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News Weekly

"The People's Paper"

Data Zone Page 7



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April 21 - April 27, 2012 46th Year Volume 47 www.ladatanews.com

Unintended Consequences

A Black Press Special Report

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and Vote**



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Black Press Special Report Unintended Consequences



The photo above by John Ernest Joseph Bellocq (1873 – 1949) was an American professional photographer who worked in New Orleans during the early 20th century. Bellocq is remembered for his haunting photographs of the prostitutes of Storyville, New Orleans' legalized red light district. While his work is remembered in circles with great fondness, the harsh reality of this economy is the effect it is having on poor women, forcing many into prostitution to make ends meet.

By Kenneth J. Cooper
Special to the NNPA from
TheDefendersOnline

Prostitution: One of Welfare Reform's Unintended Consequences

While waiting in my car for a funeral repast to begin at a fraternal function hall, I noticed two young women, in their late teens or early 20s, lounging together on a stone wall at the edge of a large neighborhood park. They were wearing

tight jeans and lightweight blouses that left more exposed than concealed, a revealing style of dress unremarkable in this age of excessive openness about everything.

I figured they were friends relaxing on a sunny, warm afternoon.

That is, until a man old enough to be their

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DATA NEWS WEEKLY

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Please call 504-309-9913 for subscription information or to obtain a back issue of the paper ONLY.
Dated material two weeks in advance. Not responsible for publishing or return of unsolicited manuscripts or photos.

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grandfather pulled up in a car, braked and engaged one of the women in a brief conversation. She got in. He drove off. What had looked like purposeless idling now appeared to be commerce:

the sex trade.

Harambee Park in the heart of the Boston's Dorchester section, a city facility once known as Franklin Field, was not where I expected to find prostitution. It's

in a residential neighborhood. A youth center, popular indoor tennis club and sports fields are in or adjoin the park.

The New York Times recently ran a front-page article about what poor single women with children do to make do in the recession since the country has ended welfare "as we know it" and slapped a five-year limit on cash benefits. The hard-pressed women interviewed in Phoenix reported they had "sold food stamps, sold blood, skipped meals, shoplifted, doubled up with friends, scavenged trash bins for bottles and cans and returned to relationships with violent partners."

Jason DeParle is a seasoned reporter who knows federal social policy, but this time I don't think he got the whole story. His New York Times sources may not have told him everything or they may not have been entirely representative.

I suspect what I saw at that

park earlier in the 2000s, before the Great Recession, and have observed any number of times since then in Boston represent an unanticipated way women in poor families manage welfare reform: neighborhood prostitution.

If I'm right, I wonder what the "family values" crowd who pushed for the limits on welfare – a program originally authorized in the Social Security Act of 1935 – thinks about this unintended consequence of relieving poor women from dependence on the government.

The two young women hanging out on that day were light-skinned, maybe Black, maybe Hispanic, maybe Cape Verdean. The elderly motorist was definitely Black. There is a public housing project on the opposite side of Harambee Park.

I've observed similar scenes on my morning walks involving White, Black, Latina or Asian women; usually young, but some

edging toward middle age. I've seen in White and Black neighborhoods what sure looks like prostitution by women who are poor, given their gaudy but cheap clothing.

Women sexily dressed and posed, standing in the cold near the entrance of drug or grocery stores, smoking cigarette after cigarette, waiting for a man to offer a ride, for starters. On a summer day, a woman in short shorts, sitting a long time on a step at a gas station, waiting to be approached—downscale marketing I saw repeated one summer I worked in Reno. I've observed women flouncing along thru streets in residential neighborhoods, with a brief vehicle stop, a quick conversation and a hop-in.

In none of these cases have I done a journalistic investigation to know for sure what I saw was prostitution, but it sure looked

Cover Story,
Continued on page 5.



US Senator David Vitter (R-LA) is one of the many in Congress who push a Conservative social agenda, favoring cuts to the poor, and "family values" but were caught visiting prostitutes and or engaging in morally questionable behaviors.



It is the opinion of many that the unintended consequence of deep cuts to social programs is women turning to prostitution as a means to caring for their children.

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RTA Launches New Public Safety Campaign

NEW ORLEANS - The Regional Transit Authority (RTA) in New Orleans recently launched a new public safety campaign titled Tracks Can Kill: Live Outside the Lines. The campaign is specifically targeted to pedestrians, drivers, joggers, cyclists and all who encounter the streetcars on a regular basis. The overall goal of the campaign is to educate the public about the safest ways to coexist with streetcars in an effort to eliminate all preventable accidents. "We launched this initiative because we want people to be careful and pay

attention when they are near streetcar tracks," says Angele James, Communications and Marketing Manager for RTA.

Through the use of television PSAs, advertisements on RTA vehicles, brochures, flyers and social media, the safety campaign grabs the viewer's attention with creative and direct messaging encouraging citizens to "think again" so that they avoid dangers while near a streetcar line.

Streetcars travel at a lower speed than most rail vehicles, but like many other rail vehicles, most streetcars cannot come to

an immediate stop. The difference in time and inches can be a matter of life and death. "We have placed signage to make people aware of potentially dangerous situations when around streetcars and in the past three years we have seen accidents decrease by 50% says James.

Because pedestrians and drivers are often unaware of the potential dangers of a rail line, streetcar operators have few options when a pedestrian or driver comes into the immediate path of a moving streetcar, resulting in an unnecessary incident. This safety campaign

brings greater awareness to the hazards associated with jogging and cycling on the tracks and encourages motorists to treat the median, or neutral ground as an additional lane of traffic.

In an effort to meet this goal, the RTA's safety campaign will message to citizens that Tracks Can Kill (so you should) Live Outside the Lines. It's a bold and direct message but it's one that the RTA believes is necessary to dramatically increase awareness and save lives. The campaign will also encourage citizens to always look both ways before crossing the track,

look left before making left hand turns when driving along the rail lines, never walk, run, sit or play on the tracks, keep children close while near tracks, and use good judgment and remain alert when near rail lines. "We know that people use the median for jogging and we can not say enough to our citizens but we ask please do not run on tracks because it can put you in harms way" remarks James. Continuing she says "Please help us by being responsible for your safety because we believe a single accident is one too many.

Stephanie Jordan Sings A Tribute To The Fabulous Lena Horne: Yesterday When I Was Young



Stephanie Jordan

By Ted Panken

"I love a story," Stephanie Jordan says. "As a matter of fact, if a song doesn't communicate a real, true story, it's hard for me to relate to it."

Which is one reason why this daughter of the Crescent City decided to dedicate her first album to Lena Horne (1917-2010), the iconic diva-actress who enchanted several generations of

mid-century Americans, black and white, with a singular admixture of talent, beauty, integrity, and class, not to mention a unique ability to convey the essence of a lyric. Great lyrics permeate this beautifully rendered homage, and Jordan has the skill sets to do them justice—a voice that projects from a whisper to a scream, impeccable diction, dead-center pitch, fluid phrasing. Backed by a

breath-as-one 8-piece unit of top-shelf New Orleanians that sounds twice its size, and counterstated by a cohort of virtuoso soloists, she finds fresh, unfailingly swinging approaches to this well-traveled repertoire, melding into a personal argot elements garnered from such distinguished mentors as Shirley Horn, Abbey Lincoln, Nancy Wilson—and Lena Horne herself—while sounding like no one other than Stephanie Jordan. As she aptly puts it, "it's a tribute, not a copy." Her only regret is that Horne isn't around to hear this heartfelt offering. "I was two years into doing tributes to her, when she died," she says. "It was devastating to me.

"I love intimate, quiet duos and trios, but I love the excitement and drama of Lena Horne with a lot of horns on stage. It's a beautiful experience to witness it, and to do it is just beyond belief. Through this Lena Horne journey, I figured out that I love music and musicians more than I ever thought I could. It transformed me, and I'm hoping that my fans will be transformed by this experience."

Monika Stoker Makes History As First Commanding Officer of USS Mitscher



Monika Stoker

It is Navy Week in New Orleans and vessels from all over have descended on the Crescent City lasting from April 17-23. It is also the 200th Anniversary of the War of 1812.

The U.S. military has always been a place where many African-

Americans fought and died for America. It is where great strides have been made in the struggle for equality. Recently the U.S. Navy made another historical leap as Cmdr. Monika Washington Stoker took command of the Norfolk-based guided-missile destroyer USS Mitscher.

She's the first African-American woman serving as Commanding Officer of an Arleigh Burke-class Aegis guided missile destroyer, the Navy said.

"It says that you do whatever you want to do, whether it's in the military or not and don't let anyone tell you that you can't," Stoker said.

She relieved Cmdr. Brian Sorenson, who served as commanding officer for two years.

Stoker, a native of Greensboro, N.C., served as USS Mitscher's Executive Officer since June 2010.

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Jaqueline Fleming

Inside the Heart of an Artist

By Edwin Buggage
Photos by Ray Bonnee

She is the embodiment of the 21st Century woman, armed with beauty, brains, talent and business savvy. Over the years Jaqueline Fleming has worked in stage, television and film playing opposite some of Hollywood's biggest names including Terence Howard, Morgan Freeman, Marc Wahlberg and Halle Berry just to name a few. She has an acting resume that reads like a who's who of today's biggest stars. Presently, she can be seen in the T.D. Jakes film, *Woman Art Thou Loosed: On The 7th Day*. A film that is a dramatic thriller starring Blair Underwood and Sharon Leal, of her role she says, "I play the best friend of Blair and Sharon's character and I really enjoyed doing this film, especially since this genre of film usually does not feature African-American actors I thought this was a great opportunity to do something dif-

ferent and show that we can do all types of films."

After years of being in Los Angeles working in film, television and commercials Jaqueline decided she would do something that would fulfill her benevolent side, so she came to New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina and worked as a volunteer at Children's Hospital. "I just wanted to help people who are in need because one of my greatest passions is children." Continuing she says, "Then someone at the hospital asked me about teaching acting and with one student I began and it has grown into something beyond my wildest expectations," says Fleming of the beginnings of Jaq's Acting Studio where she runs classes for aspiring actors. Of her success she says, "I am glad to say that many of my students are booking jobs and are working in the industry and I am excited that I can contribute to the success of others who as-



Actress Jaqueline Fleming

pire to be actors."

New Orleans has become

true to its moniker as Hollywood South, it is now a Mecca for film

and television projects and people are migrating to the Big Easy to take advantage of opportunities in the entertainment industry, "I feel this is a great thing for the City and I am glad to be a part of it," remarks Fleming. Continuing speaking of her adopted home she says, "There is no other City like it, the food, the people, the culture, it is a place that people celebrate life and living and that is something I love about New Orleans." She is a woman of big talent and a heart to match, "I believe that giving back is important and that's why I came to the City, and now it is giving me so much as well and I am glad to be part of its artistic renaissance." There are bright days ahead for Fleming as she talks about her future plans, "Presently, I have a TV show I am working on producing and I want to continue to grow my business and inspire the next generation of women with whatever they want to do if they believe they can achieve it."

Cover Story, Continued from page 3.

like it and it's a repetitive pattern. In one instance, I know police thought the same thing and intervened to disrupt the pattern.

A small neighborhood park on an inlet into Boston Harbor is on my walking route. The park, which is actually state property, has a parking lot almost as big as the grounds. I used to see a lot of parked vehicles with a middle-aged man behind the wheel and a 20-something woman in the passenger seat—that is, when you could see her.

The state police started making morning sweeps of the parking lot. I watched troopers ask a couple to get out the vehicle and overhead one inquire of the middle-aged man, referring to his much younger female companion: "Where did you pick her up?"

That kind of early morning business does not happen in Teaneck Beach Park any longer.

I don't know for sure the women I observed are members of former welfare families or, under the rules before the 1996 changes, whether they would have been eligible for government assistance. Those strike me as good questions worthy of official investigation.

With committees in the Republican-controlled House eager to investigate anything in a bid to harm President Obama politically, maybe the committee chairmen could do something constructive and turn their scrutiny on one of the laws passed after Republicans took over the chamber in 1995 for the first time in 40 years. They could ask Bill Clinton, then president, who coined the phrase "end welfare as we know it," to appear as a witness. And maybe Newt Gingrich, who was House speaker when the welfare law passed.

While they're at it, the House

committees could also explore whether welfare reform has pushed more poor teenage boys into selling drugs to make up for the government money no longer coming into their households. In Boston, police say inner city gangs have become less about territory and more about the drug trade. That's new.

Are teenage boys selling illegal drugs and young women selling their bodies better alternatives to poor families depending on the government for financial support? That's a moral dilemma that supporters of the 1996 welfare reform law need to confront.

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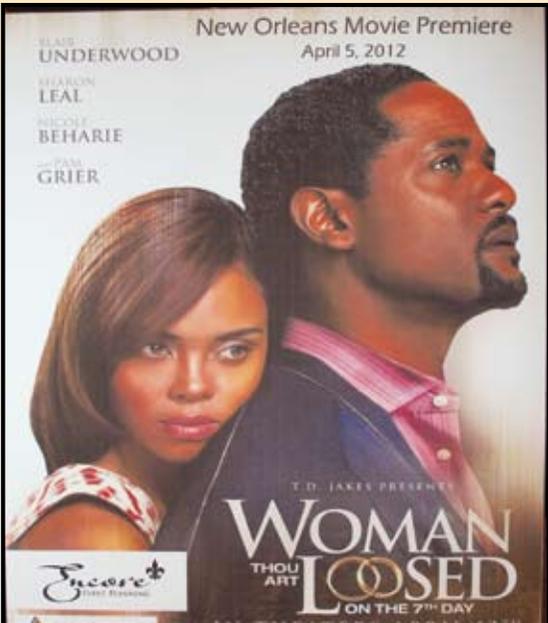
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Data Zone

7th Day

Photos by Ray Bonnee

Recently, there was a screening of the TD Jakes Film, Woman Thou Art Loosed: On the 7th Day. The film was set in New Orleans and many local performers were part of the production and Data News Weekly was there.



L-R Michaela Harrison , Keisha Means, Lance Nichols, Harold Clark, Essence Harris-Banks

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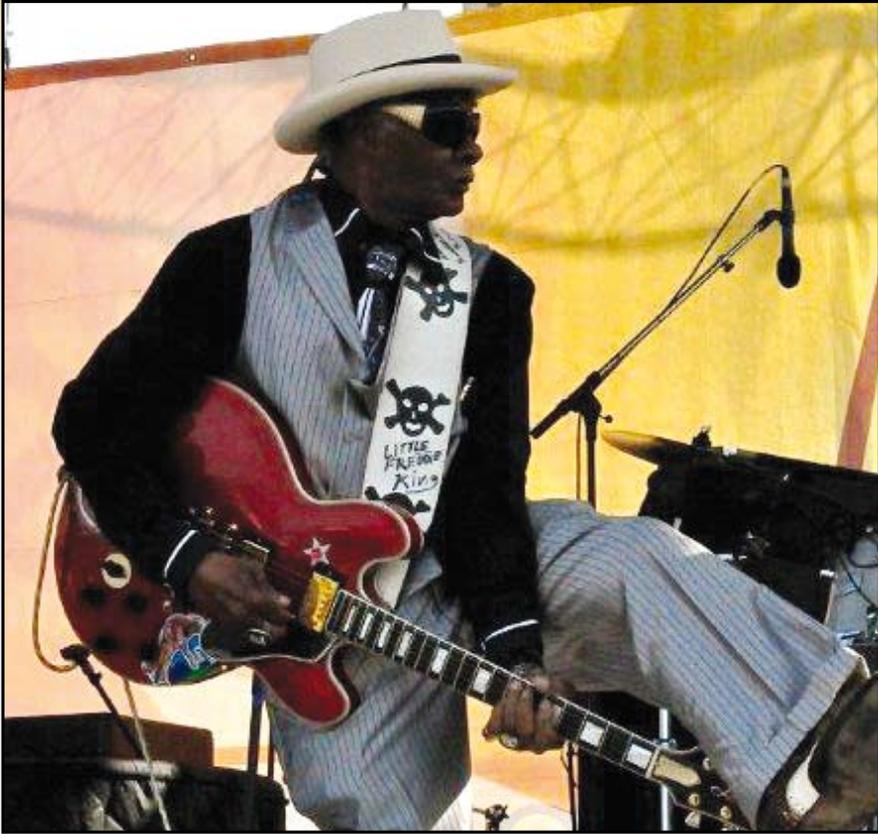
L-R Michele Briscoe Long and Sharon Martin



L-R Clyde Jones, Zoe Carter, Jaqueline Fleming and Nicoye Banks

French Quarter Fest

Photos by Kichea S. Burt



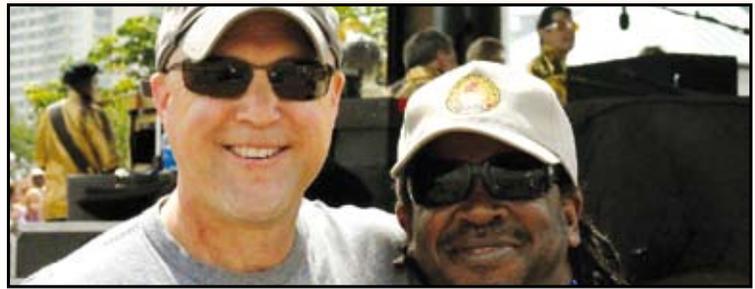
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Questions for Presidential Candidates



Julianne Malveaux
NNPA Columnist

paigned, but also one of his “think” tanks. Maybe Gingrich can find work, as he suggested that inner city youth do, by taking on some janitorial tasks. So it’s down to Romney and President Obama as opponents in November. The entertainment is over. Let’s get down to business.

Those who are undecided about the political path they’d like to take ought to look at several areas of contrast, and consider what either candidate might do in three areas:

JOBS – The unemployment rate ticked down just a tiny bit last month, from 8.3 to 8.2 percent, but only 120,000 new jobs were created. We need to create at least 300,000 jobs a month for the next year or so to just begin to catch up with all the jobs that were lost. Black unemployment,

at 14 percent, is at the Great Depression level of 25 percent when hidden unemployment is considered. Unemployment is trending down, if slowly, and the Obama administration has been quick to share these facts. Further, if President Obama had been able to pass job creation legislation at the end of 2011, the rate might have dropped even faster.

My question to Mitt Romney would be how he plans to accelerate the pace of job creation and lower unemployment. I’d also ask him about high Black unemployment rates, and targeting. Finally, I’d ask him whether he still enjoys firing people and what message he thinks that sends to the least and the left out.

I’d ask President Obama at least two of those three questions. I’d certainly ask what he would do

to change the pace of job creation, what kind of legislation he thinks is needed for him to implement his plan, and whether he thinks he can pull a political consensus together to pass such legislation. I’d also ask him about Black unemployment and targeting, not to put him on the spot or to play the race card, but because this is an important question. Finally, I’d ask about a focus on youth unemployment, given the fact that young people who graduate from college and cannot find jobs have lifetime effects from or two years worth of joblessness.

TAXES – Former Republican candidate Herman Cain, he of the 9-9-9 plan that just didn’t add up, the foreign policy ignorance, and the fiery, if inept, blather said that Romney was being “picked apart” by the tax issue. But Rom-

ney pays a lower proportion of his income on taxes than the average – not upper income, just average – working person does, mostly because investment income is taxed at a lower rate than earnings. Romney has also called for an extension of the Bush tax cuts, while President Obama would eliminate them.

I’d ask Mitt Romney why he thinks it is fair for the rich to pay proportionately less in taxes than middle income people. I’d ask him bluntly whether he thinks he favors the rich and if so, why. I’d ask him to detail his objections to the Buffett plan, and to offer an alternative plan for tax fairness.

I’d ask President Obama (who not only pays his fair share in tax-

Malveaux, Continued
on page 11.

All-Black Revival of “A Streetcar Named Desire” on Broadway



Marc Morial
President and CEO
National Urban League

stream classics, especially those originally created for White thespians. But, unlike “Tinseltown,” the “Great White Way” has moved much more forcefully in recent years to open up new avenues for Black actors.

The latest example is a new all-Black revival of Tennessee Williams’ Pulitzer Prize-winning play, “A Streetcar Named Desire,” set to open April 22 at Broadway’s Broadhurst Theatre. Marlon Brando as Stanley Kowalski first screamed the immortal line, “Hey Stella” in 1947 when “Streetcar” originally premiered on Broadway. The other leading members of that original cast included Kim Hunter, as Stanley’s wife, Stella; Jessica Tandy as Stella’s delusional sister, Blanche DuBois; and Karl Malden as Blanche’s scorned suitor, Mitch. The story centers around the emotional unraveling of Blanche, a Southern belle hiding a tawdry

past, who moves into Stanley and Stella’s New Orleans apartment causing all manner of conflict and tragedy.

In this first all-Black Broadway revival, Blair Underwood is cast as the brutish Stanley; Daphne Rubin-Vega plays his wife, Stella; Nicole Ari Parker is Blanche; and Wood Harris is cast as Mitch. Five-time Grammy winning jazz trumpeter, Terrence Blanchard has composed original music for the play.

The revival is being co-produced by Stephen Byrd, founder of Front Row Productions and his business partner, Alia Jones. Byrd and Jones are the African-American producers who brought the all-Black revival of another Tennessee Williams masterpiece, “Cat on a Hot Tin Roof,” to Broadway in 2008. That play, which won the Laurence Olivier Award for Best Revival of a Play, starred Terrence Howard, Anika

Noni Rose, Phylicia Rashad and James Earl Jones.

From 1890 to 1910, most of the Blacks on Broadway were featured in African American minstrel shows, playing to all-White audiences. In the 1920s composers such as Eubie Blake and Noble Sissle popularized the Black Broadway musical. But it wasn’t until the 1935 production of George Gershwin’s Porgy and Bess that African Americans really hit it big on Broadway. The momentum has continued to build.

In the 1970s we saw Broadway plays like Purlie, Raisin, Ain’t Misbehavin, and The Wiz. With the 80s came shows like Dreamgirls and a number of plays by the great August Wilson, including Fences and Jitney. And since the 90s productions such as Bring in ‘da Noise, Bring in ‘da Funk, The Color Purple, Fela and Sister Act have attracted mainstream audi-

ences.

While these productions have resulted in more work for Black actors, Stephen Byrd and Alia Jones are still a rarity as full-time African American Broadway producers. Black superstar entertainers such as Alicia Keys (Stick Fly), Will Smith, Jay-Z and Jada Pinkett (Fela), Whoopi Goldberg (Sister Act) and Oprah Winfrey (The Color Purple) are making inroads as Broadway producers, but there is obviously room for many more.

We want to congratulate Stephen Byrd and Alia Jones and their award-winning director, Emily Mann, for bringing this new all-Black revival of “A Streetcar Named Desire” to Broadway. We can’t wait to see the usually debonair Blair Underwood in a T-shirt screaming, “Hey Stella.”

Marc H. Morial, former mayor of New Orleans, is president and CEO of the National Urban League

To Be Equal

“The landscape of any Tennessee Williams play is the human heart, and I have a cast of people with heart.”

– Emily Mann, Director of the new Broadway revival of “A Streetcar Named Desire” with an all-Black cast

Like Hollywood, Broadway has historically been reluctant to cast African Americans in main-

Get Out and Vote



Terry B. Jones
Publisher

lead us moving forward.

In these last few elections the number of registered voters casting ballots has been very low. We must do something to reverse this trend. For too many people have fought for us to secure this right and we cannot take for granted their courage and perseverance, and in not voting we are dishonoring the sacrifices so many made so we could fully participate in the democratic process. So today I ask you the citizens of this great City get out and vote.

New Orleans is a City where things are rapidly changing, and yes these are still difficult times for the City. But we must let our collective presence be felt at the polls. African-Americans are still the majority population in our City, but our voting numbers do not reflect this fact. We cannot

It is again time to get out to the polls to vote, this is as all elections important, so get out and let your voice be heard. I cannot stress more that we are at a critical time in the direction of our City and our nation. And it is incumbent upon us to have a hand in shaping what our City will look like and who will



continue to complain about others high jacking seats of power when we do not participate. In fact, we

can place whoever we desire in seats of elected office if we voted in larger numbers.

Today, I challenge you the citizens of New Orleans to begin to organize around voting. Go out and vote as a family or as groups of friends begin to ask questions of each other such as have you voted? It is time for us to have the same enthusiasm about voting that we have around the Saints, Jazzfest and Mardi Gras.

In these tough times we must prioritize voting, it is the keys that will unlock the doors of opportunity and continued progress for our community. This is not the time to sit by idly on the sidelines. We need people on the field working to ensure we elect candidates that will fight for those whose voices are not always heard. So we at Data News Weekly encourage you to get out and vote and have a hand in molding the future of the City.

Dedication to Education



Edwin Buggage
Editor-in-Chief

ple write off as problems are in fact brilliant kids who have not been given the tools or map that would assist and support them in reaching their full potential. As I have worked with so-called at risk youth what I see is less of the achievement gap that has been written about ad nauseum and more of an aspiration and social gap. What I experience are kids where the social and environmental factors play a part shaping what these young people become. And I feel these are two of the main things that separate those who achieve success and those who do not.

After years of working at Xavier University where I see young people working and competing at the highest levels, I beam with pride when I talk about them and their successes. But there is what I call a wide divide, where across the canal which separates the university, from the young people of Gert Town area where crime, vice and despair exist. Where young people particularly males fall prey to the traps of low achievement and aspirations and it is my feeling that this has to become some-

thing that is unacceptable. But the question for us today is what are we to do as a community?

This brings me back to a young man who I worked with I will call him K. He was a young man who fell through the cracks. He was at the time a 16-year old boy from Gert Town enrolled in a local high school and came into Xavier University Library to use the internet and it was soon discovered that he was semi-literate and had only basic math skills. Soon I began working with him and it was a pleasure to see him light up when he learned new things. I talked to him about having goals in life and not just myself but people all over campus took him under their wing. I felt this young man had so much potential, but it was not nurtured and outside of the university experience; when he left the confines of the campus he had to deal with a dysfunctional home environment and a neighborhood where being tough or cool was favored over being smart. And in a community where the aspirations for many of the young males were to become an athlete, an entertainer or deal drugs as opposed

to something that they could control the odds of their success by putting in the time and effort and reap the rewards of their hard work in obtaining their goals.

I regret to say eventually, K stopped coming to campus to use the library and recently I saw him downtown in Popeye's with what I assume was his family and friends. And what I saw disappointed me, I saw a young man who was able to show compassion, vulnerability and willing to learn new things transformed into a loud, vile, foul mouthed, disrespectful young man who was headed down the wrong path. When I talked to him I could see in his eyes that he was still the little guy I knew in the library, but felt he could not be that person at home and in his neighborhood. This I feel is shameful that we allow so many of our young men to fall prey to so many negative things in the name of keeping it real. K is like so many of our young people, diamonds in the rough that never get a chance to shine, where there lights are dimmed way to early.

So when I think of education

reform, I feel it is our charge today to have all hands being on deck. It is not simply the job of the school and the teachers. A bureaucracy whether it is the one in place or reform efforts will not change the lives of the kids who are the neediest in any significant way. It is up to the parents, the churches, and the entire community working together to give young people the things they need to be successful. We must begin to again celebrate academic achievement as much as we do great athletes or entertainers. We must again become a village of elders working together to push our children to strive for excellence. And when I say excellence I do not mean everyone has to become a doctor or lawyer, I mean strive to be a good and honest person of character who contributes in positive ways to family, community and society. And for us who are adults who interact with young people this is our responsibility to plant the seeds of success in them and nurture them to full bloom, because when our kids fail, it is not their failure alone, it is ours.

School Reform has become a hot button issue in the State of Louisiana. Where recently a group of educators went up to the State Capitol to fight changes proposed by Governor Bobby Jindal and while I am a proponent of fixing a broken school system. There are many other factors that inhibit why students achieve at low levels. I believe that reforming schools is only a small piece of a larger puzzle that is education. And that ultimately it is about how we reform our communities and what we value.

In my years of writing about education as well as working with young people, I've found that many of the kids that peo-

Making a Visit to the Doctor Without Leaving Home

By Akeya Dickson
NNPA Nat'l Correspondent

WASHINGTON (NNPA) – Sometimes you can't make it to the doctor. You don't have a way to get there, you're bedridden, or you may have simply forgotten. Cueing up a Skype session with your physician might be the most efficacious solution to getting immediate care, avoiding a missed appointment (and \$40 co-pay), and to skipping the marathon waiting room sessions and flipping through out dated issuemagazines.

A healthcare system anchored in technology could eventually become the norm if strict privacy regulations outlined by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act shift are maintained, according some cutting-edge health experts. Some hospital administrators and physicians

are eager to embrace new technology and new possibilities. But they have professional limits, restrictions on disseminating health records and the need to protect personal privacy.

The ideas and possibilities were batted around – and sometimes batted down – during the day-long symposium last week on U.S. Health Care at Howard University. A technology session included a presentation and roundtable discussion that posited new media solutions for assisting communities of color in managing their healthcare.

“The advantage that these communities have is the broad adoption of technology by minorities. It's largely an untold story,” said Howard Wolley, senior vice president of Strategic Alliance and Wireless Policy for Verizon Communications. “We're partnering

with all of the key stakeholders to work through the regulatory framework and the cultural barriers.”

And there is no shortage of barriers, including the need to protect privacy.

Beyond privacy issues, the questions that the healthcare industry and patients alike grapple with are just how far should the engagement go? Does it stop at text message notifications reminding patients of upcoming appointments? Or is an in-depth conversation about an ailment yet-to-be-chartered terrain?

“If we start to communicate with people through these technologies it will create a dialogue,” said Maisha Walker, a technology columnist for Inc. magazine and founder and president of Message Medium. “A lot of people are not that involved in their healthcare.

This will start conversations, even if it's from a point of irritation.”

Hospital administrators, policy-makers, doctors and telecommunication companies are trying to figure out how they can integrate technology into healthcare to improve services. The difference between healthcare companies and most other companies is that unlike some companies that focus on pushing product to consumers, their ultimate success may depend on how well they can persuade patients to become more involved their healthcare.

Lisa Fitzpatrick, a professor at the Howard University College of Medicine, and Kerry-Ann Hamilton, director of Strategic Marketing and Communications at Howard University, offered a glimpse into how technology can be the conduit to providing the best care. They shared preliminary results from a pilot study in Kenya that evaluated cell phone intervention in healthcare.

“In the case of Africa where they are leaps ahead of the United States, we're borrowing from successes there and looking at how they can help us,” Hamilton said.

Though the final results won't be released until June, Fitzpatrick said that they are already seeing fewer missed appointments, adherence to medication and client acceptability since patients have integrated health care with their cell phones.

Initial reaction to exploiting technology for medical purposes

has been enthusiastic.

“The practices that have implemented this type of care have reported positive results,” said Dr. Mark S. Johnson, dean of Howard University's College of Medicine. “Patients feel empowered and don't have to leave their homes to go to the doctor's office.”

Punctuated by easier coordination between healthcare providers, less paperwork and improved reports on quality of care, the number of physicians using health information technology has more than doubled from 17 percent to 34 percent since 2008, according to the Department of Health and Human Services.

While some laud the benefits of a tech and healthcare mix, others urge caution.

“There's no reticence from us to embrace technology, but the same way that we test a new drug, we have to do the same with this,” Johnson explained. “Sometimes we assume that technology is better, but if we don't prove that, then we don't know.”

No one knows the extent technology will be adopted.

“Each person will have to decide with his or her physician the extent of that interaction,” said Larry Warren, chief executive officer of Howard University Hospital. “For some period of time, we're going to be living in two worlds: one of high technology and one where we hope we can call and someone will pick up the phone.”

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Xavier University of Louisiana's Dr. Norman Francis Honored as Longest-Sitting College President

NAFEO and AT&T honor Dr. Francis with creation of new student scholarships

NEW ORLEANS (April 17, 2012) – Xavier University of Louisiana (XULA) President Dr. Norman C. Francis was honored by the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO) for his commitment to minority education and service to the community during the organization's annual meeting in Washington, D.C.. The AT&T-NAFEO Francis Fellows Award, a new need-based, exemplary achievement, student grant has been created in his name.

Dr. Francis has served as President of XULA for 44 years, making him the longest-sitting college president in the United States. NAFEO announced the inaugural Francis Fellows awards, which consists of two \$5,000 awards that will go to two Xavier students, and one \$5,000 award that will go to a student from each Dillard University, Grambling University, Southern University, and Southern University New Orleans. The students, selected by the schools, are currently enrolled, full-time students



Dr. Norman Francis

in good standing, majoring in the sciences; computer sciences/technology; engineering; mathematics; physics, health professions; law; economics; teaching in a scientific field or any other discipline commonly referred to as STEM disciplines.

For outstanding achievement, the NAFEO Noble Prize was also

created to honor the many distinguished faculty and researchers serving Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) or Predominately Black Institutions (PBIs). Because of their commitments to the mission of their respective institutions, the passion for their work, and their love for assisting students with

great promise, the Noble Prize gives these first-rate professionals a token of the heartfelt appreciation of the entire black, higher-education community and its partners.

The NAFEO Distinguished Alumni citations were also presented to outstanding alumni of HBCUs and PBIs. Candidates are nominated by their alma mater, and those selected have distinguished themselves in their professions and communities for excellence and altruism.

The two inaugural XULA Francis Fellows are sophomore biochemistry student Corey Arnold of Houston, TX (Cypress Falls High School) and freshman chemistry/pre-pharmacy major Cristal Wright of Zachary, LA (Baton Rouge Magnet High School). XU Division of Education Chair Dr. Rosalind Hale was selected as the Noble Prize winner; and Harry Johnson, a career attorney who served as President and C.E.O. of the Washington, D.C. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. National Memorial Project Foundation, was selected as Xavier's Distinguished Alumni.

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Malveaux/ Continued from page 8.

es, but also contributes generously to charitable causes (including the United Negro College Fund) to offer, beyond the Buffett plan, other keys to tax fairness. I'd ask him whether investment income should be taxed at an equal or higher rate than earnings. And I'd ask him what kind of coalition is needed to turn the Buffett plan into public policy.

STUDENTS – While President Obama has vigorously defended Pell Grants, Romney would not only eliminate these grants but many other social programs. Furthermore, students pay more than 6 percent interest on federal loans, while some of the bailout banks paid less than 1 percent interest on their loans. If we believe that children are our future, why aren't our future workers, students, more highly considered in the budget process?

I'd ask Mitt Romney what his horizon is for U.S. prosperity and what role today's students play in that prosperity. I'd ask him why he is opposed to Pell grants, and what he thinks of the interest differential between the way students are treated and bailout banks are treated.

Before I ask President Obama anything on education, I'd thank him for his fight to protect HBCUs and other colleges. Then I'd ask about the interest differential, and about his progress on his pledge to restore the U.S. to world leadership in educational attainment.

Now that we don't have the distraction of debate about peripheral issues, maybe we can get down to business to compare and contrast the candidates.

Julianne Malveaux is president of Bennett College for Women in Greensboro, N.C.

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