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New Orleans

Data

News Weekly

"The People's Paper"

Page 8 DataZone

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Data News Weekly

Blazing the Trail for 43 Years

Edwin Buggage
Editor-in-Chief

It has been 43 years since Joseph “Scoop Jones” started the New Orleans Data News Weekly. In over four decades, Data News Weekly has grown from a paper that reached only people in New Orleans into being an award-winning nationally and internationally recognized source of information on what’s happening in the Crescent City. And today, New Orleans Data News Weekly stands poised to continue forging ahead as a leader in being true to its motto as “The People’s Paper.”

As we celebrate Data News Weekly, we also celebrate the continuing significance of a tradition started by the first African-American owned newspaper “Freedom’s Journal” owned by Samuel Cornish and John B. Russwurm. Today as new forms of media emerge, Data News Weekly has moved forward with the times becoming more relevant than ever in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. It has become a viable and vital source of information for New Orleanians and those who long for the scent of familiarity that can only be found in New Orleans.

Glenn Jones, the grandson of the paper’s founder “Scoop Jones” and son of current publisher Terry Jones said, “I grew up watching my grandfather and father building Data News Weekly into what it is today—an award winning paper that has become an important vehicle for information in the city of New Orleans,” said Jones. “I’ve seen it evolve into something that is truly the voice of the community and the people’s paper. We have seen the paper expand and reach different markets, and I hope to see that vision continued to be built upon so we can continue to be the place where African-

Americans come to get their news and things that concern our community. [I] know we will be there to give them what they need.”

“I would like to say that it is important that our story be told by us and for us,” said Nolan Rollins, president of the New Orleans Chapter of the Urban League. “And more in these times it is crucial in our community that papers like the New Orleans Data News Weekly are there to give a voice to those who sometimes can’t see or hear their voice in the mainstream media.”

While a lot of print publications are struggling, Data News Weekly is on the incline and is embracing new media. Plans are in the works to have a state of the art website that will take the paper to new levels and reach even more readers.

“I am glad to see Data News Weekly moving forward giving us the news we need. I hope they continue to give us that because it is a valuable community resource and has been around for forty-three years. I hope to see it grow into a bigger force than it has already become,” said Anthony Patton, president of EBONetworks.

Patton said that with the ascendance of President Barack Obama some feel that the struggle for blacks is over, but he feels that the need for black and minority media is still necessary.

“Because we have an African-American President, some feel the struggle is over; but the struggle is still here. There are still issues that need to be addressed in poor and minority communities, and I feel that the black media is best suited in many instances to address this need. I feel organizations like Data News Weekly are doing an excellent job in covering them.”

The importance of African-American media continues to be echoed by citizens from all walks

of life from business, civic, community leaders, etc. Dr. Corey Hebert is a physician and television personality who has seen the importance of ethnic media throughout his life.



Janice Meredith

“I remember being a little boy in the barber-shop and seeing Jet Magazine and people would go right to the middle where the beauty of the week was,” Hebert said laughing.

“But as I got older, I began to read the articles and saw there was valuable information within the pages, and later I started to read more publications that focused on African-American issues and found a point of view that was overlooked in other publications.” “And what can I say about Data News Weekly is that it has been such an important voice for people especially after Hurricane Katrina. I commend the paper on its coverage and keep up the good work.”

Data News Weekly is not just a newspaper, but a business as well, and as so many businesses struggle to stay afloat, Data News Weekly has seen its profile grow to unimaginable heights as it sees itself as an important part of the renaissance of New Orleans.

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"I feel the African-American media is not just important, it is necessary after Hurricane Katrina," said Janice Meredith, owner of Simply Divine Hair Salon and publisher of Stylebrity Magazine. "As people who have come back to New Orleans—who had perhaps never been anywhere before the storm—saw



Shayla De La Rose

how other people were thriving in other cities, [they] came back with that same tenacity and I must say that I've seen the same thing with Data News Weekly as it continues to be our voice giving us the information we need."

Shayla De La Rose, who works in the field of education and was raised in Tremé, knows the value neighborhood and family, for her family has operated a business for over six decades. According to De La Rose, there are many challenges associated with running a business post-Katrina. "We as African Americans were born without luxuries, 'old money,' and legacies." She said that in order for African-Americans to concentrate on building wealth, "We



Wibert "Chill" Wilson

should think about subsequent generations instead of self. The future should be for advancing your family. African American should consider those around during the production of wealth. There are so many businesses-building initiatives such as: energy, policy, telecommunications, international trade and affordable healthcare," said De La Rose. "We should choose one and begin developing it into a business

to support and grow self-worth within our families/communities."

Wibert "Chill" Wilson is a small business owner who has seen his profile grow after Hurricane Katrina when his story was featured on CNN and in Fortune Magazine, and when he was honored as a Data News Weekly Trailblazer. From those experiences with media he is trying his own hand at telling his story with an upcoming book that is scheduled to be released in the fall.

"What I've learned about having these stories done on me is that it is important that we tell our own story," said Wilson. "It's funny how you can sit down and talk for an hour and find what you said taken out of context or the writer just don't get the gist of what you're saying. I am not completely discounting or discrediting what was written, but I found the stories that were written by Data News Weekly captured the essence of what was going on with me and so many others that have fought to come back to the city and make a life in the rebuilding of a city we all love and I commend Data News Weekly for that."

Sean Hunter is the Director of Aviation at the New Orleans Airport. He is one who has become a role model for his community and an inspiration for youth around the city of New Orleans. And for his work, he was honored by Data



Sean Hunter

News Weekly as its Trailblazer for the month of April.

"This is a crucial time for our city and New Orleans Data News Weekly gives us a collective voice," said Hunter. "It is like our Underground Railroad leading people to freedom, and it gives to those a platform that otherwise may not get heard. It has been around now for over 40 years and I hope it continues to grow and prosper because the information it provides is important to not just the citizens of New Orleans, but for those who care about the city. Its voice is needed now more than ever."

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Newly Released Guidebook Offers Support for Crime Victims

On Sept. 3, 2003, in Mid-City New Orleans, Rose Preston lost her husband and mother-in-law to homicide. According to Preston, beyond the emotional devastation that murder brings into a person's life, she encountered further traumatization due to disrespect from lawyers and a court system devoid of compassion. Other victims she

has met also experienced disregard from homicide detectives and a justice system that makes victims feel like criminals. When her case was over, Preston found herself with a calling to help others who would have to endure what she had been through.

The result of Preston's calling and over two years of work is a



free booklet titled "Crime Victims Guidebook." The Guidebook has been completed and printed



Linda Roussel, Rose Preston, Zully Jimenez and Ann Rabin

and was released at Beth's Books (2700 Chartres Street) on Friday,

June 12. The Guidebook walks homicide survivors through many of the emotional, practical, and legal hurdles they will face. It includes sections on Immediate Matters and Longer-Term Considerations, as well as a Resources section.

It is Preston's vision that the "Crime Victims Guidebook" be available for every New Orleanian who may be supported, comforted, and assisted by the sharing of her experiences and lessons learned. To this end, free booklets will be provided to offices, agencies, and institutions that come into contact with victims and victim-survivors of violent crime, including emergency rooms, funeral parlors, law enforcement, and the state criminal justice and judicial systems.

In addition, "Crime Victims Guidebook" is now the textbook for the Victim Allies Project, a community-based effort to provide survivors of homicide with advocacy and support as they navigate the criminal justice system.

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City's Public Works Director Gives Best Effort to Improve New Orleans

Robert Mendoza, a native of Cuba and long time resident of New Orleans, was appointed as Director of the Department of Public Works for the City of New Orleans immediately following Hurricane Katrina. He is known to live his life guided by principles of initiative, exploration, and discipline. Mendoza is also recognized in the community as one who is efficient, direct and reliable. These qualities have played a major role in his effectiveness as a director. Mendoza has extensive experience which ranges from his role as a vice chairman at J.P. Morgan Chase to working for a locally owned roadway general contractor, Barriere Construction Company. From this, he has



Robert Mendoza. Photo: www.cityofno.com

gained great experience in managing city and state projects.

During Mendoza's tenure, a vast amount of work has been completed, bringing about the restoration of 1,600 miles of roadway, 55,000 streetlights, 70,000 traffic and street signs, 460 traffic signals, 8.7 million feet of drain lines and 125,000 catch basins and manholes successfully. This was made possible through the help of many organizations and agencies at dif-

ferent levels of government. He has also worked to restart Capital Bond projects that were stalled due to the storms of 2005, and has completed the repair of 27 street projects on 46 roadways in the City.

Mendoza also spearheaded the start of the Off-System Bridge Replacement Program to restore bridges located off major highways with funding from the Federal Highway Administration, and spearheaded receiving funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) repair to over 17,000 individual sites, roadways and sidewalks that were damaged as a result of the flood waters and debris removal damage. To date, we've repaired

5,858 sites. The department also completed the city wide drainage cleaning and recently announced the beginning of repairs to collapsed drains across the city.

As for future plans within the capacity of Public Works, crews will soon begin restoring about 45 federal-aid route roadway segments in New Orleans, rehabilitating deficient bridges, continuing the design process for many streetscape enhancements, and starting a comprehensive drainage master plan for streets among other projects. Public Works has accomplished much under the direction of Mendoza and more development is to come.

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Liberty Bank and Trust Company Announces Its \$20 Million Gentilly Homeowners Initiative

Liberty Bank and Trust Company, a Louisiana based commercial bank committed to community development, announced on June 11 the launch of the \$20 Million Gentilly Homeowners Initiative. This unique program will provide financing to existing and potential homeowners for the rehabilitation and purchase of homes. Liberty Bank and Trust Company is committed to Lending A Hand to the New Orleans community by assisting in the rebuilding and repopulation of the historic neighborhood of Gentilly.

The \$20 Million Gentilly Homeowners Initiative is a holistic approach to homeownership that

will provide an opportunity for our customers and communities to fully recover from the devastation of Hurricane Katrina and to move forward. This initiative will grow homeownership in the area, build capacity within the construction community, and create jobs. Through the \$20 Million Gentilly Homeowners Initiative, Liberty Bank and Trust Company will provide assistance to homeowners in estimating cost of completion, identifying contractors, and determining financing options to rebuild their homes and their neighborhoods.

Alden J. McDonald, President of Liberty Bank and Trust Com-

pany commented, "Liberty Bank and Trust Company has taken its role as a good corporate citizen to heart since our founding in 1972, and it is important now more than ever to the New Orleans Community. We will continue to develop innovative programs that positively impact the lives of our customers and every citizen of New Orleans." McDonald added, "As we launch this program targeted at restoring what has historically been one of the great New Orleans neighborhoods, we look forward to being on the forefront of the movement to revitalize our home."

Liberty Bank and Trust Company is making

the normally difficult process of financing and construction as easy and affordable as possible for the residents of this community, many of whom have depleted their funds, or have been taken advantage of by unlicensed or uncertified contractors. To assist homeowners through the rebuilding process, Liberty is taking this program beyond what any other financial institution has done to date by developing a list of Liberty qualified contractors who will be approved to work on \$20 Million Gentilly Homeowners Initiative financed properties. The contractors in the program must meet Liberty Bank and Trust Company criteria in terms of quality of work, professionalism,

affordability, licensing and insurance or bonding requirements. Liberty Bank and Trust Company developed this assisted approach to rebuilding to reassure disenchanted homeowners and renew their hope and commitment.

Liberty Bank and Trust Company was founded in 1972 with assets of \$2 million. Alden J. McDonald, Jr. has lead the bank since its inception and has grown Liberty Bank and Trust Company to its current holdings of over \$400 million, which positions the bank as the third largest African-American owned financial institution in America. Liberty Bank and Trust Company currently has 19 locations in five states and 8 cities.

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YA/YA Artist's Exhibit Makes Debut at the Contemporary Arts Center

The first-ever solo art exhibit for Monica Tyran, a 22-year-old senior guild member of Young Aspirations/Young Artists (YA/YA), debuted Saturday, June 6, at the Contemporary Arts Center, 900 Camp Street in New Orleans. Titled *I Am Not A Celebrity*, Monica's exhibit, available for viewing throughout June, features more than a dozen paintings of the 1961 Mississippi Freedom Riders. She learned of the mug shots via an online search.

"The first mug shot I found was of Martin Luther King and (one of) Rosa Parks. The first thing I thought of was, 'Oh my goodness. Martin Luther King has a mug shot?' He was in his 20s when this photo was taken. The photo is so cool and powerful at the same

time," says Monica. "I just had to learn more. I did not want to just paint anything, especially for my first residency."

Monica, a member of YA/YA since 2004, is currently serving her first residency with the organization. She says that her show highlights the truth behind what was, at one time, seen as something negative. One of the paintings she created is based on the mug shot of 13 year-old boy who was a freedom rider.

"The freedom riders were fighting for a positive cause. At the time, some people saw it as negative, but it changed the world, and I know many people are grateful for it. I just hope this inspires others like it has inspired me," says Monica.

YA/YA (Young Aspirations/Young Artists), Inc. is a non-profit arts and social service organization whose mission is to empower creative young people to become successful adults. YA/YA does this by providing educational experiences in the arts and entrepreneurship to New Orleans-area youth, and by fostering and supporting their ambitions.

Since its founding in 1988, the YA/YA studio-gallery has provided young artists who have limited access to educational resources and career opportunities the chance to apprentice with professional artists, create public artworks, design merchandise, serve as cultural ambassadors, work as project managers, and mentor others in the arts. YA/YA

has received extensive media exposure with features in *Fortune*, *Rolling Stone*, *The New York Times*, *Elle Décor*, and *ArtNews*, as well as MTV's *House of Style*,

Sesame Street, and NBC's *Today* show. For more information about YA/YA, call 504-529-3306 or visit <http://www.yayainc.com/>

Data News Weekly
Wishes All Fathers
a Very Happy
Father's Day!



City of New Orleans Housing Rehabilitation Program *Office of Recovery and Development Administration*



CONTRACTOR'S CERTIFICATION



The Office of Recovery and Development Administration's Construction Unit is seeking qualified housing rehabilitation contractors who wish to participate in the City's Rehabilitation Program. Contractors who meet all of the qualifications and apply within the specified enrollment period will be classified as eligible to bid on housing rehab projects funded through this office. Contractors determined eligible will also be required to attend an orientation seminar at a time and location to be announced.

The qualifications are as follows:

1. Five years of housing rehabilitation work experience.
2. License or registration with the Louisiana State License Board for Contractor's as a General Contractor or Home Improvement Contractor.
3. Workman's Compensation Insurance in the amount of \$100,000 per occurrence.
4. General Liability Insurance in the amount of \$300,000.
5. Three letters of reference from clients within the last 18 months.
6. Current Occupational License with the City of New Orleans.
7. Federal tax identification number.

Interested contractors should contact Terrance Wills, (504) 658-4360 or Elaine Walton (504) 658-4211 of the Construction Unit, if you require any additional information. Applications will be available starting June 8, 2009 from the ORDA Construction Unit located at 1340 Poydras Street, Suite 950, or online at www.cityofno.com.

All completed applications must be returned to Elaine Walton, Terrance Wills, or Beverly Swinney at the ORDA Construction Unit, between the hours of 8:30AM-4:30PM. **NO applications will be accepted after June 22, 2009.** All applicants will be contacted no later than July 6, 2009 regarding their eligibility.



Shoot Ya Best Shot!

Recently, New America Media held its 2009 National Ethnic Media Awards Banquet, bringing together ethnic media to celebrate the new face of American journalism in the 21st Century. It was an amazing event with media representing 51 million ethnic Americans and 2500 ethnic media outlets in 150 languages.



New Orleans Data News Weekly Editor-in-Chief Edwin Buggage, Randy Stelly, Publisher of The Real Views and Vincent Sylvain, Publisher of The New Orleans Agenda.



Jennifer Dargan, Director of Public Relations for CNN, New America Media Executive Director Sandy Close and New Orleans Data News Weekly Publisher Terry Jones.



New Orleans Data News Weekly Editor-in-Chief Edwin Buggage and CNN Correspondent and Headline News Anchor Richelle Carey who served as the emcee of the awards ceremony.

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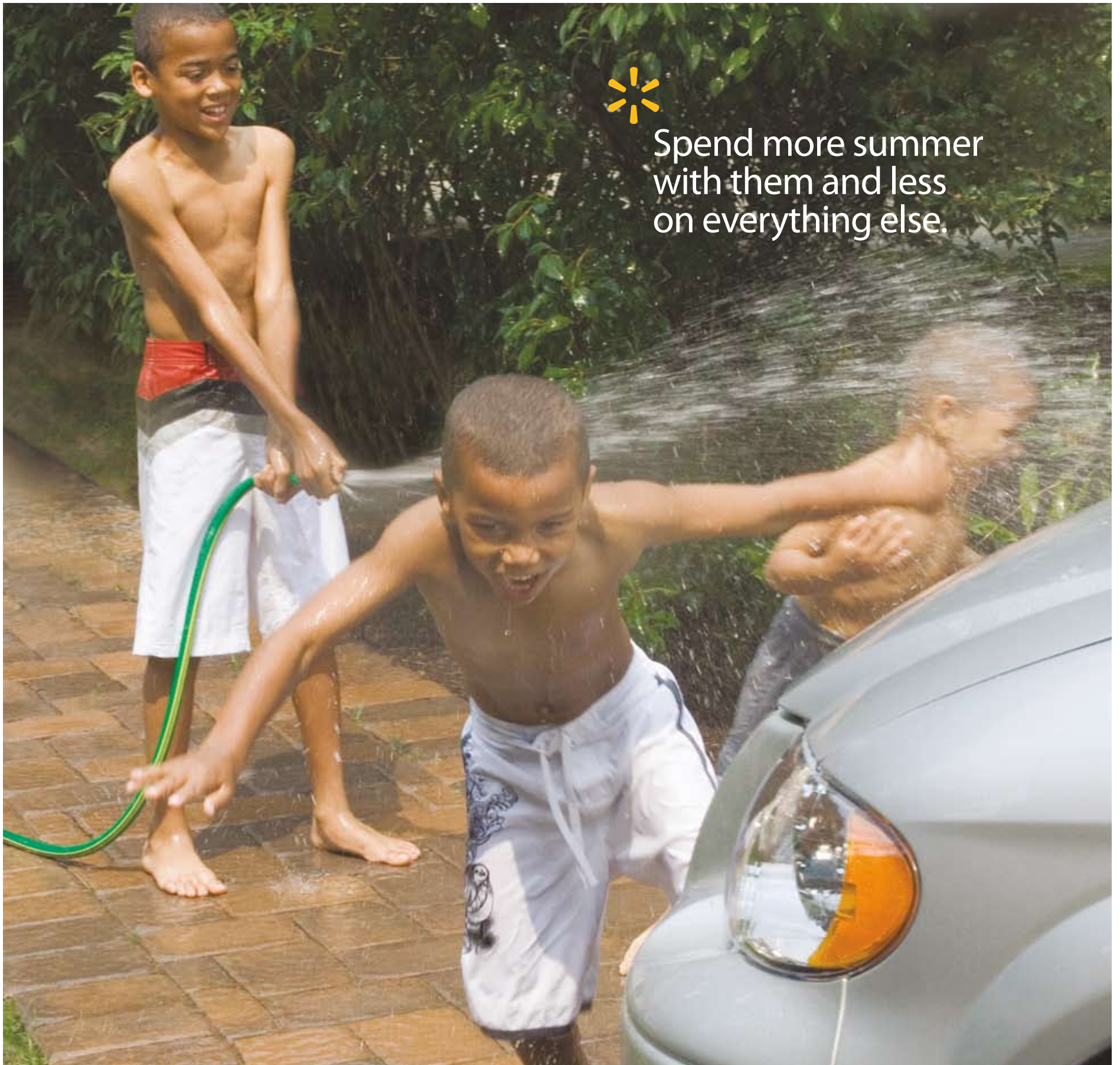
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Dalton Savwoir, Jr.

Dedicated to Giving Back

by: Edwin Buggage
Editor-in-Chief

Dalton Savwoir, Jr., MPH has pursued his professional career based on the belief that one who has benefited from an excellent education is obligated to give back to his community for the benefit of others.

A proud New Orleanian, Savwoir graduated with honors from St. Augustine High School (Class of '68), then after matriculating at Lake Forest College in Lake Forest, Illinois on a four-year scholarship, earned a bachelor's degree in chemistry. He also completed a master's degree in public health in epidemiology from Tulane School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine. Savwoir said he feels education is important if one is to be successful in life.

"I look around at some of our young people and I see some who are not pursuing education and for me that is distressing. I [also] see a lot of young people enrolled in school and a lot of young people who are serious and focused about being the best they can be and that is encouraging," said Savwoir.

For 30 years Savwoir has served the New Orleans community in a number of capacities. Over the years he has specialized in public relations/ healthcare administration in public health, criminal justice, epidemiology, college teaching, consulting, program development and evaluation, grant writing, and community organizations in governmental and private settings.

"In whatever I have done in my professional life, it has always been about giving back to the community in some way. I feel that it is important for those who have some level of success to reach back and give people a hand up and help them up the ladder to live a more productive successful life," said Savwoir.

Savwoir's greatest professional achievement was as a harbinger in the field of public health where he created and implemented the first School-Based Program at Carver High School in New Orleans (1977-88, City Health Dept.) and the first statewide Louisiana High Blood Pressure Control Program (1977-81, Dept. of Health & Hospitals, Office of Public Health). His greatest personal achievement was to stand tall with his friend and confidant, the former Orleans Parish District Attorney Eddie J. Jordan, Jr. as his spokesperson. He later served under the administration of three different district attorneys.

"In my work in the criminal justice system I was able to see a lot of young people fall through the cracks, but then as well as now I continue to do all I can in some way to make a positive impact on any young person I come in contact with," he said.

Although Savwoir has campaigned for many elected officials from mayors to councilmembers to



Dalton Savwoir, Jr.

senators/state representatives to judges and congressmen, he has made two runs for public office as state senator and state representative. He believes in public service and continues to find ways to better the quality of life of the African-American community of New Orleans.

"Although I was not victorious, it felt good going out in the community and seeing up close and personal what the concerns of the citizens of the city were, and whether I was elected or not I still will continue to work in the community to improve the quality of life of all our citizens," said Savwoir.

One of the keys to Dalton's success has been family. He is happily married to Nadine Rachal, and is the father of two children, Grant (26) and Macy Savwoir (19).

"Without their love and support I don't know where I would be," said Savwoir.

Education is the most important thing in Savwoir's life and he stresses it to his children and other young people he comes in contact with. He has taught health at Southern

University in New Orleans on a part-time basis for seven years. Education has always been emphasized in his upbringing.

"We were a large family and my parents stressed education where all my siblings have pursued education and had success in life so I commend my parents on how they raised us," he said.

Savwoir has served his community as a member of the Friends of Crimestoppers and the Greater New Orleans NAACP. Since 2007, he has been a member of the Press Club of New Orleans. And, since 2003, he has been a board member of Holistic Home Health Care.

Living in the Gentilly-Terrace area of the city with his wife since 2004, Savwoir is a member of the Gentilly Civic Improvement Association and the Gentilly Terrace Neighborhood Association. Since Hurricane Katrina, these multi-ethnic groups have vigorously tried to band together to help identify the resources including governmental, private, and non-profit organizations to rebuild the neighborhoods of Gentilly. Elected officials and guest speakers representing various organizations are presented to the groups at monthly meetings.

Politics continues to be a special interest to Dalton Savwoir, Jr. The City of New Orleans is really a small town of neighborhoods and generations of families living in the same area. Dalton said, "It feels good to walk down the street or go to a store where you accidentally see someone you know. This is the New Orleans we grew up with and the New Orleans that we would like to see our children and other generations enjoy. Politics allows you to get involved in the direction of our city and have your voice and interests heard. Having lived and visited other cities gives you an appreciation of our lifestyle here in New Orleans."

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Joseph M. Jones
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Microsoft Receives Judge Leon Higginbotham Corporate Leadership Award

Brittany Hutson

On the 45th anniversary of the historic Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law has honored Microsoft Corporation for excellence in diversity at its 10th Annual A. Leon Higginbotham Award Dinner in New York June 3rd.

"Microsoft is receiving the Higginbotham award for its commitment to diversity and inclusion as part of the daily business function within every area of the company," says Barbara Arnwine, executive director of the Lawyers' Committee. The Lawyers' Committee is a nonpartisan, non-profit organization that strives to obtain equal opportunity for racial and ethnic minorities.

Arnwine added, "They are also being honored for their stellar commitment to pro bono legal work."

One such pro bono project recognized by the Lawyers' Committee includes the "pay for performance" approach, which was launched by Microsoft to enhance diversity in the legal profession.

The Higginbotham award is named in memory of Chief Judge A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr., a civil rights advocate, author and federal appeals court judge. The award recognizes exemplary corporate leadership with respect to advancing equal opportunity, particularly leadership in recruiting, retaining and promoting minorities.

Past honorees include Earl Graves Sr., founder and publisher of Black Enterprise magazine; The New York Times Company and its CEO Arthur Aulzberger, Jr.; and Ronald A. Williams, chairman and CEO of Aetna Inc.

According to Arnwine, Microsoft is distinguished from past honorees because of their internationally renowned corporate

diversity mission and for inspiring law firms to demonstrate the same commitment. They were also the first and largest technology company honored.

"This award is particularly important as Microsoft strives to be the global leader in attracting diverse talent to careers in technology," said Gwen Houston, director of global diversity and inclusion for Microsoft. "We hope to provide an inclusive work environment where they can succeed."

Microsoft's aspiration to attract a diverse and talented company network among underrepresented groups, youth and women involves partnering with several organizations including the National Urban League, the Women's Business Enterprise National Council, the Minority Business Development Agency, the National Society of Black Engineers and the National Black

MBA Association.

"We invest hundreds of millions of dollars in dedicated outreach to attract minorities and women to high-tech careers," said Houston.

She explained that this includes grants, scholarships, event sponsorships and partnerships with universities, such as Howard and Xavier Universities, and organizations that serve minorities and women, such as the United Negro College Fund.

Besides attracting diverse talent to careers in technology, Microsoft focuses on distributing investments into underserved communities through the minority investment program, which was launched in 2000.

The company conducted research with the Urban League that revealed minority-owned businesses have a lack of resources to adopt and implement information technologies for business

functions. Therefore, the diversity investment program focuses on increasing funding options for businesses historically limited by lack of capital.

According to Microsoft's website, the corporation has \$50 million of unsecured deposits in minority-owned banks and direct more than \$1 billion of investment business volume to minority-owned brokers and asset managers.

"This award just confirms that [anyone] can benefit from Judge Higginbotham's vision of a more fair and just legal system," said Professor Charles J. Olgetree, Jr., of Harvard Law School. "I think he would be smiling down with great joy to see that a corporate giant is seeing the importance of delivering racial equality."

Higginbotham dedicated his life's work to racial and social justice.



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**By Barbara R. Arnwine, Executive Director
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law**

In today's increasingly diverse and interconnected society, equal access and inclusion are more vital than ever.

Since 1963, the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law has strived to ensure that all people, through the rule of law, receive fair access to housing, employment, education and other rights. One of our premier corporate allies is Microsoft, this year's recipient of our prestigious A. Leon Higginbotham Corporate Leadership Award for advancing diversity and equal opportunity.

At last week's awards dinner in New York City, Microsoft was recognized for a variety of efforts, including its pro bono legal work and a program that encourages law firms to enhance diversity within their ranks.

What we find most compelling, however, is the company's unambiguous commitment to promoting diversity and inclusion, even in challenging economic times. At all levels and through its partnerships, Microsoft demonstrates that fostering a broad range of experiences, perspectives and capabilities is essential for businesses to remain innovative and relevant.

With the outstanding leadership of partners like Microsoft, we are moving closer to the goal of true equality for all and the realization of a more perfect union.

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On Father's Day: The Black Man – An American Hero

He built America from the ground up with a few tools, his bare hands and by the sweat of his brow. While doing so, he was repeatedly whipped, lynched, falsely accused and castrated.

Even now, he braves America's streets despite the fact that he is more often stopped, brutalized or shot by police, blamed for crimes he did not commit, and incarcerated at

astronomical rates. He even dies earlier of natural causes than any other racial group in America – a statistic that some doctors speculate is partially due to the every day stresses of his race.

Whether he's wearing a necktie, a uniform, coveralls, or jeans, he braves the streets of America when he goes to work – or even to look for work. Most of the time, he makes

it home. But, all too often he falls victim to this historic, undeclared war on Black males.

Still, he dares to believe in a nation where his unemployment rate exceeds all others –

not just because of the economic downturn – but because of a history of race discrimination that has pressed him to rock bottom.

His post traumatic stress is not from Iraq or Afghanistan, but from a lifetime of scaling the dangerous mine fields of American society. This is about Joe Blow and John Qshon Citizen. One might call him "the average Black man". But, given the list of daily atrocities he faces in this nation, there is actually no "average" Black man.

Rather, this is about "The Black Man – An American Hero". Despite the odds against him, he has exceeded every bar that has ever been set.

What is an "American hero"?

Traditionally, the American hero is deemed as a Super Man type, someone with exceptional courage who performs a one-time gallant deed or a long term public service that warrants celebrity and perhaps even a medal. But, for the Black man, he is a quiet American hero, unsung, even unsuspecting, deserving of respect simply for the risks he takes every day.

The family of 25-year-old Black police officer Omar Edwards is familiar with this gallantry as they grieve their husband and father of 18-month-old and 7-month old children. Struck down in a hail of bullets from a White police officer who mistakenly thought him to be a criminal, Omar is an American hero.

The family of 38-year-old Stephen T. Johns also knows. When this husband and father of an 11-year-old son was felled by the bullet of a hate-crazed White supremacist at the Holocaust Museum, it was yet another shot that was "heard around the world". "Big John" – as they called him – is indeed an American Hero.

From coast to coast they have fallen. Among them, Sean Bell, 23, of New York; Oscar Grant III, 22, of San Francisco; DeAuntae "Tae Tae" Farrow, 12, of West Memphis, Ark.; and Martin Lee Anderson, 14, of Bay County, Fla. They are among the sons and fathers who were all too early struck down amidst injustice. Not to mention the thousands of Black men who have died at the hands of other Black men – a dubious "friendly fire" if you will.

Unlike other wars, there is no flag-draped casket or playing of "Taps". Yet, the grieving hearts of loved ones are no less painful; the tears are no less real. And moreover the fortitude he displayed in having fought against the odds is no less worthy of honor.

The Black man – an American hero, we all know one as he refuses to cower. His swagger is emboldened as he defies statistics that constantly predict his demise. He daily swims upstream in the murky, unpredictable waters, daring to believe in himself and in the power of his God. Despite the memories of his fallen brothers, he presses on for respect. And on Father's Day, we salute him for his raw courage.



Hazel Trice Edney
NNPA Editor-in-Chief



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NAACP Continues Campaign to 'Save Innocent Man' from Execution

NNPA

WASHINGTON (NNPA) - The NAACP is launching a campaign called "I AM TROY" to save the life of Troy Davis, an African-American man on death row believed by civil rights leaders to be innocent of the charges against him.

Davis will be executed unless Georgia Gov. Sonny Perdue or the Savannah District Attorney Larry Chisolm intervene. The NAACP has asked the general public to contact Perdue or Chisolm, urging them to "not allow the execution of an innocent man," according to a statement released last week.

A new website, www.IAMTROY.com allows people to send an email directly to the Governor and Chisolm.

Davis has been on Georgia's death row for nearly 18 years, convicted of the murder of police officer Mark Allen MacPhail in Savannah. The NAACP points out that there is no physical evidence linking Davis to the crime and seven of the nine witnesses who testified in the case have recanted or contradicted their original testimonies, several saying they were coerced.

The NAACP release states that



Troy Davis

one of the witnesses who has not recanted is the prime alternative suspect in the case and has been in and out of jail numerous times.

"Beyond a shadow of a doubt, this man is innocent," says NAACP President Benjamin Jealous, who recently met with Davis for two hours on death row.

According to an NAACP investigation, Davis had no prior criminal

record and since he has been in prison has been a model prisoner and a valuable mentor to his young nephew, whose mother has breast cancer.

Courts have denied Davis an evidentiary hearing, which would allow the evidence to be reexamined. The Supreme Court will hear the case on June 25 but Davis

is not expected to prevail. His execution could come within weeks after that decision.

The NAACP has filed an amicus brief in the case, urging Gov. Perdue to intervene.

Chisolm, an African-American, could also reopen the case, possibly saving Davis' life.

Davis is also being denied the right to speak in person to the

media, including 60 Minutes, Dateline, and other television programs, which have requested interviews with him. Davis is only allowed to speak on the phone to reporters.

"The denial of his right to speak to television is a flagrant abuse of his First Amendment rights," says Jealous. "It not only is morally wrong to put an innocent man to death, it does not bring justice to the victim's family and allows a dangerous criminal to go free. We have witnessed scores of people wrongfully sentenced to death in our nation. Justice requires we not turn a blind eye to killing another innocent man - a travesty that can never be rectified."

Prominent politicians and leaders, including President Jimmy Carter, Pope Benedict XVI, Nobel Laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Presidential candidate Bob Barr and former FBI Director and Judge William S. Sessions have all called for Davis to be given a new trial or evidentiary hearing, the NAACP reports.

The death penalty has long been a racially charged issue.

More than 60 percent of the people in prison are people of col-

or and African-Americans make up more than 40 percent of those on death row.

The NAACP will unveil a national campaign at its Centennial Convention July 11-16 in New York aimed toward reversing those trends. The campaign's overarching goals are to make communities safer, improve police performance, save money and end the mass incarceration that characterizes our country's criminal justice system.

The campaign will include ongoing efforts to save the lives of potentially innocent men such as, Davis and Reggie Clemons, another African-American man from St. Louis, sentenced to death for the murder of two White girls.

According to an NAACP investigation, in that case, there was no physical evidence linking Reggie to the crime: no fingerprints, no DNA, no hair or fiber samples; nonetheless, Clemons was convicted and was scheduled to be executed on June 17. He received a stay from the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals.

Wal-Mart Board Approves \$15 Billion Share Repurchase Program

At its 39th Annual Shareholders' Meeting on June 5, Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. (NYSE: WMT) announced that its Board of Directors has approved a new share repurchase program that gives the company authorization to repurchase \$15 billion of its shares. This program replaces the previous \$15 billion program, which was announced June 1, 2007 and had approximately \$3.4 billion of remaining authorization. Under the program, repurchased shares are constructively retired and returned to unissued status.

"We remain committed to returning value to our shareholders through share repurchase and dividends,"

said Mike Duke, Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. president and chief executive officer. "During the last five years, Wal-Mart has repurchased approximately \$21 billion worth of its shares."

In addition to share repurchases made in fiscal year 2010, Wal-Mart will pay more than \$4.2 billion to shareholders in the form of dividends during fiscal year 2010. Wal-Mart has increased its dividend every year since March of 1974, when it began paying a dividend of five cents per share. The company is paying an annual dividend of \$1.09 per share this fiscal year, a 15-percent increase from \$0.95 paid last year.

Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. (NYSE: WMT) serves customers and members more than 200 million times per week at more than 7,900 retail units under 55 different banners in 15 countries. With fiscal year 2009 sales of \$401 billion, Wal-Mart employs almost 2.2 million associates worldwide. A leader in sustainability, corporate philanthropy and employment opportunity, Wal-Mart ranked first among retailers in Fortune Magazine's 2009 Most Admired Companies survey. Additional information about Wal-Mart can be found by visiting www.walmartstores.com. Online merchandise sales are available at www.walmart.com and www.samsclub.com.

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