collect a share of any proceeds recovered. Under various state False Claims Acts, private

individuals can also bring actions for fraud on behalf of those states and receive a share of the

proceeds. As a result of today's settlement, the two relators will share \$1,446,658.54 as their portion of the recovery.

"Health care fraud continues to be a priority for both the District of Minnesota and the Department of Justice nationwide," said U.S. Attorney Frank J. Magill. "Our office is gratified to see a substantial recovery of funds for the taxpayers, helping to ensure the continued availability of Medicare and Medicaid trust funds in the future."

The case was handled jointly by the Justice Department's Civil Division and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Minnesota, and the offices of the Attorney General for the states of Michigan, Florida, Minnesota and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, with investigative assistance provided by the Office of the Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services.

The case is entitled U.S. ex rel. Thompson et al. v. Walgreen Co., (D.Minn) Civ. Action No. 05-SC-759.

Long Hard Road, continued from page 12.

ward Blacks—calling them "lazy," "violent," responsible for their own troubles. The poll indicated that these attitudes could affect the outcome of the Presidential election in a close contest.

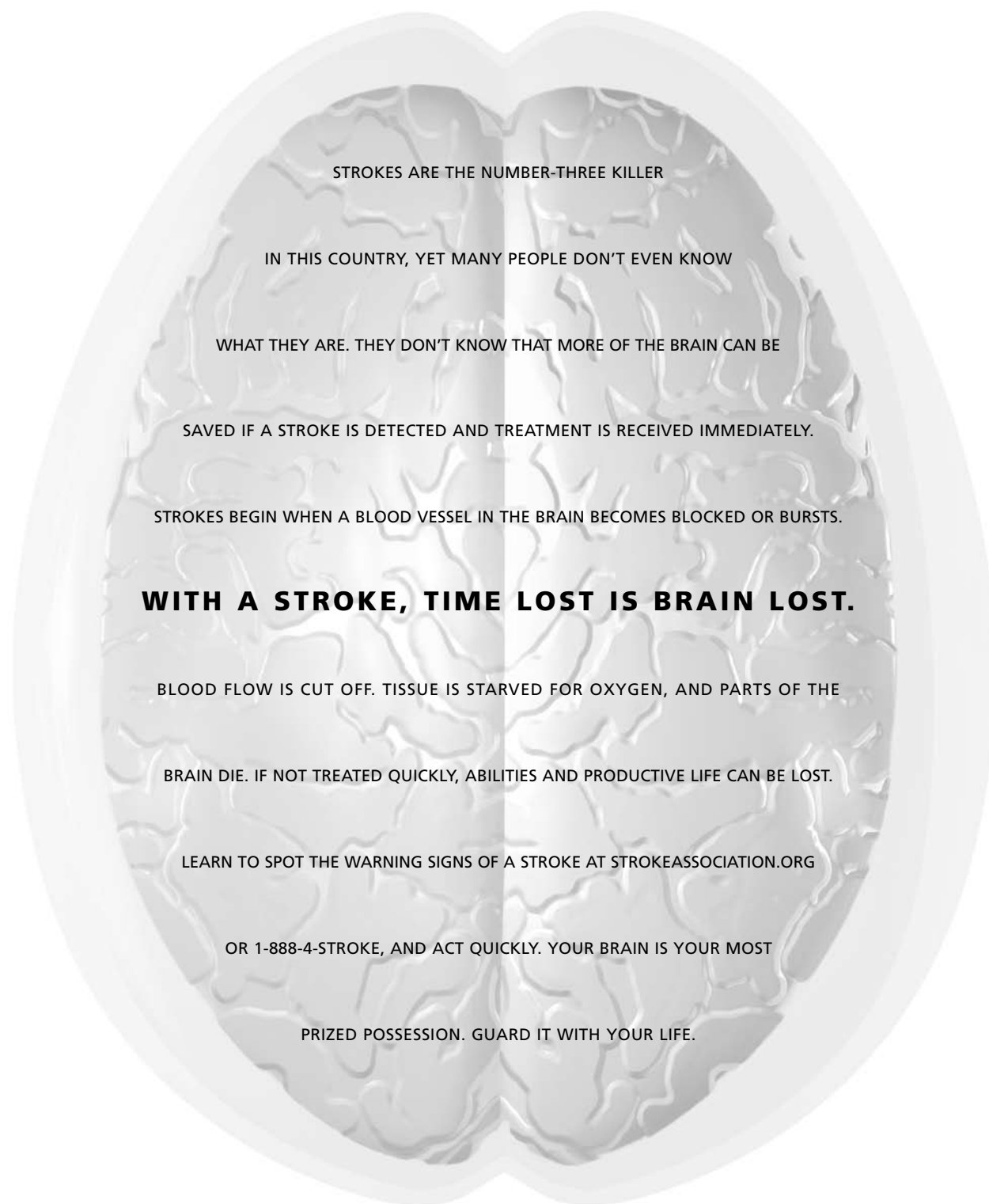
There is too much at stake in this election to vote against a candidate simply because a nebulous voice deep in one's psyche may be saying America isn't ready for a Black President.

The next occupant of the White House will set our nation's priorities for the next four years and beyond. But we cannot move forward without dealing with the issue of race. Barack Obama says: "The legacy of discrimination—and current incidents of discrimination, while less overt than in the past—are real and must be addressed, not just with words, but with deeds, by investing in our schools and our communities; by enforcing our civil rights laws and ensuring fairness in our criminal justice system; by providing this generation with ladders of opportunity that were unavailable for previous generations...." He adds that "Investing in the health, welfare and education of Black and Brown and White children will ultimately help all of America prosper."

The struggle to ensure that our political, economic and social interactions take place on a level playing field began when the Founding Fathers signed the Declaration of Independence asserting that "all men are created equal." President Abraham Lincoln exhorted the nation to expand that precept in the Gettysburg Address with the hope that the United States would have a "new birth of freedom." We've come a long way.

But, as Barack Obama says: We must "continue the long march of those who came before us, a march for a more just, more equal, more free, more caring and more prosperous America," and ultimately achieve a more perfect union.

For more information about the Children's Defense Fund, go to <http://www.childrensdefense.org/>.



STROKES ARE THE NUMBER-THREE KILLER

IN THIS COUNTRY, YET MANY PEOPLE DON'T EVEN KNOW

WHAT THEY ARE. THEY DON'T KNOW THAT MORE OF THE BRAIN CAN BE

SAVED IF A STROKE IS DETECTED AND TREATMENT IS RECEIVED IMMEDIATELY.

STROKES BEGIN WHEN A BLOOD VESSEL IN THE BRAIN BECOMES BLOCKED OR BURSTS.

WITH A STROKE, TIME LOST IS BRAIN LOST.

BLOOD FLOW IS CUT OFF. TISSUE IS STARVED FOR OXYGEN, AND PARTS OF THE

BRAIN DIE. IF NOT TREATED QUICKLY, ABILITIES AND PRODUCTIVE LIFE CAN BE LOST.

LEARN TO SPOT THE WARNING SIGNS OF A STROKE AT STROKEASSOCIATION.ORG

OR 1-888-4-STROKE, AND ACT QUICKLY. YOUR BRAIN IS YOUR MOST

PRIZED POSSESSION. GUARD IT WITH YOUR LIFE.

If you suddenly have or see any of these symptoms, call 9-1-1 immediately:
Numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of
the body • Confusion, trouble speaking or understanding • Difficulty
seeing in one or both eyes • Trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance
or coordination • Severe headache with no known cause

Learn more at StrokeAssociation.org or 1-888-4-STROKE.



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You are the Power

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