The Teacher Who Changed My Life

New America Media, The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Partner with Ethnic Media to Sponsor Contest Honoring Teachers

Story and Photos by Edwin Buggage

Honoring Teachers

As we conclude another school year, we see students taking a summer break and teachers getting a much needed rest as they prepare for the fall where they will again work hard teaching our youth and giving them the tools they need to be successful in society. Often castigated, underpaid and underappreciated for the work they do, but they are truly the unsung “heroes” and “sheros” in our community. Recently, New America Media through a grant by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation held an essay contest. Partnering with Ethnic Media and sponsoring contests in Atlanta, Memphis and New Orleans.

Contest Winners and Dedication to Education

At the New Orleans Public Library in New Orleans East, many of the participants, their teacher and families and Ethnic Media Partners gathered for the award ceremony. The winners in the 14 to 18 year old category were (Winner) Tyrone Clay, (Honorable Mention) Carnisha Tassin, (Honorable Mention) Lon don Taylor and the Special Judges Award went to Yolanda Andrade. In the Adult Category (Winner) Juwanda Ford-Williams, (Honorable Mention) Ari Line Dahney, (Honorable Mention) L’Issa Gates, (Honorable Mention) Jodaca Harrington. In the teacher in Memory Category, (Winner) Asali De Van Ecclesiastes, (Honorable Mention) Marie Agid, (Honorable Mention) Bertha Irons. The winners in the teenage and adult and the teachers they wrote about were awarded 500 dollars and the Teacher in Memory winner donated 500 dollars to a local school or charity.

During the event many of the winners and their teacher got up to speak. Maria S. George, the First Vice President of the Louisiana Retired Teachers Association was the Keynote
Cover Story, Continued from previous page.

Teaching is more than just a job; it is a calling. Throughout its storied history, the U.S. has become a great country because of immigration and amending itself into become a more just and fair nation where more of its citizens could access the American Dream. In the contest several essays touched on these themes. Bertha Irons and Patricia Thomas, in addition to writing amazing essays gave historical backdrops that charts the journey of African-Americans during the Civil Rights Era. In her essay Ms. Thomas speaks of her fourth grade teacher Ms. Porshe in 1963-64 New Orleans. “Mrs. Porshe had the ability to make every student in her class feel unique and special,” she writes of her teacher. “She demanded that we treat each other with dignity and respect.” In her essay she recalls a day that America mourned when President Kennedy was assassinated where Mrs. Porshe shed tears and told her class what a great man he was and all the good things he had done and was going to do for Black people in America. This great woman was one of the reasons Ms. Thomas became an educator working for several decades teaching special education, speaking of her career and Mrs. Porshe, she says, “I truly enjoyed teaching children and helping them overcome obstacles and become successful in whatever they chose to pursue. After Hurricane Katrina I retired from teaching in the schools, but I have never ceased to be an educator, I still am dedicated to helping young people and I still think of the great impact Mrs. Porshe had on me.”

In Bertha Irons Essay she spoke of her teacher at Walter L. Cohen High School, Mr. Lee, who gave her the wings to fly by helping her enroll in Xavier University in the 1950’s. In her life she became a teacher and poured herself into the well of knowledge that many young people drank from during her time in the classroom. Something she says she could have not done without the help of Mr. Lee. On this day Mr. Lee’s daughter was present at the event, with her and Ms. Irons meeting for the first time. Overall it was a day filled with emotion as.

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100 Black Men of America Convene in New Orleans

Photos by Glenn Summers

The organization of 100 Black Men of America held its 27th Annual Conference here last weekend at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. Pictured are some highlights from the event.
Data Zone

Shoot Ya Best Shot!

100 Black Men VIP Reception

Photos by Vincent Sylvain

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Fondest Moments with Fathers

Question: Can you talk about the most memorable time with father and lessons of life learned?

Jennifer Carter

“The fondest memory of my father, the late Alderman Gregory Carter of St. Louis, Missouri is when I graduated from Xavier University. I have never seen a bigger smile on his face. He said it was the best investment he had ever made, and I will never forget his tears of joy on that day.”

Tommy E. Curtain, Jr.

“My father’s name is Tommy E. Curtain, Sr. The most memorable time I had with my father is when I asked him ‘what made you marry my mother?’ He told me that they didn’t both have a lot of money, but that he loved her. He said, “they believed that they could build together.” The lesson he taught me was that you can’t be afraid to start from the beginning and grow. It’s very important to be patient.”

Bre’Anna Jolliff

“My most memorable time with my father, D’Broski Jolliff Sr., would have to be when my father took me out on a father/daughter date. On the date, he taught me how I should use my silver wear correctly, how to sit up without my elbows on the table, and always place the napkin in my lap. He as well taught me how a date should go and how a man should treat a lady. Experiencing all of this taught me to never settle for less, and have high standards not only for myself, but as well for the potential guys I was to encounter along the way. I really appreciate my daddy alot & all he does for me. He makes this date yearly now & I always look forward to each one of them.”

By Corey Anderson
Data News Weekly Columnist

Carl Winslow, Archie Bunker, Nigel Thornberry. These are just a few examples of what one might point out to be something we call a father. But what exactly is a “father”? Although they are fictional characters, they exuded, to the entire world, the qualities that we consider to be of a great father: caring, watchful, protective, using brawn when necessary, and providing for his child(ren) to further their growth whether it be in a mental, physical, or spiritual aspect. However, some people neither have this father nor “caring figure” consistently or have never experienced these qualities from a person other than the woman in their lives. We tend to look at these individuals as deprived. However, this is why we give some of the strongest women in our lives the title of mother and father.

Due to the upcoming “Father’s Day” this weekend, Data News Weekly wanted to talk about the most memorable time with your father and what you gained from it. Would you pass it on (since all lessons aren’t positive)? How did they affect your outlook on life?
Terrilyn Monette’s Car Found Decomposed Body Inside

Authorities pulled a missing teacher’s car from a New Orleans bayou Saturday and police said there was a decomposed body inside.

Authorities couldn’t immediately say whether the body was Terrilyn Monette, who was last seen leaving a New Orleans bar not far from the bayou in the early morning hours of March 2. She wouldn’t have had to cross the waterway to get home.

Monette was a Long Beach, Calif., native who moved to Louisiana to teach. Her family has been flying back and forth from California to look for her. They attended a prayer vigil Friday and appealed for FBI intervention, accusing the New Orleans Police Department of mishandling the case. The department has denied the accusations.

Monette’s mother, Toni Enclave, was among the family members who came to the scene Saturday.

“I don’t understand why it took them so long to find her car,” Enclave told The Times-Picayune. “We decided to sonar this area again, and more heavily, and it got a hit,” Badon told The Associated Press. "A diver got into the water and found the car . . . .”

Terrilyn Monette

I’m just overwhelmed. It doesn’t make sense.”

Louisiana state Rep. Austin Badon helped spearhead the search. He said he and a volunteer diver resurveyed the waterway and found the car.

“We decided to sonar this area again, and more heavily, and it got a hit,” Badon told The Associated Press. A diver got into the water and found the car, which was covered with a film when it was pulled out. Badon described the body as “heavily decomposed.”

John Gagliano, the Orleans Parish coroner’s chief investigator, said he could not immediately tell if the body was a man or a woman. Gagliano told The Advocate an autopsy will be performed Monday to determine the identity of the body and cause of death.

Monette was a second-grade teacher at Woodland West Elementary School in Harvey, which is located across the Mississippi River from New Orleans. She had come to Louisiana through a program that recruits teachers to area schools and had been nominated for a teacher of the year honor.

After going to a bar, her friends left her at her car. They told police she planned to sleep before driving home. She left a parking lot about 5:15 a.m. and a traffic camera captured her making a turn in New Orleans’ City Park.

Monette’s disappearance sparked a broad search handled in part by the Texas group Equusearch. A number of cars were pulled earlier from Bayou St. John as part of the search, some of which had been reported stolen.

“Unfortunately it wasn’t what we were looking for in terms of finding her alive and well, but it does bring the family some closure,” Badon said.

Terrilyn Monette

Statewide Lemonade Day Local Winners Announced

Lemonade Day Louisiana set for May 3, 2014 next year

Last month, more than 13,000 youth across Louisiana participated in the state’s third annual Lemonade Day on Saturday, May 4, 2013. Immediately following Lemonade Day, participants are encouraged to submit their business results information via the Lemonade Day website. This form is used to properly document how each participant tracked their business results. Winners will receive a gift basket from Rainin’ Cajun’s Chicken Fingers. Additionally, Junior Achievement of Greater New Orleans will honor local winners at a special event at 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 11, 2013 at its headquarters. Located at 5100 Orleans Avenue in New Orleans, Lemonade Day winners are already gearing up for Lemonade Day Louisiana 2014, which is set to take place on Saturday, May 3, 2014.

Winners for Statewide honors and also the New Orleans and Northshore market are listed below.

Statewide Overall

Top Producer
Name: Cultural Elite Dance Academy
Location: New Orleans, La (outside of the Jazz Festival)
Profit: $1597
Donation: $100 to Breast Cancer Research

New Orleans

Top Producer
Name: Cultural Elite Dance Academy
Location: New Orleans
Profit: $1597
Donation: $100 to Breast Cancer Research

Best Business Plan
Name: Norman Price Wildcatters
Location: New Orleans
Profit: $465
Donation: $100 to SPCA

Northshore

Top Performer
Name: Shane Barrow and Northshore
Profit: $521
Donation: Metropolitan Stand: Pucker Up

Best Business Plan
Name: Terrilyn Monette
Location: New Orleans
Profit: $280
Donation: $100 to St. Jude’s Hospital

Data News Weekly, a sponsor of Lemonade Day 2013, congratulates all of the winners, and all those who participated in the event!
Odds of a child becoming a professional athlete: 1 in 16,000

Odds of a child being diagnosed with autism: 1 in 88

Some signs to look for:

- No big smiles or other joyful expressions by 6 months.
- No babbling by 12 months.
- No words by 16 months.

To learn more of the signs of autism, visit autismspeaks.org