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New Orleans

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News Weekly

"The People's Paper"

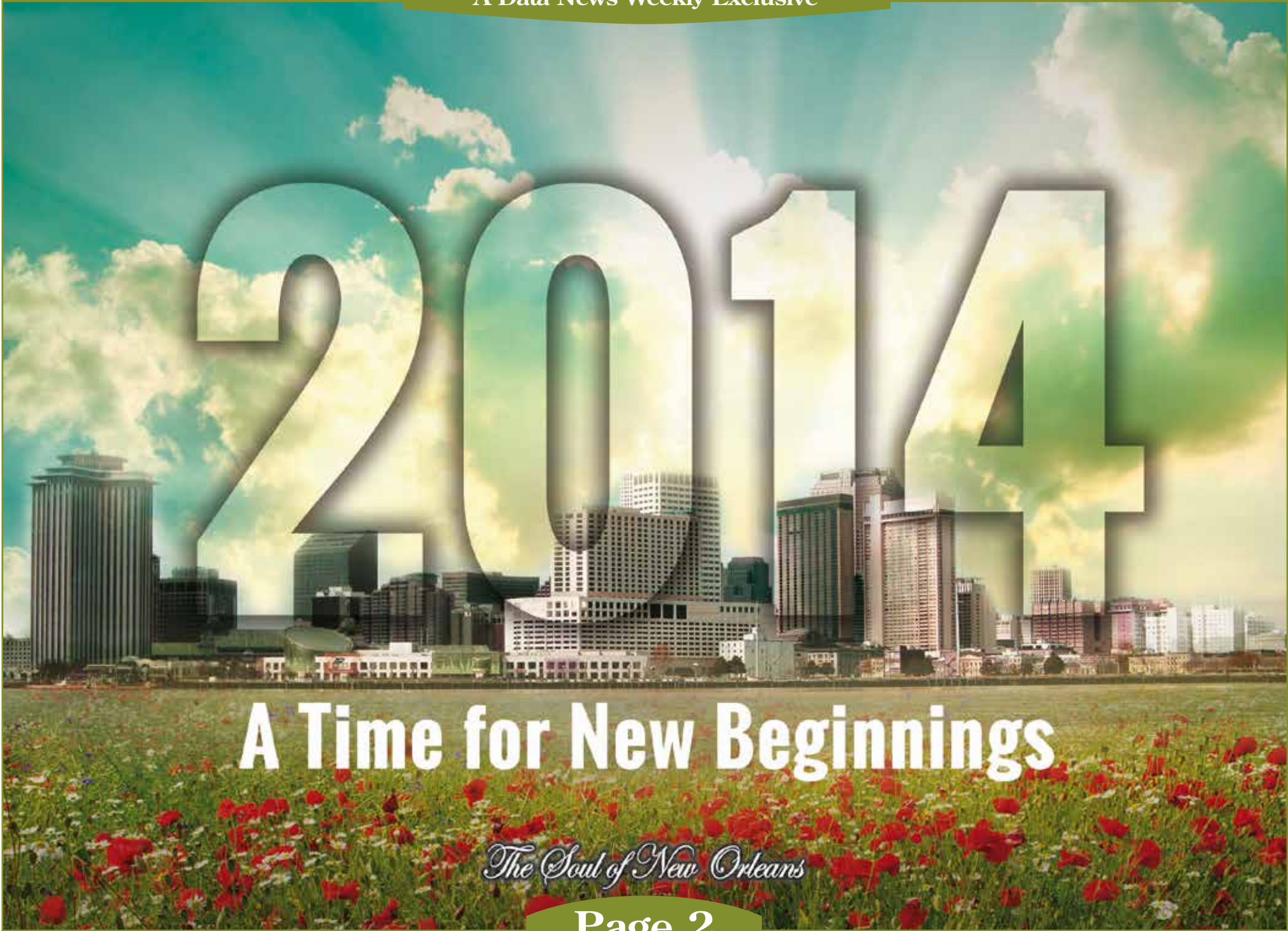


**Happy Birthday
Fred Johnson**

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A Data News Weekly Exclusive



2014

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A Time for New Beginnings

By Edwin Buggage

It is again that time of year where we are on the eve of the ending of one and the dawning of the next. What usually happens during this time is we reflect and make plans to make changes to some of the things we've done during the previous year.

In all truth rarely do many keep them, but this year let us the citizens of New Orleans try to do something different and be committed this year to making a difference. For we have a great City with many great people, so this year let's strive for excellence and raise the bar for ourselves and our City. Staying true to our motto as "The People's Paper" we went

out and spoke to several of our past Monthly Trailblazer Award Recipients, about their New Year's Resolutions both on a personal and community level; people who are doing great things for the betterment of our City.

Giselle Nakhid is a Professional Dancer and Educator whose spent many years in the community

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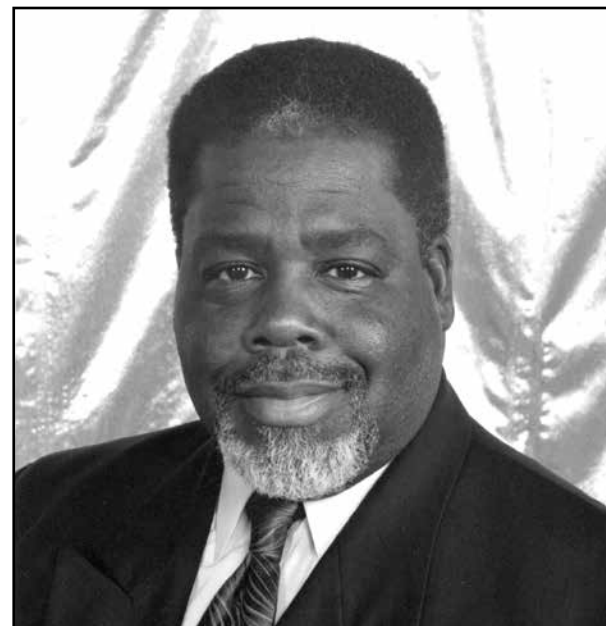
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Derek Bardell



Giselle Nakhid



Rev. Dr. Dwight Webster

empowering young people and giving them the tools to succeed. Over the years her life has been hectic with all the multitasking of juggling her career and her passion for dance. So this year she's vowed to take a few things off of her plate do a little self-reflection. "This year I am not going to dance professionally, but I will continue to teach because I love it so much and through it I am able to share with women in our community," says Giselle. Continuing she says, "But this year I plan on rethinking some things and the direction of my life and set new goals for myself. I am thinking about living life with a greater purpose. As far as my feelings about the community I feel we should continue to work together to build a better City especially those things that empower our most vulnerable citizens."

Many know Al "Brother" Mims as an outspoken Advocate of ceasing the senseless violence that plagues our community, claiming too many lives. Over the years Brother Mims has worked tirelessly to help those in need in a selfless way, but this year he plans to retool his efforts for maximum effectiveness. "In 2014 I plan to use my energy to work with people who are serious and committed to change and surround myself with people who will enhance what I am trying to do as far as saving the lives of the victims of violent crime. I feel this way because I think we can make more of an impact with a few dedicated individuals versus a bunch of people and we get

nothing accomplished. It is like TD Jakes says that sometimes you got to minimize to maximize." On the personal front Brother Mims is known for a man committed to his family and says his personal resolution is the same as it always is and that is to stay firmly committed to God, Family and Community.

Rev. Dr. Dwight Webster has been a voice for uplift for the community for over two decades. Since founding Christian Unity Baptist Church, he has been on the front lines of the struggle to better the community. In the true spirit of liberation theology he takes his message beyond the pulpit and the church walls into the streets, community centers and halls of academia where he works tirelessly empowering and touching people's lives. "I stopped doing resolutions a long time ago because I could never keep them," Dr. Webster says laughingly, but continuing on a more serious note he says, "What I have done in the area of self-improvement is that I try to focus on accentuating being a positive person and giving that energy and perspective when I look at my own life and how I interact with others. This is something I think if we should do on a community level and that is focus on the positives I feel if we did this it would overwhelm and override much of the negative things in our community. Many of things that are problems in our community is because of negative attitudes and negative thinking,

but my feelings are that if we really understood the power of positive thinking that we would be much better off as a community."

She has been a woman who has given her time and energy to those who often suffer in silence. In the cause of abused women and children Gwendolyn Richardson has helped many women and their families over the years. She is known as a woman who burns the candle and both ends as a Community Educator and Advocate. With her work with women and children being recognized with an award given each year bearing her name is a true testament to her hard work. Between working in the community and raising her two sons as a single mother she says her New Year's Resolution is to dedicate more time to having a better work/life balance. "I have been doing so much for the community and busy raising my sons for so many years, this year I am going to take some time to take better care of myself. Because I feel if I can take better care of me I can take better care of those in the community that are in need," says Richardson. Her resolution for the community this year she says we should try to understand why things happen that are negative in our community and that may be a better starting point to deal with solutions. "I feel we should become better educated and informed about why things happen in our community and come up with more effective ways to address them. I feel that too often the solutions of-

fered or approaches are short term fixes and never get to the root of why things happen that negatively impact our community, but this year moving forward I feel we should try this approach and maybe we might get better results."

Derek Bardell has been an Educator for over a decade as both a classroom Teacher and Administrator. He has worked with students at all levels from elementary school to college and through his work he's inspired many. He is a progressive person and through his life's example is all about personal growth. Something he imparts to his students and practices in his own life. "This year I would like to continue evolving in all aspects of my life professionally, socially and personally and continue to making a difference in my community." As someone who has spent his life working for the laudable cause of helping and inspiring people as an educator he encourages the people of the community to begin to be serious and diligent around social causes and feels it is a moral imperative. "This year especially since we are in a year with major elections we must let our voices be heard. We must rally around causes of education, the economy, affordable housing, crime and many other things that affect our community and come up with viable, a realistic solution to improve our community and it is important that citizens realize that anyone can work to serve a cause greater than themselves, all they have to do is make the choice to do so."



Al "Brother" Mims



Gwendolyn Richardson



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Shoot Ya Best Shot!

Fred Johnson Celebrates 60

Photos by Glenn Summers

Fred Johnson, Director of Integrity Homebuyers Association, Inc, and Co-Founder, Black Men of Labor celebrated his 60th birthday surrounded by family and friends at the Treme Center, and Data was there. Congratulations Fred!



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

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Black Men of Labor Jazz Funeral for Nelson Mandela

Hundreds line the streets, Saturday December 21, 2013 as the New Orleans Black Men of Labor (BMOL) lead a Jazz Funeral Procession in tribute to the late former South African President Nelson Mandela.

BMOL in partnership with Ashe' Culture Center, Congo Square Foundation and NOSACON held a Memorial Program prior to the

Jazz Funeral. "This was our way of showing our deepest and heartfelt condolences to the Mandela Family and the Continent of Africa which is the native land of our origin," said Todd Higgins of the BMOL. The Celebration of Mr. Mandela's Life culminated at Sweet Lorraine's Jazz Club on St. Claude.



Demetrius Howard's Fabulous 50th

Photos by Dominic Tobias

Demetrius Howard celebrated her 50th birthday with a soiree at the Regency Reception Hall in New Orleans East. She was in awe of all of the love that she received from so many people, and generations of her family.



JUDGE PAULA A. BROWN



Wishing you a happy, healthy, safe and blessed New Year.

May all your desires come to fruition.

Judge Paula A. Brown,

Civil District Court for the Parish of Orleans, Division J

National Urban League Holiday Luncheon Awards

Honoring Distinguished Leaders in New Orleans

Photos courtesy of
Bonneefied Images, LLC

Each year, the National Urban League and its 95 affiliates

across the nation serve millions of Americans in need – working tirelessly to achieve economic equality through job creation and training, educa-

tion, access to healthcare and housing. With a focus on the meaning of the holiday season, the National Urban League honored, for the first time, sev-

eral distinguished citizens of New Orleans who have built notable careers and simultaneously given back to their community by working to improve

the city's quality of life in a manner consistent with the mission of the National Urban League and the Urban League Movement.



Top Row. 1.NUL President and CEO, Marc Morial, Don Hubbard of Hubbard Enterprises, Former Mayor Sydney Bartholomey, Dr. Charles Teamer Board Member First NBC Bank & Former City Councilman Jim Singleton. 2. Ray Bonnee, Photographer & Owner Bonneefied Images, LLC with Marc Morial. 3. Rep. Jared Brossett – Member, Louisiana House of Representatives with Marc Morial.

Middle Row. 4.Tanya Lombard – Assistant Vice President, Public Affairs, AT&T with Marc Morial. 5. Judge Terry Fleming Love – Louisiana 4th Circuit Court of Appeal with Marc Morial. 6.Timothy Francis – Lawyer and Artist with Marc Morial.

Bottom Row. 7.Sheriff Marlin Gusman, Sheriff, Orleans Parish with Marc H. Morial. 8. Erika McConduit-Diggs, President & CEO, Urban League of Greater New Orleans with Marc Morial

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

Christmas Cheer for At-Risk Youth



Youth Empowerment Project's (YEP) After-school Enrichment Program participants with their gifts.



YEP Co-Founder and Executive Director Melissa Sawyer and Deshawn Wright.



Santa and his helper handed out toys to the YEP participants.

By Rhea Warren

Holiday music and the delicious smell of fried chicken, macaroni and cheese, and green beans filled the room as a jolly Santa Claus walked around passing out gifts. Kids were outside playing basketball and dancing to the DJ's music selections. For some of the older guests, this is just a regular Christmas party. For the children, it is something much bigger.

With youth crime being such a prevalent issue, New Orleans needs a positive place for impoverished youth to turn. The Youth Empowerment Project's After-school Enrichment Program is the answer. On December 19th, the program held its Annual Christmas Party at their youth center on Oretha Castle Haley Blvd and

it was a huge success. Over 100 of the at-risk youth involved in the program received gift-wrapped presents. Besides having holiday parties, this afterschool program provides numerous free services for youth ages 7-16 including tutoring, recreational activities, LEAP preparation, mentoring, and anger management and violence prevention groups.

Founded in 2004, YEP began as the first juvenile re-entry program for youth returning home to the Greater New Orleans area from secure and non-secure juvenile facilities. It has continued to create a total of seven programs that are all geared towards bettering New Orleans youth. The programs include the Community Reintegration Program, Community Based Mentoring Program, New

Orleans Providing Literacy to All Youth, The Village, Afterschool Enrichment Program, Summer Camp, and the Trafigura Work and Learn Center.

"We want to insure that these kids have the support they need to be successful," says Melissa Sawyer, Co-Founder and Executive Director of YEP. With 130 registered kids, the Afterschool Enrichment Program strives to reach out to as many people as possible and is always willing to accept more children. "We have a lot of fun, engaging, in safe activities and everything is free. They love it," says Glenis Scott, Director of Case Management for YEP.

The program is definitely making an impact. Deshawn Wright, 13, has been a member for the past four years and comes to the

youth center almost every day. His dream is to attend St. Augustine High School next year, and YEP is helping him with his goal by providing him with funds. Performing "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" at the holiday party, it is apparent that he is comfortable here. "It is a place where you can really express yourself," says Wright.

Diamonte Beasley, 16, is a Sophomore at Edna Karr High School and has also been greatly aided by the program. "Before I came here, I was occupying the wrong crowd and my grades were pretty low. It has helped me both school-wise and becoming a better person overall," says Beasley. "I feel so welcome here, it's like a family," says Beasley.

Daughters Of Charity Commemorate 180 Years in Local Health Services With Special Eucharistic Celebration

Archbishop Gregory Aymond is the Celebrant

Join Daughters of Charity Services of New Orleans for a special Eucharistic Celebration commemorating the 180 year anniversary of the Daughters of Charity providing health services in New Orleans. Archbishop Gregory Aymond is the Celebrant.

This event is free and open to the public. A special invitation is extended to current and former Daughters of Charity Health

Centers staff, patients, board members and friends, former Hotel Dieu, Charity and DePaul Hospitals staff, patients and board members, and those who graduated from the Hotel Dieu and Charity Hospital Schools of Nursing and Surgical Technology.

The event takes place at 4 p.m. on Saturday, January 4, 2014 at St. Joseph Church, 1802 Tulane Ave., New Orleans, LA 70112

Dr. Robert J. Spears, DDS



Merry Christmas and Happy New Years from Dr. Robert Spears and his Staff

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A close-up portrait of a young Black woman with short, curly hair, looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. She is wearing a black top and small hoop earrings. The background is dark and out of focus.A large, light brown, upward-pointing arrow graphic with a grid pattern, positioned behind the main headline.

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