

Lighting The Road To The Future

New Orleans

Data

News Weekly

"The People's Paper"

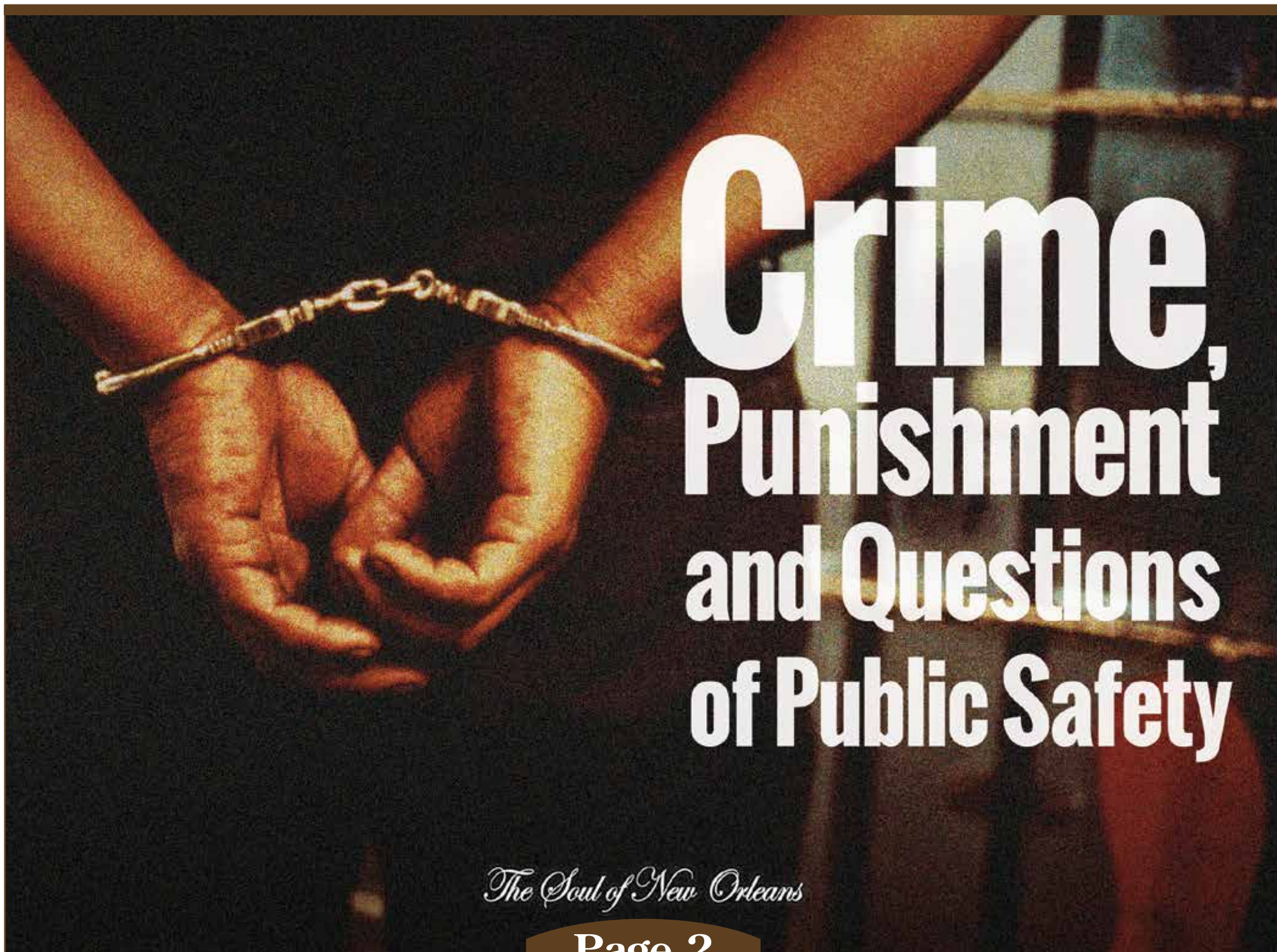


FREE
COPY

**Costco Comes
to New Orleans**

**Data Zone
Page 6**

September 28 - October 4, 2013 48th Year Volume 22 www.ladatanews.com



Crime, Punishment and Questions of Public Safety

The Soul of New Orleans

Page 2



**State & Local
NOLA Job Corps
Graduates 79**

Page 9

**Trailblazer
Rev. Samson
"Skip" Alexander**



Page 5

Crime, Punishment and Questions of Public Safety

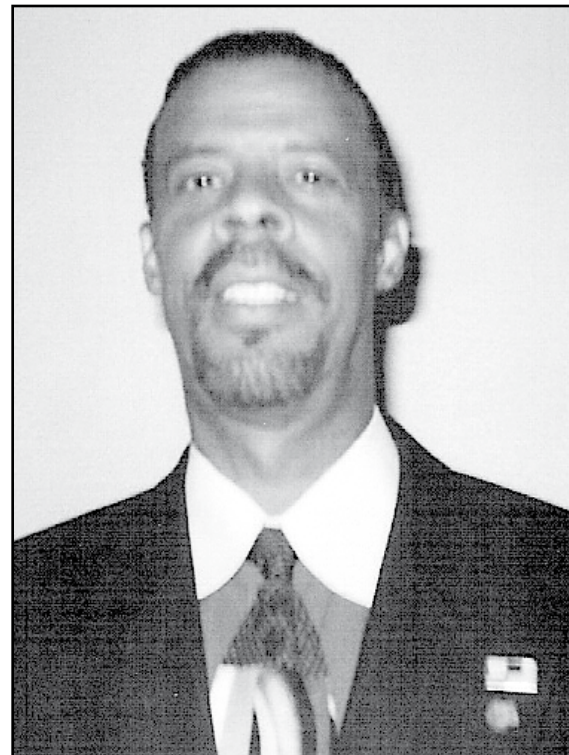
Data News looks at The Vera Institute's Pretrial Services Program and asks is it good or bad for New Orleans.



Rev. Tom Watson
Pastor & President, Family of New Hope Inc.



Attorney Tracie Washington
CEO, Louisiana Justice Institute



John Leftridge
Owner, Abracadabra Bail Bonds

By Edwin Buggage
Data News Editor

New Orleans Introduces Pretrial Services But Not Without Controversy

Nearly 18 months ago the Pretrial Services Program was introduced in New Orleans and is being run by the Vera Institute of Justice, a non-profit headquartered in New York who opened a local office funded with \$623,000 from the city budget. On

their website it states, 'That people should be detained pending adjudication only when they pose a significant risk to public safety or of flight. The design of New Orleans Pretrial Services incorporates universal screening interviews with defendants and investigation of information prior to their first appearance, the use of an empirical risk-assessment instrument to guide release decisions, the ability to supervise defendants, and a court-date reminder system to help defendants meet their obligations.'

The work they perform inside of Orleans Parish Prison is screeners interview those arrested and give them a risk score ranging from 0-24. They provide this information to judges doing bond hearings saying it is a predictor of whether a defendant can be safely released back into the community pending trial. While the program is just coming to New Orleans, the Vera Institute has been around since 1961 with the goal of helping poor people who are not threats to the public not sit in jail unnecessarily, costing

cities money and further adversely affecting the lives of persons already struggling to survive; Jon Wool Director of the New Orleans Office of the Vera Institute told Data News Weekly.

Since moving into pretrial services in New Orleans critics of the Vera Institute warns that it is mixing criminal justice with social justice in a way that may result in more problems than they intend to solve. For a little background, after Hurricane Katrina the Vera Institute was brought in by then City Councilman James Carter, who

**Cover Story, Continued
on next page.**

Cover Image by Getty Images

INSIDE DATA

Cover Story	2	Data Zone	6
State & Local News . . .	4	Commentary.	8
Trailblazer	5	National News	11

DATA NEWS WEEKLY

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

Edwin Buggage

Editor

Calla Victoria

Executive Assistant

June Hazeur

Accounting

Contributors

Edwin Buggage

City of New Orleans

Flozell Daniels

Lee A. Daniels

Benjamin Todd Jealous

Glenn Summers

MG Calla Victoria

Art Direction & Production

MainorMedia.com

Editorial Submissions

datanewseditor@bellsouth.net

Advertising Inquiries

datanewsad@bellsouth.net

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.

Cover Story, Continued from previous page.

was Chairman of the Criminal Justice Committee to do a study of the Criminal Justice System in New Orleans and was funded with federal monies. Leaders from across criminal justice and elected official embraced Vera and its recommendations, one being reducing the number of people incarcerated because of the inability to make a bond or those charged with low level offenses. Leading to the city council with the support of council person Susan Guidry who chairs the Crime Criminal Justice Committee to have Vera continue working on criminal justice reform except now with City dollars.

Some of its most staunch critics say the City giving the Vera Institute a no bid contract is unfair and a waste of taxpayers' dollars and that those monies allocated to the Vera Institute could be used more wisely to impact the effects of crime on local communities. In a City post Katrina where conflicts surrounding race and class have some locals feeling they are not part of the equation of the "New" New Orleans they see the Vera Institute and their work as an affront and another attempt to further disenfranchise locals. "In theory, I am not against Pretrial Services I feel it can be a good thing, keeping low level offenders who have been arrested from sitting in jail for long periods of time," says Tom Watson a local pastor who has 30 years of experience in social services and has a non-profit called Family of New Hope Inc. "But my problem lies in the fact that after Katrina it seems that everyone wants to come to our City and make money off of us when there are local people who could do some of the work for less cost or no cost to the taxpayers. For the Vera Institute this year to get over six hundred thousand dollars of city money in a no bid contract I feel is unfair."

Mother's Day Mass Shooting Puts Spotlight On Pretrial Services and Work of Vera Institute

Others have lined up to criticize the flaws in the assessment process Vera uses that they give to judges who have the discretion to factor into their decision when setting a bond. Critics say it does not accurately reflect the potential of an arrested person to commit another crime or appear in court? The Pretrial Program whether fairly or unfairly came under fire when the Mother's Day mass shooting suspect Akein Scott reportedly received a low score of 3 on a scale ranging from 0-24

where they use criminal history, work record, education and other factors, to assess whether an arrested person would be a flight risk or has the potential to endanger the community.

After his arrest in March on charges of possessing heroin and a handgun with an extended magazine, Akein Scott underwent a pre-trial risk assessment that labeled him unlikely to re-offend or fail to show up for court, and thus deserving of a relatively low bond amount, according to a report obtained by NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune. Also of note is Scott reportedly misled interviewers by saying he was presently enrolled in school at Talledega College in Alabama, but at the time of his interview he'd already left the university amidst trouble he had while there. In the Times Picayune Report Jon Wool, Director of the Vera Institute's New Orleans office said. "We try to verify residence and employment, which includes school and other things, and if we are unable to verify it, we take the defendant's word. That is another aspect that we intend to re-examine." This article caused a firestorm of criticism of the work of the Vera Institute, and some of the criminal justice leaders who initially embraced it have recently become reluctant to speak about the program on the record.

Pretrial Service is something new to a City where Commercial Bail Bond companies still handles the majority of cases where those arrested bond out of jail in addition to Cash Bonds and Attorney Bonds. And some in the bail bond industry feel that the Vera Institute getting involved in more serious cases may endanger citizens of the City and hinder law enforcement from being as effective if burdened with finding people who fail to appear in court and other services that commercial bail bondsman provide. "While there were many players involved in Akein Scott being released this is an instance where pretrial services needed not be involved, they should handle cases that are really low level crimes that do not involve firearms," says John Left ridge, Owner of Abracadabra Bail Bonds. Further, he feels that commercial bail bond companies are best suited to deal with violent offenders and felons, "In some instances you have people who will not show up to court; and we have the capacity to make sure that doesn't happens because we have a vested interest to make sure they get back to court and this is at no cost to the taxpayers ensuring the public safety."

Some City, Civic and Criminal Justice Leaders Support Pretrial Services and feel the Work of the Vera Institute is a Step in the right direction.

While the Pretrial Services Program is in its infancy in New Orleans retired Criminal District Court Judge Calvin Johnson praises the program and touts it as step in the right direction. "In one form or another in cities across America have some form of Pretrial Services Program and in my opinion it is much needed and can be helpful in assisting poor people and those who commit minor offenses where a lengthy stay in jail can affect their lives. Also I feel that it has already saved maybe twice as much as they've been funded, so I feel this is a good investment for the City and should continue."

Another proponent of Vera's efforts is Civic Activist Flozell Daniels, Jr., an experienced public policy community leader and is a member of the Mayor's Criminal Justice Working Group and CEO of the Foundation for Louisiana. "I feel the work they are doing is great because historically the Criminal Justice System has taken advantage of impoverished people especially minorities, they arrest more Blacks and this mass incarceration has little to no impact on increasing public safety." Continuing he says, "But let me be clear of course I am not talking about letting violent criminals go free, but those low level crimes where it costs the taxpayers more money when there are more effective ways to address these problems that usually go beyond the crimes people commit. Whether it is issues with drugs, alcohol, homelessness, unemployment or underemployment and a host of other social problems we have to realize that we cannot arrest our way out of and keeping people in jail unnecessarily in my view is not the solution."

Thus far the Vera Institute Pretrial Service Program in New Orleans has not been independently evaluated for its effectiveness, but in the coming weeks the U.S. Department of Justice National Institute of Corrections will give a report on the program. "I welcome the findings in the report and any recommendations they have to make the program more effective in reducing unnecessary long-term incarcerations, because that is the goal," Jon Wool told Data News Weekly.

Pre Trial Services Success: A Matter of Perspective

Philadelphia, Washington D.C. and Dallas are large urban cities with Pretrial Services and has had mixed results of success. Also of note is with every city being different a one size fit all comparison does not paint the full picture and can predict whether Pretrial Services will succeed or fail in New Orleans. But according to many of the proponents including Retired Judge Calvin Johnson he sees early signs of success "The figures I am hearing assuming that they are accurate is there is a 96% of people returning to court is encouraging."

On the other hand while Akein Scott was not released through pretrial services, the fact he received a low risk score is troubling to some who are afraid what happens when the risk score does not accurately reflect the actual risk? "I don't think the tool Vera uses to assess risk is as effective as it could be, also we have to look at who is being trained to do these evaluations; and also ask ourselves are we creating another

layer of bureaucracy when much of the information they give to judges is readily available already. Another thing that concerns me is since they are a non-profit that previously received federal money why is it now that they are getting City money, it seems like a bait and switch and what happens if they are not funded what happens to the service; will it continue or will they leave when the money is no longer available," says Attorney Tracie Washington, CEO of the Louisiana Justice Institute and talk Show Host on WBOK-AM1230 radio who has interviewed Vera Director Jon Wool.

Funding the Fight Against Crime and the Future of Pretrial Services

As the City nears budget hearings the first under a federal consent decree the 2014 budget promises to be even tougher than previous years. The City faces increased expenses due to the adoption of a federal consent de-

Cover Story, Continued
on page 10.

Educational Coach

LSUHSC-HDC seeks to hire an Educational Coach for an inclusive post-secondary education program for students with intellectual disabilities attending Delgado Community College. The overall charge of this position is to support youth with intellectual disabilities to participate successfully in academic, social, employment, and recreational opportunities on campus and in the community. Job duties include managing the on-campus peer support system, providing training and direct support to students and peer mentors (as needed), handling student data requirements, functioning as a liaison between project staff, campus, and participating in other activities of the LSUHSC Human Development Center, as required.

Applicant must have a Bachelor's degree and experience using Word, Excel, PowerPoint, good written and verbal communication skills, and the ability to problem solve collaboratively. Successful applicant must be willing to work flexible hours, including occasional evenings/weekends. In addition, must have valid Louisiana driver's license, state minimum insurance and use of vehicle during employment hours.

Please respond by sending e mail with attached Word documents only. Send cover letter, resume & references to hdcbofc@lsuhsc.edu . Position opened until filled.

LSUHSC is an EEO/AA Employer

2013 Ford HBCU Community Challenge To Give Away \$40,000 In Scholarships To Black College Students

Ford Motor Company is reaching out to students attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities for the 2013 Ford HBCU Community Challenge Competition. Up to \$75,000 in scholarships, university and community grants will be awarded for the first-place student team and its project. The new program, conducted in partnership with the "Tom Joyner" and "Rickey Smiley Morning

Shows," encourages HBCU students to design community projects that address pressing local needs.

The challenge is a request for proposals addressing the theme of "Building Sustainable Communities." The Proposal should take an innovative, fresh approach in defining what building a sustainable community means to one's local community. The Proposal should not be restrict-

ed specifically to environmental issues; rather, "sustainable community" refers to all elements of a healthy, livable community which can thrive in a global economy encompassing a wide range of issues, including education, safety and mobility.

"We are thrilled to be able to continue in our efforts to support students attending HBCUs with the launch of this program," said Shawn Thompson, manager, Ford

Multicultural Marketing. "This program will allow students to make a difference in their education, schools and ultimately their communities."

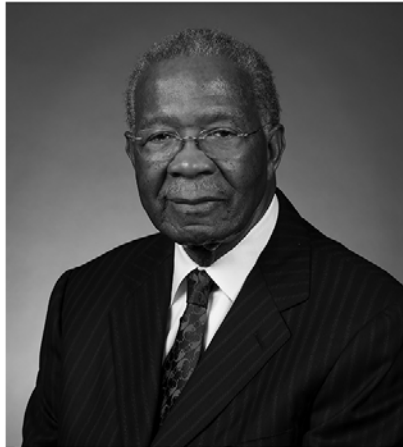
For more details about the Ford HBCU Community Challenge, visit: www.scholarshipsonline.org/2013/09/ford-hbcu-challenge.html

To search hundreds of other 2013-2014 scholarships, visit: www.ScholarshipsOnline.org

"Talented Youthfest 2013" Seeks Talented Youth To Promote Performing Arts As Mental Health Remedy

Talented youth ages 5-18 are invited to perform at Talented YOUTHfest 2013 on Saturday, October 19, 2013. Greater New Orleans is being inundated with negative youth news daily. The mental health crisis among Greater New Orleans youth is evident. Many kids use performing arts as a viable tool to express inner hurt, frustration, anger, depression, etc. Talented YOUTHfest is a concert that celebrates kids who excel in the performing arts and are examples of how it can be used to responsibly deal with mental turmoil. The event is open to young singers, rappers, dancers, musicians, groups, and poets. Talented YOUTHfest 2013 will celebrate Greater New Orleans' rising superstars while raising awareness about the need for more mental health outlets for Greater New Orleans youth. Talented YOUTHfest 2013 is in its second year, and was created by youth advocate Kimberly "QueenOfTeenz" DiLosa. Talented YOUTHfest 2013 is being presented in partnership with Fall Fed Fest, Federal City's first open air festival. The event is from 10am - 3pm on the grounds of Federal City (the old Algiers Naval Base). Youth who are interested in performing at Talented YOUTHfest please call (504) 473-4602 or email info@theteendynasty.com

**First
NBC**
Member FDIC



*First NBC Bank
Vice Chairman
Dr. Charles C. Teamer*

First NBC Bank recognizes that a community based financial institution grows when it has professional and caring employees. We strive every day to supply the best banking services to each of our customers.

Majority local ownership allows us to cut through red tape and make decisions quickly when responding to our customers' financial needs. The Bank's flexible organizational structure affords our clients access to highly skilled and empowered bankers who are valued as trusted financial partners. And because we believe in open communication with customers, we will always encourage you to discuss your financial objectives and look for ways to implement them. First NBC Bank never stopped lending even during days of market instability. We're recognized as one of the top lending and service related banks throughout the Crescent City and the Metropolitan Area. So, if you want to work with a bank that makes client services its primary concern, you know who you can turn to-First NBC Bank.

www.firstnbcbank.com

504-566-8000



JEFFERSON PARISH

Elmwood Office

504-671-3510

Kenner Office

504-671-3540

Lapalco Office

504-671-3570

Veterans Office

504-671-3530

Transcontinental Office

504-671-3425

Terrytown Office

504-671-3550

Manhattan Office

504-252-4315

Cleary Office

504-252-4360

ORLEANS PARISH

Main Office

210 Baronne Street

504-566-8000

Mid City Office

504-252-4345

St. Charles Office

504-252-4330

Read Office

504-671-3875

Carondelet Office

504-671-3560

DeGaulle Office

504-252-4300

Lakeview Office

504-671-3520

**ONLY
YOU
CAN PREVENT
WILDFIRES.**



Rev. Samson "Skip" Alexander

Eyewitness to History

by: Edwin Buggage

He has been on the frontline of history with many in both the national and local struggle for Civil Rights. Today Rev. Samson "Skip" Alexander is still fighting the righteous fight using his wisdom and passing it on to future generations. When speaking with him you are always guaranteed to get a lesson given the great gifts he has for both teaching and preaching. "I have lived long enough from seeing people marching for their rights and now if you can go out and get the education or training you need you can access opportunities, I say to young people today never surrender in your quest to get an education, 'learn baby learn' so you can 'earn baby earn'" says Alexander.

Rev. Alexander or Mr. Skip as he is known is a fountain of information and is a walking history book or encyclopedia on Civil Rights and the History of Black New Orleans. Much of which he shares on his television program on community access on Cox Channel 76 and a Radio Show that airs on WBOK-AM 1230, most appropriately called "Eyewitness to History." Throughout his over eight decades of life he has been involved in media working both for the Louisiana Weekly and the Data News Weekly and has fond memories and great respect for his

friend Data News founder Joseph "Scoop" Jones, "He was a great man with a vision to give people a voice and I am glad to see what he created continue, because our community needs our own media to tell our own stories and record our own history."

Being involved in the fight for Civil Rights and on the frontline is something Rev. Alexander is well acquainted with starting early in his life as a member of the U.S. Air Force, where he was one of the first group of airmen to integrate Lowry Air Base in 1947 which was segregated at the time. In addition he was a champion in track and field where he ran against some of the best runners in the world, in this he learned a valuable life lesson; that when you are able to compete and everyone starts off at the same point your talent can shine and if you get behind you have to catch up, keep up and win. But after serving his country, and eventually returning to the south, he soon found out regardless of what he'd accomplished that Jim Crow was alive and well, so he decided to join the movement to fight racism and segregation in the United States.

He later spent time as an aide to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. while a Representative of the AFL-CIO. Rev. Alexander was also present at the Memphis Garbage



Strike and worked with Dr. King until his assassination in 1968. He also worked alongside many of the giants of the fight for fairness and equality in New Orleans including: Oretha Castle Haley, A.P. Tureaud, Rev. Avery Alexander and many others involved in the struggle for Civil Rights. "These were times when people were unified in our mission to have a more fair and just society, our struggle was not just about opening doors for Blacks but in the larger sense it was about human rights and justice for everyone and was a struggle based on what was moral and right."

Over the years he has collected many archives and artifacts of the history of the Civil Rights

Movement, so he has decided to endeavor into telling the untold story of the Civil Rights Movement in New Orleans. What many may not know is that New Orleans was instrumental in the national Civil Rights Movement, so Rev. Alexander as the Curator and Director of the Theresa Jarrow Black History that's named for his wife

who passed away in 2006. "The Jarrow Museum is a journey through the history of the Civil Rights struggle in New Orleans, in it there are news clippings and pictures of Avery Alexander being dragged from City Hall, or photos of the Dutch Morial being inaugurated as the City's first Black Mayor, second line pictures from the 1940's and so much more; this is our history and I feel it is important for people to know because if we don't know where we've been and how far we've come and we don't know how far we still have to go."

When asked what can people do today to contribute to making the world a better place he says, "Too many times people are on the sidelines talking about what we don't have and what other people are not doing for the Black community, but what I always tell them and it is simple, get out there and become part of the solution. We need them to take the baton and lead

us into the future in the spirit of Frederick Douglass, W.E.B. Dubois, Paul Robeson and our local leaders like Oretha Castle Haley, Jerome Smith, Avery Alexander and so many others who don't receive recognition but made sacrifices so we can move forward.

As he poses for his picture there is a shot of him along with one of his daughters and Author Alex Haley and Dutch Morial at a Muhammad Ali fight that took place in New Orleans in 1978. There are other pictures as I look around one is of him pictured with Mayor Moon Landrieu, former Councilman Jim Singleton, Rev. A.L. Davis and Rev. Avery Alexander. And a news clipping of him from his track and field days racing to victory in Japan in the 1940's, looking back on his life he says, "I have went far beyond than I ever anticipated, I was just a little boy from Gert Town who has seen the world change and been an eyewitness to history."

JMJ
Joseph M. Jones
Continuing Education Fund

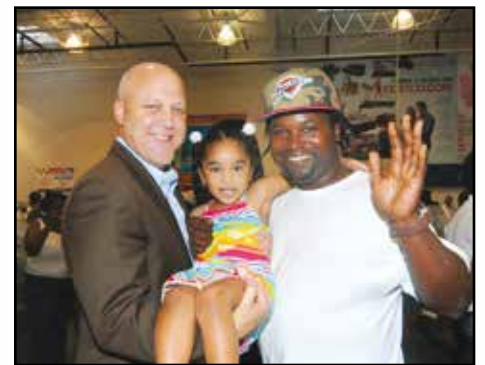


Shoot Ya Best Shot!

Costco Cuts the Ribbon on the First Store in Louisiana

This week, Mayor Mitch Landrieu, Costco Wholesale Corporation executives and other dignitaries celebrated the first Costco store opening in Louisiana during a ribbon cutting ceremony. The new 148,000 square foot membership-only retail warehouse will officially open Saturday, September 21, 2013, on 3900 Dublin Street in New Orleans. The global retailer will introduce 200 permanent jobs into the local economy and is expected to generate a \$21 million direct fiscal impact to the City over a 10-year period.

Photos: Courtesy of the City of New Orleans



Visit www.ladatanews.com for more photos from these events



Find us on:
facebook®
more photos
more stories
more data

subscribe
to data chatta
New Orleans in your inbox



Shoot Ya Best Shot!

The Honey Loaf Sandwich Lounge Grand Opening

Photos by Glenn Summers

The Honey Loaf Sandwich Lounge celebrated it's Grand Opening on September 18 at the BioInnovation Center at 1441 Canal Street. The event featured the music Of Kermit Ruffins and the artwork of Adrian Fulton.



Visit www.ladatanews.com for more photos from these events

Connect to the Source

Data News Weekly, your one stop for what's happening in New Orleans.



ladatanews.com



WBOK 1230AM

A BAKEWELL MEDIA COMPANY

Real Talk for Real Times...

1639 Gentilly Blvd. New Orleans, LA 70119 (504)942-0106

www.wbok1230am.com

The “I Am Troy” Call to Action



By Benjamin Todd Jealous
President & CEO, NAACP

Two years ago last week, the state of Georgia ignored the facts, doubts and pleas of hundreds of thousands of people and killed Troy Anthony Davis. Today, on the anniversary of his execution, we rededicate ourselves to ending the immoral, biased and ineffective practice of capital punishment.

For 15 years, we fought alongside Troy to clear his name for the killing of Savannah Police Officer Mark Allen MacPhail. Troy remained adamant about his innocence to his last breath. As

explained in the new book *I Am Troy Davis*, by author Jen Marlowe and Troy's sister, Martina Davis-Correia, the case against Troy lacked conclusive evidence after many of the key witnesses recanted testimony from the time of the original trial.

In the last weeks of Troy's life, the Georgia State Board of Pardons and Paroles received 663,000 petitions from people imploring the group to reconsider the execution given the sheer amount of doubt surrounding the case. World figures, including Pope Benedict XVI and former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, human rights groups and commentators urged the execution to be halted – all to no avail.

In the hours before his death, the NAACP held a rally and lobbied the Department of Justice to intervene on the grounds of a civil rights violation. The glimpses of sadness and quiet resolve I saw on the faces of Troy's family when his death became imminent

will stay with me forever. The last time I saw Troy, he told me “This movement started before me, and it needs to continue, no matter what, until we destroy the machinery of death.”

While many of the supporters who stood in solidarity with Troy have put away their signs and returned home, the battle to end the shameful practice of capital punishment wages on in his name. Side by side with Troy's family, we remain on the frontlines of this fight to abolish a system that is ineffective and steeped in racial bias.

Racial disparities pervade every component of the justice system. A report from Amnesty International concluded that 77 percent of people executed since 1977 were people convicted of crimes involving white victims, compared to only 15 percent of people executed for killing blacks. A full 42 percent of the 3,100 inmates on death row are people of color.

Furthermore, we know that the death penalty is a poor deterrent of crime. FBI data shows that all 14 states without capital punishment in 2008 had homicide rates at or below the national rate.

The only effective way to deter killings in our streets is to ensure justice is swift and certain. In order to do so, we must ensure both that we have police leadership that builds strong partnerships and trust with all communities and also that they have enough officers and detectives to ensure every homicide in every community is responded to with the requisite resources to find and catch killers quickly.

Since Troy's death, we have made definitive strides in our effort to end the death penalty. We have worked with a diverse and multifaceted coalition of advocates including Amnesty International and the National Coalition to Repeal the Death Penalty fix our nation's broken justice system. Last year our work led to Connecticut

repealing the death penalty. This year, Maryland became the first state south of the Mason-Dixon Line to do the same. Those two states now join New Jersey, New York, New Mexico and Illinois as the fifth and sixth state in six years, and the 17th and 18th in the nation to abolish the death penalty.

Our strategy is clear. Our strategy is simple. We will outlaw capital punishment in a majority of states, and then we will go to the United States Supreme Court and make the argument that the punishment is cruel by its very nature but also unusual because most states have passed laws against it.

“I Am Troy” reminds us that each year September 21 will serve as both a solemn anniversary and a call to action. It is and will continue to be an annual reminder that justice and common sense we end this brutal practice of capital punishment.

Benjamin Todd Jealous is the president and CEO of the national NAACP.

‘Twisting Up’ the New Orleans Police Brutality Case



By Lee A. Daniels
NNPA Columnist

Surely, there's no little historical irony in the fact that two events occurred last week that were reminders that as far as Black Americans are concerned, justice in this country often remains, as the old saying goes, a sometime thing and a long-time thing.

The week began with the bittersweet commemoration of one of the landmark events of the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s

and 1960s: the infamous September 15, 1963 bombing by the Ku Klux Klan of Birmingham's 16th Street Baptist Church, which killed four adolescent girls and grievously wounded many others.

Although the identity of the four men who had likely planted the bomb was almost immediately known to federal and local authorities, it wasn't until 1977 that the ringleader was tried, convicted and sentenced to life in prison. In 2002, two of the other men (a third had died) were arrested, tried and convicted as well.

Last week ended with a shocking return to perhaps the most notorious act of misconduct of the New Orleans police in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina – the Danziger Bridge incident. A federal district judge there, heatedly denouncing surreptitious

postings on social media by federal prosecutors, ordered a new trial for five former New Orleans police officers who last year had been convicted of civil rights charges in that case.

The Danziger Bridge incident unfolded in the days after Hurricane Katrina had devastated the city and destroyed virtually any semblance of effective government.

A group of police officers, purportedly responding to reports that officers were under fire at the bridge, drove there and opened fire on two groups of Black unarmed civilians crossing the bridge to reach a nearby shopping center. Two men, James Britsette, 17, and Ronald Madison, 40, were killed, and four others were wounded. The police immediately launched a cover-up, charging

that one of the injured had tried to murder a police officer.

Their attempt quickly fell apart, amid media reports that began to lay bare a police department in complete administrative disarray and prone to acts of horrific violence against Black New Orleanians. Nonetheless, it was only after the federal Department of Justice took up the case and brought federal charges against nearly a dozen officers that five, whose actions were the most egregious, were convicted.

Last week, however, the federal judge, Kurt D. Engelhardt, who presided over the trial and meted out sentences of from six to 65 years to the officers, declared that the “highly unusual, extensive, and truly bizarre actions of” at least two federal prosecutors in the New Orleans' U.S. District At-

torney's Office and another one in the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department in Washington, left him no choice but to order a new trial.

The three prosecutors – neither of whom were directly involved in the courtroom aspects of the trial – anonymously posted dozens of derogatory comments about the New Orleans police department in general, the officers under indictment, their attorneys, and some witnesses both before and during the federal trial to the city's most popular website, Nola.com, an adjunct of the New Orleans Times-Picayune newspaper.

In the decision, Judge Engelhardt repeatedly expressed his dismay that the federal prosecu-

Police Brutality,

Continued on page 10.

Seventy-Nine Students Graduate from New Orleans Job Corps Center

New Orleans Job Corps graduates walked across the stage to receive their diplomas during the Center's recent commencement exercises at Loyola University. It was the program's largest graduation ever with 79 students receiving diplomas.

LaVerne Saulny, Regional Manager for U.S. Senator Mary Landrieu, delivered an inspiring commencement address, celebrating the accomplishments of the graduates and reminding them to pursue their dreams with passion and determination. Ms. Saulny told the graduating class that the seeds of their success have been planted at Job Corps and now it's time for them to find their purpose in life and make it happen.

New Orleans Center Director Michael Fernandez told the audi-



Pictured above are the 79 New Orleans Job Corps graduates who received their diplomas during the Center's recent commencement exercises at Loyola University

ence, "The young people before us today have cleared so many hurdles, overcome so many obstacles to become graduates and in doing so have demonstrated to us all the awesome power of determination, hard work and persistence."

This year's graduates represented Job Corps six academic trade programs: HOT (Health Occupation Technology), CMA (Clinical Medical Assistant), MOS (Medical Office Support), Culinary Arts, Carpentry and Electrical. Job Corps is a free job training program for disadvantaged and low-income youth between the ages of 16-24. For more information on enrolling at New Orleans Job Corps Center, please call the Outreach & Admissions office at 504-483-8093.

Saenger Theatre to Host Free Performance of "Christmas Cantata" by Gracias Choir and Orchestra

The historic Saenger Theatre, slated to reopen Sept. 27, will host a free performance of "Gracias Christmas Cantata" by the world renowned Gracias Choir and Orchestra on Sun., Oct. 6 at 7 p.m., the theatre announced today. Tickets to this free concert event, presented by Good News New Orleans Church, are now available to the general public.

In honor of the landmark theatre's reopening in the New Orleans community, Good News New Orleans Church invites the general public to attend the free event at the Saenger Theatre. The Gracias Choir and Orchestra, founded in 2000 by Pastor Ock Soo Park, is currently on tour presenting "Gracias Christmas Cantata" across the U.S. and in Canada. The performance is a compilation of opera, musical, and deeply cherished Christmas carols aimed at bringing the true

message of Christmas to life at the direction of world renowned Conductor Boris Abalyan from St. Petersburg Conservatory of Music in Russia.

Free tickets to Good News New Orleans Church's presentation of "Gracias Christmas Cantata," performed by The Gracias Choir and Orchestra at the Saenger Theatre, are now available for pickup at the Mahalia Jackson Theatre Box Office at 1419 Basin Street between the hours of 11 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Tickets are required for entrance to the concert, but seats will be first come, first serve. Doors will open at 6 p.m., with the show beginning at 7 p.m. For more information on the "Gracias Christmas Cantata" performance, call 504-602-9930 or visit <http://www.saengernola.com/shows/christmas-cantata-2013-tour>.

Dillard to Host Woman Know Thyself Conference

The WYEN is blowing again! After a successful conference this past spring, the Women Youth Empowerment Network and Dillard University have partnered together to bring New Orleans a College Women's Conference entitled, "Know Thyself." Open to all local colleges and universities and all national HBCUs, the conference will host an exciting, overnight event packed with activities and

speakers to help college ladies develop wholly- professionally, financially, relationally and spiritually. The event will take place on Dillard University's campus on Friday, October 11th through Saturday, October 12th.

If you are, or know a college lady who might be interested in attending, please visit WYENUUniversity.eventbrite.com. For additional questions, email TheWYENU@gmail.com!

subscribe
to data chatta
New Orleans in your inbox



Find us on:
facebook®

more photos
more stories
more data

Cover Story/ Continued from page 3.

crees for the New Orleans Police Department and the Orleans Parish Prison. The City has estimated the cost of the NOPD consent decree at \$11 million a year. The cost of the jail consent decree has been the subject of federal court hearings; estimates range from \$7 million — the City's estimate — to \$22.5 million.

With this new mandatory expense to improve the NOPD and the jail the question becomes where will this money go what will be the citizens return on their investment? Will we see an expansion of the Pretrial Services Program and if so will the Vera Institute control the funding? Or in a tough budget year will it be cut, if so what happens to the service that they provide?

Another question is if pretrial services are to continue regardless of its configuration can it co-exist without supplanting other types of bonds.

"I would say that there is room for both commercial and pretrial services and in most cities where there is pretrial services the majority of bonds for those arrested are still Commercial Bail Bondsman," says both Flozell Daniels and New Orleans Vera Director Jon Wool. But Commercial Bail Bondsman John Leftridge questions its necessity and cost to taxpayers. "In a City that always has issues with not having enough



Pictured (far right) is Jon Wool Director of the New Orleans Office of the Vera Institute and Pastor Antoine Barriere at the August 28 MICAH Project event at Household of Faith. Photo Credit: Flozell Daniels.

money in its budget it seems the money spent on Vera and the work they do is wasteful, because if we have judges and the District Attorney's Office already having access to much of this information they give them this is not money well spent. But if we continue to have Pretrial Services Program then it needs to be re-evaluated to make it more efficient and focus solely on working with low level offenders. The problem arises when the Pretrial Services Program begins to take on cases that involve people outside of what it is they are best able to handle; and in more serious cases there is less

room for errors as was the case with Akein Scott, now 20 people and many more people's lives have been impacted negatively as a result."

The Search for Justice, Public Safety and the Incarceration of Black Men in New Orleans: Too Many Problems Not Enough Solutions

After all is said and done in regard to pretrial services and the Vera Institute when the smoke clears the million dollar question is can a broken Criminal Justice System work more effectively and

assist Black men in a City where 1 and 14 Black men are behind bars and 1 in 7 are either in prison, parole or probation? And in a state that has the largest prison population in the world at 1619 per 100,000 people more than twice the national average and far outstripping nations such as China, Iran and Afghanistan.

So the question for the City is how does it stop unnecessary incarceration while remaining safe? New Orleans post Katrina has been in a mode of experimenting with models of how to make the City better and safer for all its citizens. And recently a

pretrial service as administered by the Vera Institute is the latest in a City looking for answers to problems that predate Katrina. And while the program is new to the City and unanswered questions continue to arise around what is needed and who should be running these programs and a host of other questions one thing remains clear; too many men who are mostly Black are sitting in jail on low level offenses and this is a problem that needs to be fixed but at what cost to public safety?

And we all must realize that this will not be a quick fix and it is important that sober minds prevail where everyone can be at the table and their ideas to help solve problems. And realize that we as citizens of the City when it comes to public safety are united in having a common enemy. Today as we move towards solutions, a holistic approach is necessary where people on all fronts are working together including lifetime New Orleanians and newcomers; people Black and White, rich and poor and everybody in between can come to the realization that we all want a safe City. But in fighting crime and searching for solutions we have to be careful not to blur the lines between social justice and criminal justice because the consequences may be deadly affecting the lives of many of our citizens.

Police Brutality/ Continued from page 8.

tors, bound by specific rules regarding ethical conduct, would engage in such behavior, especially since the trial jury was not sequestered while the trial was occurring. He readily acknowledged there was no way of knowing now whether individual jurors had likely been influenced either directly or indirectly by the prosecutors' anonymous postings, and that overturning the verdicts was "indeed a bitter pill to swallow." But he declared the prosecutors' actions left him no choice: the integrity of the criminal justice system itself was at stake.

Reading the judge's persuasive ruling provokes the same sense of astonishment he clearly felt that these federal prosecutors — all three of whom had years of experience — would act this way. What did they think these anonymous posting would do?

One thing they did achieve is clear. They betrayed the families of the victims of the police rampage. The families thought they could count on the federal government to bring them a small measure of comfort for what their loved ones and they themselves have endured.

It turns out they could not. Now they will have to wait yet again for justice to be done. The words of Sherrel Johnson, James Brissette's mother, resound: "What's going to happen to the crimes [the police] committed? Are they just going to sweep that under the carpet and forget it? My son is dead. Ronald [Madison] is dead. All the others are damaged. [The police] did that to innocent people, for no reason. And now they're going to twist it all up."

Lee A. Daniels is a longtime journalist based in New York City. His latest book is *Last Chance: The Political Threat to Black America*.

FULTON INSURANCE AGENCY
"LET US BE YOUR FULL LINE INSURANCE AGENCY"

Specializing in

*Automobile	*Boats	*Bonds	*Business Coverage
*Contractors	*Churches	*Fire	*General Liability
*Homeowners	*Dwelling	*Property	*Flood/Life/Health
*Medical	*Legal	*Home Health	*Landlord and Rental
*Personal Umbrella		*Worker's Compensation	

"I need car insurance"
"I need a health and life insurance policy"
"I need homeowners insurance"
"I need property insurance"
"I need Group insurance"
"I need workers comp insurance"

All great reasons to call
Fulton Insurance Agency
1925 St. Bernard Avenue
504.947.3445

CALL NOW!!!
504.947.3445
Call For a FREE Quote Today

We Welcome You!

Insurance is **MUST** in New Orleans

Let us see if we can SAVE you some money on your premium.

VISA, MasterCard, American Express, Discover

NNPA Honors Rep. Marcia Fudge and NAACP Chair Roslyn Brock

WASHINGTON (NNPA) – The National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), a federation of nearly 200 Black newspapers, named Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) Chairwoman Marcia L. Fudge (D-Ind.) and NAACP Board Chairwoman Roslyn M. Brock as recipients of its 2012 Leadership Awards.

The presentations were made last week during the CBC Foundation's annual Legislative Conference, also known as CBC Weekend.

Fudge is a member of the House Committee on Agriculture, where she is the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Department Operations, Oversight and Nutrition. She also serves on the Education and Workforce Committee and is a member of the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education.



NNPA Chairman Cloves Campbell presents NAACP Board Chairwoman Roslyn M. Brock the 2012 Leadership Award.

Prior to joining Congress,

Fudge worked in the Cuyahoga

County Prosecutor's Office. She also was the first Black and the first female mayor of Warrens-

ville Heights, Ohio. She is past national president of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority.

Brock was unanimously elected chair of the NAACP Board of Directors in 2010, becoming the youngest person and only the fourth woman to hold the position. She graduated magna cum laude from Virginia Union University, earned a master's degree in health services administration from George Washington University, an MBA from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University and a Masters Degree of Divinity from Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University.

An advocate for affordable health care for vulnerable communities, she is Vice President, Advocacy and Government for Bon Secours Health System, Inc.

DATA CLASSIFIED

Call 504-821-7421 to place your classified ad.

Mailboxes by Mark



You pay for the bricks or maybe you have bricks already. You provide the mailbox.

I will provide the cement, wood, mortar, nails etc. You choose or create the design. Prices vary according to the design.

Contact: Mark (504) 723-7318

AVON

The company for women \$\$\$ \$\$\$\$

Can you use some extra cash? Try Avon!!! Avon is easy to sell, no experience necessary. It cost only \$10.00 to start.

Become your own boss or just earn extra money. Whether you are interested in purchasing Avon products or becoming an Avon Representative yourself, I can assist you.

Call June - 504-606-1362
I will explain everything and help you to get started.

Distribution Manager Position Available

Data News Weekly is seeking a Distribution Manager for our weekly newspaper distribution.

The position requirements are:

- Must have a valid Louisiana drivers license
- Must have a truck/van/SUV and must be insured.
- Must have a thorough knowledge of the City of New Orleans
- Work days are Thursday, Friday, Saturday, flexible schedule on those days.

This is a paid, Part-time Position.

Contact Terry at Data News Weekly to apply.

(504) 821-7421

This space can be yours for only \$80

Call Now!

504-821-7421

Connect to the Source

Data News Weekly, your one stop for what's happening in New Orleans.

THE PEOPLE'S PAPER **Data News Weekly**
New Orleans
Lighting the Road To The Future

ladatanews.com





“The doctor said:
‘if I would have waited,
I would not have
made it.’”

– Mercedes C.,
Cancer survivor and
Peoples Health plan member

Getting quality care is the first step to a healthy life.

When Mercedes C. wrote to Peoples Health to say how grateful she was to be a plan member, we knew it was stories like hers that made all of us happy for the chance to help.

Fortunately for Mercedes, she went to her doctor when her colon cancer was at an early stage. “I had surgery and it was successful,” she says.

Had she not been with Peoples Health, she might have put off seeing that doctor. “I’m on a fixed income,” she says. “If I were not eligible for Peoples Health... I would not have been able to take these tests to see what was going on inside me.” If she couldn’t afford the tests, it’s hard to imagine affording the surgery. But Mercedes was covered.

At Peoples Health, we make it a point to make it easy for you to see your doctor and get the tests you need. With Peoples Health Choices 65 (HMO), a primary care physician visit is just \$5.

Transportation to that visit is just \$5. And the monthly plan premium is \$0.

It’s not the dollars that make the difference. At Peoples Health, our member-centered model strives to reach a new level of care coordination. Our staff works with members and their doctors to make using our plans easier with the goal of achieving the best health outcomes.

If you have Medicare – either through age or disability – find out about Peoples Health. Call for a free information packet. There’s no obligation.

1-800-398-5672 (TTY: 711)
Toll-Free, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., 7 days a week

PEOPLES HEALTH

Your **Medicare Health** Team

www.peopleshealth.com

The benefit information provided is a brief summary, not a complete description of benefits. For more information contact the plan. You must continue to pay your Medicare Part B premium. Limitations, copayments, and restrictions may apply. Benefits, formulary, pharmacy network, provider network, premium and/or co-payments/co-insurance may change on January 1 of each year. Peoples Health is a Medicare Advantage organization with a Medicare contract to offer HMO plans. Enrollment depends on annual Medicare contract renewal.

H1961_13MCOPA Accepted

