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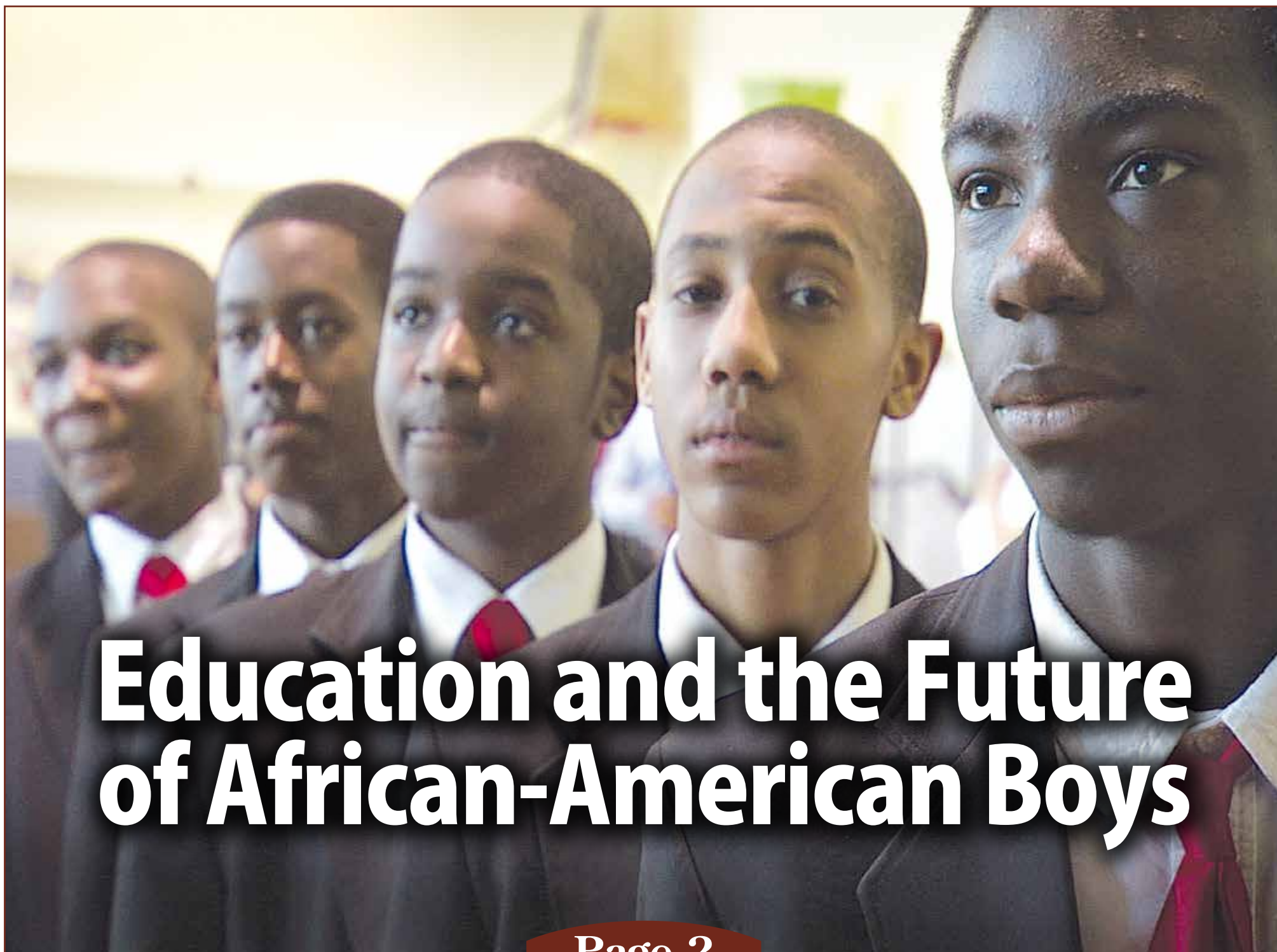


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**Kurte Pellerin
Turns 54**

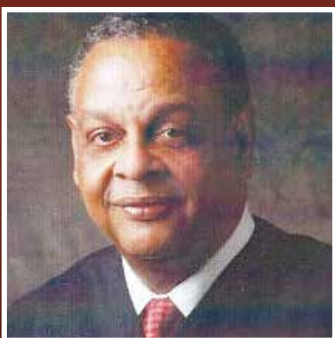
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Education and the Future of African-American Boys

Part 1



We are in a crisis as it relates to Black male dropout rates particularly in urban settings such as New Orleans and other large cities ranges from 50% to 70% annually.

By Edwin Buggage

Education and the Challenge of the 21st Century

As we begin another school year, we will be facing the challenges of how are we to educate our young people to be competitive in a society that requires new skill sets. Technology and global competition has made the U.S., a country that came to

define innovation in the 20th Century no longer having the designation of the world's foremost superpower. Today, there is no Cold War to define an US vs. Them paradigm. Today, the race for global dominance have been replaced by a spirit of co-operation in a world that is more interconnected than at any time in the world's history.

In the 21st Century we are satellites of power, interwoven into a tapestry that has created a mosaic that is unfolding into a world where a sharing of power and resources are paramount. It has become

a place where intellectual might have replaced military strength. In the U.S. as demographic shifts changes the landscape the question becomes where the people will come from that will lead tomorrow? And how does a country reconcile itself and work to develop one of its most vital and underutilized resources; this is without a doubt the nurturing and development of African-American boys that will enable them to reach their full potential is a vital asset that can propel this country into the forefront of innovations in the twenty first century.

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P.O. Box 57347, New Orleans, LA 70157-7347 | Phone: (504) 821-7421 | Fax: (504) 821-7622
editorial: datanewseditor@bellsouth.net | advertising: datanewsad@bellsouth.net

Terry B. Jones CEO/Publisher Glenn Jones VP Advertising & Marketing Cheryl Mainor Managing Editor Edwin Buggage Editor Calla Victoria Executive Assistant June Hazeur Accounting	Contributors Edwin Buggage Damekia Morgan Marc Morial Glenn Summers Art Direction & Production MainorMedia.com Editorial Submissions datanewseditor@bellsouth.net Advertising Inquiries datanewsad@bellsouth.net
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Young Urban Males: An Endangered Species?

We are in a crisis as it relates to Black male dropout rates particularly in urban settings such as New Orleans and other large cities ranges from 50% to 70% annually. According to Dr. Jawanza Kunjufu, a noted scholar who has written the well-known multi-volume "Conspiracy to Destroy Black Boys" cites in his book "Reducing the Black Male Dropout Rate" that nearly 100,000 Black young men drop out of school every year. These numbers are staggering when you take into account the pipeline from high school dropout to jail every year, where African-Americans account for twelve percent of the population but 44 percent of those incarcerated. And in states like Louisiana that lock up more people than anywhere in the world, a fact that was uncovered in a series on Louisiana Prisons published recently by the Times Picayune. Also of note in Louisiana 74% of the state's inmates are African-American according to the Morehouse Male Initiative.

So as we look at a group of young men who are steeped in communities where their life chances are diminished significantly, the question for a society becomes what is to be done to give hope and direction to young African-American youth who have fallen through the cracks of society. And to ask itself how has it failed in educating these underserved youth? And what types of investments does the society at-large and the community and families in particular need to do to make sure that young African-American men are given opportunities to maximize their potential for success.

New Orleans: A City at the Crossroads and the Quest to Save Our Sons

Before Hurricane Katrina, the New Orleans Public School System overall performed at abysmal levels that warranted a state takeover of some of the schools that did not do well on high stakes testing. Afterwards controversial measures were taken after Hurricane Katrina to reconfigure schools in the City. Following Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans has become a social petri dish and testing ground for disaster capitalism. Today a City with a shrinking population according to the 2010 Census has more Public Charter Schools than any city in the nation garnering mixed results.

While there are some who tout their success with rising test scores, this news runs concurrently, with New Orleans continuing to be listed among the top of the most dangerous cities not just in the U.S. but the world. And most of the victims of fatal shootings are African-American males. According to a federal study as reported by CNN it states that 87% of victims were male and 91.5% were Black, in its findings it also noted that 90% were killed with firearms and 40% was in their 20s and 13.5% in their teens. When you look at these numbers it is an undeniable reality that in urban areas African-American males are becoming ensnared in a web of activities and an environment where their lives are in danger at horrific rates.

So the question becomes as the City and nation enters a new school year is how to save the lives of young men. Because this trend must stop of young boys dying before they get a chance to live. And some of these communities are a place that has become rife with complacency at this epidemic that is affecting the welfare of African-American boys. While there are people out in the community working to end the senseless violence, there is not enough outrage in our communities where young men dying have become for some the equivalent of keeping box scores at a ball game. Or worse that both a community and law enforcement take a blasé approach to solving Black on Black violence and also not found a way to work together to keep the community safe from predators that endanger the lives of its residents.

Education is a Community Investment that Pays Dividends

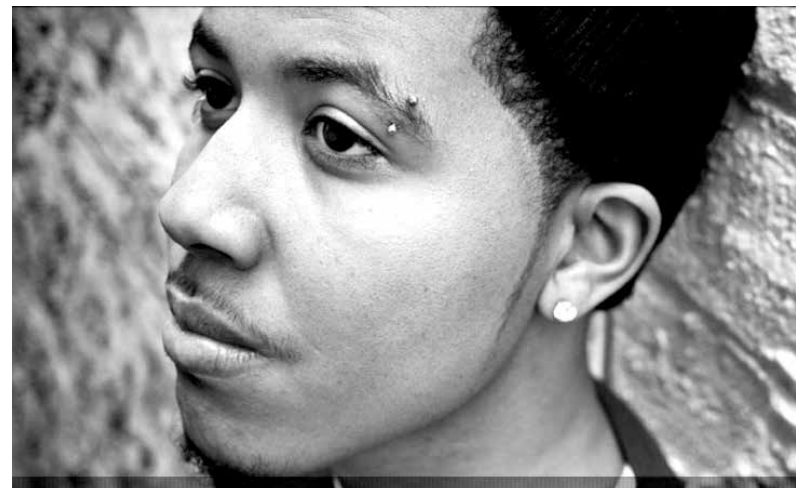
It is a known fact that educational attainment has historically been the surest route to the middle class, even in a downturned economy, and according to a report by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), based in Paris, France reports shows that on average a high school dropout in the U.S. is 50% more likely to earn a low income throughout their lives in the workplace and is more likely to be incarcerated.

In the history of African-Americans educational attainment and hard work has been touted as the great equalizer and that is something that seems to be lost in an age of instant gratification and the worshipping of material

things without sacrifice. It is time for a community to rethink itself for the challenges of the 21st Century and re-invest its efforts in saving the lives of young men.

It is incumbent upon a community to again think of itself as a village; working together to raise its boys to become men of character, and understanding that it takes hard work to reap the rewards of a society that is changing. And it is time to get rid of a mindset where sagging pants symbolize a sagging mind, and realize that it is up to the whole family and the community to make sure that our young men can become productive citizens and aspire to reach higher. And that the wick can be lit to light a fire to begin creating the building blocks of young men becoming addicted to learning and not the streets.

So as a society changes a community must change to work to save the lives of its young men. Our communities across America must pledge to become more vigilant in saving the lives of our young African-American men from the vices of drugs, crime



and settling for lives of mediocrity. And it is incumbent upon members of the community to demand better quality schools for their children and become staunch advocates for keeping our neighborhoods safe and saving the lives of our young boys.

For they are our future and we must nurture them and give them the tools to be productive and successful members of society, it is us who must demand excellence in all areas of our lives if we and our positive seeds are to be sown and grown in a way that is

strong to survive the storms that lie ahead. We must rededicate ourselves to education and its importance, for it is their pathway to success and is something that can in some instances save their lives. For this is our charge as a community, because when our young men fail it is not their failure alone, but the failure of a community. So it is time to roll up your sleeves and begin to build future leaders not just for the City, state, or nation, but for the world.

Part 2 will look at solutions and people making a difference in the lives of African-American Boys.

Legal Notice

A Class Action Settlement About Chinese Drywall May Affect You

A Settlement has been reached in a class action lawsuit involving drywall imported to the U.S. from China. The lawsuit claims that this Chinese Drywall caused property damage and personal injuries.

The companies being sued are distributors, suppliers, builders, developers, and installers who were associated with Chinese Drywall. Some of these companies ("Participating Defendants") and some of their insurance companies ("Participating Insurers") have agreed to a Settlement. The Participating Defendants and the Participating Insurers deny they did anything wrong.

Who's Included?

You are likely included in the Class if you have any claim for property damage or personal injuries related to Chinese Drywall installed anywhere in the U.S., except for in Virginia. For the specific legal definition of the Class, please visit the website or call the phone number below.

What Can You Get?

Under the Settlement, Participating Defendants and Participating Insurers will contribute \$80 million into a Settlement Fund. At a later date, after other Chinese Drywall Settlements are resolved, the Court will approve a plan to distribute the Settlement Fund to Class Members. At that time, Class Members may receive payments for their damages. You can register at the website below to be updated if a claims process is available.

Your Other Rights

If you do nothing, you remain in the Class and you may be eligible to receive Settlement benefits. You will be bound by all the Court's decisions. If you do not want to be legally bound by the Settlement, you must exclude yourself from the Settlement. The deadline to exclude yourself is **September 28, 2012**. If you do not exclude yourself you will not be able to sue the Participating Defendants or the Participating Insurers for any claim relating to the lawsuit. If you stay in the Settlement, you may object to all or part of it by **September 28, 2012**. The Court will hold a hearing on **November 13, 2012** to consider whether to approve the Settlement. The Court has appointed attorneys to represent the Class. If you wish, you or your own attorney may ask to appear and speak at the hearing at your own cost.

This notice is only a summary. Use the information below to get detailed information, and to register to receive future notifications about this Settlement and related Chinese Drywall Settlements.

Call: 1-877-418-8087 or Visit www.ChineseDrywallClass.com

Shoot Ya Best Shot!

Getting Down To Coffee Business

Photos by Glenn Summers

Tara Galbreth (pictured right) hosted a coffee and tea mixer at her home with friends and family to introduce her home based business selling organic coffees and teas.



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Miller Time Stand UP New Orleans Finalist



Actor/Comedian Kevin Hart (R) congratulates local comic, Lavar Walker, winner of the 2012 Stand Up. It's Miller Time New Orleans semi-finals. Hart is a special judge for Miller Lite's comedy talent search competition, currently making stops throughout the country. Walker and three New Orleans-area comedians, selected via online votes, competed to advance to the Las Vegas finale on August 30th, and the chance to win \$10,000. For more information, please visit www.StandUpItsMillerTime.com. (Photo courtesy of MillerCoors/Jonathan Bachman).

Shoot Ya Best Shot!

Kurte Pellerin Turns 54

Photos by Terry Jones

Kurte Pellerin did it again. He hosted his 54th Birthday Party at LeRoux's Supper Club & Banquet Hall on Friday, August 3rd and it was best yet. Each year it grows and gets better. Music was provided by our own local R&B Singing Group, BRW. The entertainment was great, the food was delicious and plentiful, with a full house. Attendance gets larger each year. Everyone had a great time and they were happy to be a part of this annual event. See you next year and of course, Data was there!!



Pictured left to right are Dwight Deal, Jerome Pellerin, Kurte Pellerin, Rubin Detiege, and CJ Morgan. The group presented Kurte with a plaque commemorating his 54th Birthday and to thank him for all he does in the community and bringing people together.



R&B Singing Group BRW with their Band



June Hazeur and Kurte Pellerin



Attendees at the party



Left to right: Elliott, Robert and Vickie – friends of Kurte's



Left to right: Don, Lenora and Clyde – also friends of Kurte's

Data News Weekly

Scan the QR code to join our mailing list. We'll email you our newsletter, great information, coupons and special offers.



Last week in Shoot Ya Best Shot, the photos of "Actor helps New Orleanians in Need", were incorrectly credited. Those photos were shot by **Glenn Summers**. We apologize for the mistake.

One Change at a Time: Parents in New Orleans win Changes in their Student Code of Conduct

Damekia Morgan
Guest Columnist

The Recovery School District (RSD) has made significant improvements to their Student Code of Conduct, eliminating the option for schools to expel students for minor misbehavior like disrespect or willful disobedience. These changes come after organizing by parents and communities with Families and Friends of Louisiana's Incarcerated Children (FFLIC) and allies.

In RSD district-run public schools during the 2007-2008 school period, 3,537 students, or 1 in 4 students, were suspended out of school at least once according to Pushed Out a report published by FFLIC. This is more than double the statewide rate in Louisiana and over four times the national rate. Since the aforementioned period, the high rate of suspension has not changed drastically even though RSD has control over fewer schools.

In response to the high exclusionary rates, in 2007 FFLIC along with many organizations and community stakeholders came together with district

staff to revise the RSD Student Code of Conduct under the state statute La RS 17:416.8 on Discipline policy review committees. FFLIC has kept the pressure on, through local and statewide organizing efforts, and has played an intricate role in reshaping the RSD Student Code of Conduct as well changing the public debate around Louisiana's approach to school discipline.

In 2011, FFLIC organized with families and allies across the state to pass a bill that would prohibit elementary students from being suspended for minor infractions such as uniform violations. While the bill received bi-partisan support it was vetoed by Governor Jindal. But FFLIC continued to make it known that schools can no longer push kids out of school through suspensions and expulsions for minor infractions or multiple suspensions.

Changes to expulsion procedures

This year, the superintendent of the RSD has implemented some of our demands and has taken the lead on making progressive changes to improve the



way we approach school discipline in Louisiana. The RSD has made significant improvements to the expulsion process and procedures in the Code of Conduct. Under the newly revised policy, students can only be recommended for expulsion for reasons such as drugs, weapons, violence on another person, burglary, or other serious misbehaviors ("level three offenses"). A student can no longer be recommended for expulsion for disrespect or willful disobedience, uniform violations, or repeated suspensions for violations not listed as level three offenses.

In spite of the changes there is room for improvement around suspensions

During the revision process FFLIC made the suggestion to delete behaviors such as "willful disobedience" and its intent from the code, which is the "catch-all" infraction for suspending students for vague and subjective reasons. However, at this time the changes have not been made. The newly revised coded lists several "non-suspendable offenses" (level one) and several "suspendable offenses" (level two), and willful disobedience is listed as a suspendable offense.

While we see the changes made to the expulsion policies as a move in the right direction, the current list of non-suspendable and suspendable "offenses" may cause confusion for parents

when appealing suspensions. The newly updated code states that a student cannot be suspended for reasons such as dress code violations and talking in class at inappropriate times, but these non-suspendable reasons can be easily interpreted by adults as "willful-disobedience" which is still a suspendable "offense." As long as willful disobedience is still a suspendable offense, high numbers of students will continue to be removed from school for minor misbehavior.

As we look at the data and advocate with families we will continue to urge the RSD and other school districts to make willful-disobedience a non-suspendable "offense" especially for children attending elementary school. We urge others to get involved with your local school district discipline policy review committee and remember that the goal is to create policies that will protect a child's right to an education as they grow through childhood.

Damekia Morgan, staff member with Families and Friends of Louisiana's Incarcerated Children.

NUL 2012 Conference Success



Marc Morial
President and CEO
National Urban League

The National Urban League's 2012 Conference began with an announcement from President Barack Obama and concluded with words of inspiration from Stevie Wonder.

This year's Conference, in my hometown of New Orleans, may have been our most successful ever. We were honored to have

President Obama deliver the opening address, in which he announced an important education initiative and addressed the growing problem of firearms violence.

On Wednesday, July 25, President Obama announced an executive order establishing the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for African Americans.

"A higher education in a 21st century cannot be a luxury. It is a vital necessity that every American should be able to afford," he said.

Obama also made reference to the mass shooting earlier this month, saying, "a lot of gun owners would agree that AK-47s belong in the hands of soldiers, not on the streets of our cities."

The President's remarks kicked off three days of workshops, seminars and panel discussions focused on the theme "Oc-

cupy the Vote: Employment and Education Empower the Nation."

I am astonished by the efforts that are underway in this nation to roll back the progress that we've made on voting rights. The rise of the modern-day poll tax and literacy tests, disguised as sane and sensible voter identification laws, restrictions on important innovations like early voting, and handcuffs on community-based organizations that want to register people to vote are nothing other than modern-day Jim Crow methods in the clothing of James and Mary Crow, Esquire.

Attendance at the conference – both registered attendees and community members attending free events – approached record numbers, with nearly 5,000 registered attendees, more than 9,000 passing through the NUL Experience Expo, and 2,000 participat-

ing in the Career and Networking Fair.

Nearly 600 youth are participated in the Project Ready College Fair on Saturday, where they met with representatives from at least 60 colleges, universities and college access organizations, and scholarship organizations, who assisted in the college application process.

I am extremely grateful to New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu and Urban League of Greater New Orleans President and CEO Nolan Rollins for welcoming the Conference and for their leadership in making it a success.

No other city in the nation represents so well the strength and vitality of the multiculturalism we advocate and support, and no two civic leaders are more devoted. On Saturday, July 28, I was honored to join Nolan Rollins in

dedicating the local affiliate's new Clarence L. Barney Head Start Center, named for the affiliate's longtime President and CEO.

The Conference also was the setting for a celebration of the 70th anniversary of the National Urban League Guild, an auxiliary to the League focused on fundraising and volunteerism. Congratulations to Guild President Frankie M. Brown. I cannot imagine where we would be without the Guilds as a force.

The Conference concluded Saturday, July 28, with the Whitney M. Young Awards Gala, where recording artist and activist Stevie Wonder and U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder received the League's "Living Legend" Award.

I look forward to the 2013 Conference in Philadelphia!

Judge Lombard presented the George W. Crockett, Jr. Lifetime Achievement Award

Honor presented by National Bar Association Judicial Council

Judge Edwin A. Lombard was presented with the George W. Crockett, Jr. Lifetime Achievement Award by the National Bar Association Judicial Council this past summer. George W. Crockett, Jr. was a U.S. Congressman from Michigan who was a member of the important Judiciary and Foreign Affairs committees. On the latter he was elevated in 1987 to Chairman of the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs, which has jurisdiction over the vital area of Central America.

Judge Lombard was recognized for this honor because of a lifetime commitment to the people who he cared most about. Judge Lombard was one of the first African-Americans to be admitted to Tulane University (Rockefeller Fellowship Award). While attending he founded a group called African-American Congress at Tulane which is now over 40 years old and services the needs of African-American students at Tulane.

Before attending Law School, Judge Lombard was hired by the "Voter Education Project" under the leadership of Mr. Vernon



Judge Edwin A. Lombard

Jordan to conduct a voter registration drive in New Orleans. As a result of this drive, Ernest "Dutch" Morial was elected State Representative in 1967. Dutch Morial later became the first African-American Mayor in New Orleans. After completing this task, Judge Lombard attended

Loyola Law School as a Roosevelt Fellow.

In 1973 at the age of twenty-seven, Judge Lombard was elected as Clerk of Criminal District Court, one of the youngest African-American elected Officials in the Country. He became the first African-American Clerk in

Louisiana since Reconstruction. He was also the Chief Election Officer in New Orleans, the first African-American to hold the title in the South. During his tenure he participated in elections all over the world in places such as Bosnia (Dayton Peace Accord), the Indonesian Presidential Election and South African Local Elections.

Judge Lombard was elected to the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals, where he took office in 2003 and he is still serving. He is the longest serving African-American elected official in the country.

After Hurricane Katrina, The Louisiana Supreme Court appointed him as Supernumerary Judge to rebuild the Criminal Justice System in Orleans Parish. He was instrumental in restoring thousands of pieces of evidences needed for criminal trials. In 2007 he was also appointed as a member of the Judiciary Commission of Louisiana for a term of four years where he served as chairman in 2009 and 2010.

Judge Lombard was recently elected President of NBA/Louisiana Judicial Council.

Citywide Baby Shower Held For New And Expecting Moms



In honor of World Breastfeeding Week, Daughters of Charity Health Centers (DCHC), in collaboration with Amerigroup, Kiwanis Club of the Westbank Konnection, Dillard University's School of Public Health, and Healthy Start, hosted a Citywide Baby

Shower for new and expecting moms Friday, August 3 at Daughters of Charity Health Center in Carrollton, 3201 S. Carrollton Ave. A total of 151 guests were in attendance.

New and expecting moms received free breastfeeding information, baby items, Med-



icaid and WIC enrollment information, consultations with doctors, midwives and nutritionists, and others. In addition, several participants walked away with bonus shower gifts including baby strollers, car seats, baby bed, high chair, playpen, diapers, and

more adorable baby items.

For more than 175 years, the Daughters of Charity have provided access to high-quality, compassionate health care for all members of our community, including the insured, underinsured and uninsured.

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For more information, visit www.YourDiabetesInfo.org
or call **1-888-693-NDEP** (6337); TTY: 1-866-569-1162.

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