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A Data News Weekly Exclusive

# James Andrews

## Ambassador of New Orleans Music and Culture



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# James Andrews

## Ambassador of New Orleans Music and Culture



If anyone can pull off aligning himself with the famous Louis Armstrong it's trumpet extraordinaire – James Andrews. The New Orleans native earned the “Satchmo of the Ghetto” alias back in his Treme’ neighborhood and the name still sizzles in the city. Photo credit: Michael Weintraub

### By Edwin Buggage

James Andrews is part of an amazing musical tradition of a City that continues to bless the world with great music. Over the years he has been at the forefront of New Orleans music as a great trumpet player and vocal performer. He is affectionately known as “Satchmo

of the Ghetto” named after an album and documentary that focused on him and his life in Treme’. As we move into Jazz Fest, which is two weekends where the City is filled with people from all over the world attending an amazing festival that showcases some of the greatest in music, food and crafts; Andrews is a veteran of Jazz Fest performing there since he was a young boy

growing up in Treme’. Today he is all grown and is part of a great musical heritage that is being led by him and his family, adding to the great wellspring of music coming out of New Orleans. “I love doing Jazz Fest,” says Andrews. Continuing in his unmistakable “Treme” accent he says, “When we have crowds of this size getting exposed to the music it helps in keep-

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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  
Edwin Buggage  
Editor  
Cheryl Mainor  
Managing Editor  
Calla Victoria  
Executive Assistant  
June Hazeur  
Accounting

**Contributors**  
Edwin Buggage  
Rachel Carrio  
George Curry  
Julianne Malveaux  
Glenn Summers  
Margaret Summers  
Calla Victoria  
James Washington  
Michael Weintraub  
**Art Direction & Production**  
MainorMedia.com  
**Editorial Submissions**  
datanewseditor@bellsouth.net  
**Advertising Inquiries**  
datanewsad@bellsouth.net

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Cover Story, Continued from previous page.

ing the New Orleans musical legacy alive and the crowd and the festival is like no other in the world.”

Today his neighborhood is on the map in ways unimaginable. The place where his love of music began in the neighborhood of Treme’ is now a place where tourist and others come to experience authentic Black New Orleans. Speaking of his connection to his neighborhood as an important part of his identity as an artist and a person he says onstage he channels the energy of many of those whose shaped his life’s outlook and perspective, “When people come out and see me they are getting authentic New Orleans. I feel like I am an ambassador to Treme’. Also I feel playing for the crowd at the Fair Grounds means so much because I grew up playing Jazz Fest. It brings back so many great memories having played at the festival ever since I started playing the trumpet. It means so much because when I am onstage, I feel I am representing the best of both Treme’ and my City to the world.”

Andrews believes that having a place for musicians to play inside of Treme’ is essential to continue the tradition of the great music coming out of the City. So he and his family came together to open Ooh Poo Pa Doo, named for the 1960 hit by Andrews grandfather the great New Orleans Singer Jesse Hill. “Although we gig in a lot of places we felt we wanted to create a venue for musicians to play at here in Treme’. I am also excited that we are seeing the reopening of the historic Carver Theater. I can remember going there growing up to see movies, and I am glad they put a lot of effort into making it a venue for music and other events to help further revitalize Treme’.

Jazz Fest brings back fond memories for Andrews, as he reminisces about his grandfather Jessie Hill playing Jazz Fest, “Every year we went to Jazz Fest with my grandfather,” recalls Andrews. “He use to take us over there and we would tap dance with him onstage at his shows. It always brings back memories for me thinking about the older generations for the guys that are not around anymore. I think about now as I am getting older playing these gigs and continuing the tradition, and it is an honor and privilege to play the fest knowing that all those great people played on; and we are carrying the torch for the next generation.”

As the City have changed post-

Katrina in ways both good and bad, from a musician’s standpoint Andrews sees in some aspects it is a good thing but in respect to the culture he feels the City suffered a loss. “I definitely feel the changes after Katrina are good, I think people go out more to hear live music and there are more venues to play around town, and more opportunities to go away and perform. Also I feel there is more appreciation for New Orleans Musicians after Katrina. But I feel with so many people who were not able to return something was lost, some of the authenticity, and I can’t explain it but it was a feeling that seems to be lost. Because I feel what makes the City special is the people and without them some of that magic is no longer there. “On a lighter note he speaks of how he got his nickname Satchmo of the Ghetto, “I’ve always loved and admired Louis Armstrong and I would always play and sing his songs at an early age and that became my nickname on the street.”

In recent years the Andrews name has become synonymous with great music. Andrews’ younger brother Troy “Trombone Shorty” Andrews has become a breakout star and is closing the Jazz Fest on the Acura Stage. Also his cousin Glen David Andrews has also become a rising star. Speaking with pride on his brother and cousin’s success he says, “I am glad to see them reaching their full potential and setting the bar higher for musicians from New Orleans. I remember taking them to different gigs and showing them the ropes like my grandfather did me and I am glad to see them become successful.”

All of the Andrews will be performing on separate stages on the last day of Jazz Fest. And with all of their shows they are all great performers that know how to put on an amazing set. James Andrews in the spirit of Satchmo says he wants his audience to leave his set feeling good. And as Pharrell Williams monster hit “Happy” blazes the airwaves everywhere, it is James Andrews that’s been accomplishing this on stage for decades and does not see an end in sight of his great performances. Saying of what his desired effect of his shows he says, “When people leave my show I want them to be happy and feel like wow they’ve had a great time. My show is about a great time. It is about a good time in New Orleans, something that gives them that old good time New Orleans feeling.”



Today, James Andrews is part of a great musical heritage that is being led by he and his family, adding to the great wellspring of music coming out of New Orleans.

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# NUL President Morial Joins Gun-Control Advocacy Group

By James Wright

NNPA - National Urban League President Marc Morial has joined a new gun-control advocacy organization that aims to galvanize Americans to end gun violence.

Everytown for Gun Safety, founded earlier this week with the support of former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, was

formed to counter powerful pro-gun lobbyists on Capitol Hill.

Morial, a former mayor of New Orleans, is familiar with the pain and destruction that gun violence can cause.

"Gun violence has often primarily been associated with poor, urban neighborhoods," Morial said. "But the truth is that gun violence can and does happen everywhere. The common denominator is easy ac-

cess to guns."

Bloomberg, who has been a force in the Mayors against Illegal Guns organization and Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, has committed \$50 million to help the organization, which also has the support of billionaire business magnate Warren Buffett.

Morial points out that gun violence kills 86 Americans daily and "yet the U.S. Congress has failed to

enact legislation requiring comprehensive gun background checks, despite overwhelmingly public support."

"In an effort to press for change in Washington and move beyond Congress to bring common-sense gun policies to state capitols, corporate boards and state and federal elections, Everytown's supporters will back candidates and legislation aimed at saving lives and raise



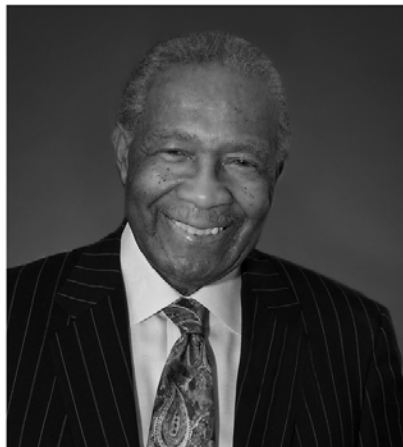
Marc Morial, President and CEO National Urban League

awareness around urgent gun safety issues," Morial said.

Morial, who will serve on Everytown's advisory board with Bloomberg and Buffett, said that fighting gun violence has long been a part of his public life.

"This is a fight to which I have been committed — whether being the first U.S. mayor to bring suit against major gun manufacturers to hold them accountable for their part in the senseless cycle of violence or focusing on the reduction of gun violence in the name of public health and community safety at the National Urban League," he said.

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# Kayla Neville

## *The Voice of a New Generation*

by: Edwin Buggage

Kayla Neville is a young woman who is poised to become a leader of her generation. As a senior at De LaSalle High School she is working to create awareness around stopping the violence on the streets of New Orleans; something is plaguing our community and threatens the future hopes and dreams of many young people. "I wanted to work to help others, especially teens like myself from different backgrounds. I realize some do not have access to the same opportunities I've had, so I am working to make a difference in the lives of others." Continuing she says on the origins of her giving spirit she says, "I come from a family of volunteers and I was always taught that it is better to give than to receive, so that is what I am trying to do."

Whether it is real or imagined some feel that young people do not have the desire to be civically engaged. This is something that Kayla feels is not necessarily true, that in fact young people do want to get involved, but Kayla feels that there is a disconnect between the generations, "I feel that some older people think young people aren't listening, but we are. Also I feel that young people have the desire to respond and want to do something about the issues that affect our community, but sometimes we don't know how. But I



think it is about the young and old communicating better to bridge the generation gap and create better understanding to address the issues facing our community, especially those that affect my generation."

Recently, Kayla won a \$2500 college scholarship essay contest sponsored by local radio station WQUE-FM Q93, Attorney Morris Bart, Crimestoppers and other businesses. In her essay she wrote how she would create a non-violent community and since her winning she has shared her essay with other students at schools

and leaders with discussions hopes that violence in New Orleans can be reduced especially among ages 24 and under. "I am glad that I had the opportunity to have my voice heard, being able to reach people, and hopefully have them beginning to think about how we can stop the violence in our community," remarks Neville.

She has taken her platform seriously as she has spoken before the New Orleans Recreational Department Commission, she has also been a guest on WBOK and started an Instagram page; 504vio-

lenceturnaround, to have an open dialogue with other students and to promote peaceful resolutions to conflicts. She sees social media as a new frontier that can bring people together around social issues, "Social media is so powerful and you can do so many things to inform and empower people and it can be used to deal with relevant issues. With my essay for example, I wanted to create more awareness and now I have over 400 followers and this is how my generation gets information. So I feel we can utilize these things to get positive messages out there to people."

As part of her prize for winning the essay contest is Prom TakeOver by Q93 where Kayla and her school will be entertained by guest recording artists. In addition Kayla's prom dress along with dinner, beauty makeover and a limo ride for her and friends are included. While she is excited about her prize she has been a teen leader for some time. Kayla has been a three year active Teen Council Member of NORDC, a Eucharistic Minister, member of campus ministry, student council member, De LaSalle cheerleader, a runner-up in The Miss New Orleans Pageant 2013 teen division. She's also made two trips to Washing-

ton, D.C. to the Close Up Program and also another leadership conference in San Francisco. Earlier this year she was presented as a debutante with The Original Illinois Club. Kayla through her work is developing into a "difference maker" and encourages all to do the same to make New Orleans safer.

In the coming weeks she is getting ready to graduate high school and have great things lying ahead for her future. She plans to study Broadcast Journalism where she plans to have a career telling relevant stories that make a difference. "I want to get into this field because I want to use my voice to tell stories that can help and inspire people." Kayla Neville is a young woman dedicated to change. She is the template for the next generation of young people and is preparing herself to lead. She has in her short life inspired many to want to make the City, the nation and the world a better place. And for her amazing work she is Data News Weekly Trailblazer Award recipient for April 2014.

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# Bottle Trees

*Poor Man's Stained Glass or Garden Earrings*



By MG Calla Victoria

Bottle trees are becoming increasingly popular as ornamentation in gardens all over America. Sometimes called "poor man's stained glass" or "garden earrings," these glistening tall glass and metal sculptures add lots of bling to any garden decor. Although a fabulous addition to any landscape, bottle trees are not a new concept, in fact they originated a very long time ago during the ninth century in the African Congo. The central Africans tribes believed that evil spirits could be captured in bottles, so they placed glass bottles dangling from twine or stuck on top of sticks near their homes to trap the evils spirits that prowl during the night. When the sun came out the next day it created extreme heat in the glass bottles thus burning up the evil spirits. Also bottle trees altars were a way for the Africans to honor deceased relatives. You may remember seeing bottles dangling from trees in the movie "Ray" and stuck on dead tree branches in the movie "O Brother Where Art Thou."

With the colonization of America, the bottle tree tradition traveled along with enslaved Africans to America's Deep South. The slaves placed bottles on crepe myrtle trees, as myrtle trees recur in the Old Testament being associated with the Hebrew

slaves getting their freedom. Although much of the folklore is long forgotten or that some considered it a pagan ritual, bottle trees are on the rise. Some clever person has even come up with a botanical name for the whimsical bottle tree; it is called *Silica transparencii* (for "clear glass").

If you are interested in adding a bottle tree to your garden you can find them at most up-scale garden centers and online, or you can make your own. To construct a bottle tree you can use any color bottles, but cobalt blue is the most desired color in the folklore tradition because the blues of the water and sky places the bottle tree at the crossroads of heaven and earth, also blue is said to be the most calming color. You can use any size bottle; however longer necked bottles have less chance of blowing off the branches. The bottles are placed upside down with the neck facing the trunk of the tree. There are many how-to videos on bottle tree construction online as well. Most gardening centers sell bottle trees constructed from rebar to make the metal tree branches, but long branches of dead trees work just fine.

Check out my "Gardening Tip of the Week" at [www.thegardeningdiva.com](http://www.thegardeningdiva.com)

**Remember, never get too busy to stop and smell the beautiful flowers!**



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# Shoot Ya Best Shot!

## All White Jam @ Harrah's

Photos by Glenn Summers

Harrah's Casino was the place to be for the All White Easter Jam. Data News Weekly VP of Sales, Glenn Jones and other friends helped make the night unforgettable, so of course, Data was there!



Visit [www.ladatanews.com](http://www.ladatanews.com) for more photos from these events.



# Schools More Segregated Now than Three Decades Ago



George C. Curry  
NNPA

As we approach May 17, the 60th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board of Education* landmark decision outlawing "separate but equal" schools, several studies show that our schools are more segregated now than they were three decades ago. And there are no indications that things are likely to change for the better in the foreseeable future.

A report by the Economic Policy Institute (EPI) titled, "Brown

v. Board at 60," concluded, "Today, things are getting worse. The typical black student now attends a school where only 29 percent of his or her fellow students are white, down from 36 percent in 1980."

Actually there were two *Brown* decisions. The first, in 1954, outlawed racially segregated public schools, which had been defended as "separate but equal." Faced with foot-dragging by intransigent school officials in the Deep South, the Supreme Court issued a second ruling in 1955, sometimes called *Brown II*, declaring that the schools had to be desegregated "with all deliberate speed."

But speed was nowhere to be found. Two years after the court ruling, no Black child attended schools with a White student in eight of the 11 former Confederate states, including Alabama.

The Leadership Conference on

Civil Rights (LCCR), a coalition of nearly 200 organizations, noted, "It took ten years after *Brown*, but beginning with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the nation committed to desegregation and it worked. Courts and executive agencies consistently supported desegregation plans and from 1968 to 1988, as more schools integrated, academic achievement increased for African American students."

However, that progress stalled.

"...The legal and political tide turned against integration during the 1980s," LCCR observed. "Courts stopped ordering desegregation plans and began dismantling existing plans – both court-ordered and voluntary. Federal agencies stopped aggressive enforcement and by 1989 schools were beginning to re-segregate, reversing many of the academic gains of the previous 20 years."

Upon entering office in 1981, President Ronald Reagan set the political climate for retrenchment. And so did an increasingly conservative Supreme Court. But some African-American leaders also played a role in dismantling desegregation.

An investigation of re-segregation in the South, conducted by ProPublica, focused on Tuscaloosa, Ala., my hometown. The city had been under a federal desegregation decree since 1979. In 1993, with Tuscaloosa vying for a new Mercedes-Benz plant, business leaders decided it was time for them to make a move.

"Publicly, the city's movers and shakers said the lack of neighborhood schools made the district unattractive ... Behind closed doors, they argued that if they did not create some schools where white students made up the majority – or near it – they'd lose the white par-

ents still remaining," the investigation found. "Districts under desegregation orders aren't supposed to take actions that increase racial separation. And so the city's leadership decided the desegregation order needed to go, and they believed the time was ripe for a court to agree."

The court did agree to bow out after some Black leaders went along with the plan.

"The roster of witnesses lined up behind the school board shocked many in the black community," ProPublica reported. "It included some of the city's most influential black leaders, including a city councilman, a state senator, and Judge John England, Jr... Rumors spread within the community that England's and others' support had been part of a secret arrangement with white leaders."

Curry, Continued on page 11.

## Mental Illness is Our Dirty Little Secret



Julianne Malveaux  
NNPA Columnist

I'm tired, my sisterfriend says. I don't know how much longer I can hold on. As I hear her I have a couple of choices. One is to tell her to get with her pastor and pray; the other is to tell her to get real with her illness. Running her to her pastor takes her to a familiar place. Pushing her to help takes her out of her comfort zone. When my beloved brothers and sisters share that they are stymied in the way they live their lives, I don't mind praying and encouraging spiritual counsel, but I do mind ignoring the medicinal help that could assist my sisterfriend.

So my sister is sighing her pain, and I am wondering what to do.

There are few that will hear a Black woman in a Black community, strumming her pain, questioning her faith. According to the National Associations of Mental Health more than 4 percent of African Americans have considered suicide. Most of them are African American women.

Mental health is our nation's dirty little secret, and if it is whispered in the nation at large, it is a silent scream in the African American community. We are afraid, ashamed, frightened to own up to it, using our own lingo (s'kerd, shamed) to wrap ourselves around the fear that goes with "coming out" on mental illness.

So we are silent, even when we loose a warrior. Karyn Washington was a 22-year-old Morgan State University sister who committed suicide, last week. This young and brilliant one turned her pain into power when she created a website, "for brown girls" (forbrowngirls.com) that lifted up and affirmed our brown skin girls. Karyn was a colored girl whose mental issues were apparently so severe that she chose to take her own life while affirming

those of others. From all accounts Karyn experienced depression. How many feel it and don't say it? How many nod and just don't mean it? How many exhale, inhale and really reach out to a brother or a sister to listen, have a cup of tea, take a walk, or just reach out and touch?

The poet Paul Laurence Dunbar wrote, "We wear the mask that grins and lies that hides our cheeks and shades our eyes." Many in our nation, especially African Americans, wear the mask. When we peek/speak/tweet from behind the mask we realize, yet if we were real, we would have to acknowledge in the words of Paul Lawrence Dunbar that to make a poet Black and bid her sing is to challenge her and her two realities. In the words of Sister Maya, "I know why the caged bird sings".

I chose to focus on this because in one scant week I have spoken to African American women who have experienced depression or feel shackled by other mental health issues. They walk like they hold the world in their hands; sway like they are hearing drums from another

continent, yet cry behind closed doors, like they have the weight of the world on their shoulders. They are sad, ground down, depressed, and we play off their pain, trivialize it, instead of responding to it. We are losing too much genius when we play off the scourge of mental illness. We decide that it is their problem, not the problem of a nation that would inflict, rather than attempt to fix, mental illness. For all the care the Affordable Care Act has offered, we must ask if it has offered enough to combat mental illness.

We in the African American community have paid more and received less to be perceived as "normal" members of society. Despite injustices in Scottsboro, Groveland and other vile places in our nation, we have been expected to show up, with amazing dignity, ignoring the massacre of our sons or daughters with well-modulated emotion. Too many of us fear or fail to speak our pain. Poverty and mental health are correlated, yet the poorest of us see our pain as "par for the course" and we don't speak about it. Whether

African Americans are wealthy or financially challenged, mental health is elusive for some. And faith without works is dead, which means fall on those knees if it comforts you, then run to the doctor who may help you with medication and therapy.

Baby girl Karyn Washington inspired this column, and as I thought of her, others kept reminding me of their own pain and the ways it has been ignored. If you don't get it, read from Terrie Williams' *Black Pain*. And if you get it/read it, remind folks that this is not a sympathy issue, this is a public policy issue. So weep sister soldier, brother warrior. Those who bear the scars of mental illness have often fought longer, harder, and with the chemical imbalance that makes them feel it all so much more intensely. Mental health is not an embarrassment; it is a national health issue. It is a silent killer that we have yet to acknowledge.

Julianne Malveaux is a Washington, D.C.-based economist and writer. She is President Emerita of Bennett College for Women in Greensboro, N.C.



# Spiritually Speaking...



**James Washington**  
Guest Columnist

Because of recent events in my life, I had to revisit something that has played a powerful role in my understanding of my relationship with God. As most things do, this started in church and my interpretation of the message again revealed a truth that God does not play games. My actual thought at the time was God was saying "I'm tired of playing games with you." That, by itself, brought chills to yours truly. Now

this becomes more insightful (for me) as I was asked by a close friend if I thought God answered prayer. "Absolutely!" The answer just rolled off my lips without any thought at all. I believe God answers prayer when and how He wants to, when prayer is sincerely offered out of the belief that He really can. I also believe we waste our time making entreaties to God out of habit or tradition. If so, I call that false faith.

Let me clarify. That's the kind of stuff we do to each other. We play each other way too much. Some of you know exactly what I'm talking about. We constantly show each other the face or faces, if you have two, of polite political correctness in an attempt to get over, or get from someone that which you want. We expertly manipulate people and circumstances to our desired end. Have

you ever done that? I plead guilty (sometimes). The problem is God ain't having none of that. It's like what my used to say to me when I was young dumb and stupid. I'd here this as only she could say it...."Who you think you talkin to; one of you little friends out there in them streets?" After swallowing and hoping I could get my little behind out of that particular conversation, I heard what mom was actually saying. She was tired of my lame excuses, bad behavior and the potential lie that she could her before I even opened my mouth.

I believe, in my sanctified imagination, that God was the originator of the question, "You talking to me?" Apparently, when you seriously consider the possibilities of God's greatness and power you really have His attention. If you

don't believe the person you're talking to has any money, you won't ask to borrow any from him or her. If you don't believe God can do something about your circumstance, you won't ask. In this instance, no prayer is probably better than false prayer. No prayer is probably better than "it can't hurt prayer." At some point let me humbly submit to you that one day God real probably react. It's that "I'm tired of playing games with you" thing. Either you're in a faith struggle of monumental proportions. And God recognizes you really believe in His magnificence. Or, you just can't get your act together. The latter will still probably get you a sympathetic ear. But don't be caught playing with your faith and God surreptitiously. You might find yourself with free tickets to a concert you

really don't want to attend. You'll take the tickets, in hopes that something better will come along. I'm just saying you need to recognize who you talking to. Faith is or it isn't, don't you know? And don't you know that God knows? "Do you believe that I am able to do this? Yes Lord, they replied. Then He touched their eyes and said, According to your faith will it be done..." Matthew 9:28-29.

What will be done in God's name for you today? I happen to be convinced God can do anything He desires. The trick is to make sure that when He asks "You talking to me?" that the answer is loud clear and emphatic. It certainly can't hurt to make sure that before you dial His number, you truly want to talk to pick up the phone. If not,

May God bless and keep you always.

## State & Local News

# Mayor's Office Announces New Initiative on Racial Reconciliation

*The Welcome Table New Orleans Promotes Relationship Building Among Citizens to Improve Communities*

Mayor Mitch Landrieu announced a new multi-year initiative focused on race, reconciliation and community-building. Funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Welcome Table New Orleans, will bring citizens of different racial groups and backgrounds together to build relationships that lead to improvements in key areas throughout the city.

The Welcome Table New Orleans will be offered in partnership with the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation. Housed at the University of Mississippi and founded by former Governor William Winter, the Institute works with communities to facilitate meaningful and honest discussions


about race in respectful, safe and structured spaces. The discussions begin with relationship building and can lead to citizen-led efforts that positively impact communities. The Urban League of Greater New Orleans is also a partner in this effort.

"The goal of The Welcome Table New Orleans is to bring diverse citizens from across the city together to meet, share experiences and work together to improve neighborhoods and communities," said Mayor Landrieu. "As I said four years ago, race is a topic that you can't go over, or under or around – you have to go through it. I believe our city's diversity is a strength, not a weak-

ness, and that the people of New Orleans are ready to look closely at the ways in which race and reconciliation can have a positive impact instead of a negative impact."

Information sessions on The Welcome Table New Orleans initiative will be held on Monday, April 28th at 6:00 pm at New Hope Baptist Church in Central City and Tuesday, April 29th at 6:00 pm at St. Roch Community Church in St. Roch. Anyone interested in learning more about the initiative is invited to attend one of the two sessions.

For more information about The Welcome Table New Orleans, contact Deputy Mayor Judy Reese Morse, jrmorse@nola.gov or 504-658-4993.



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# Footwork Therapy

**Rachel Carrico**  
Second Liner Profile Series  
for Data News Weekly

Tyree Smith, Secretary of Family Ties Social Aid and Pleasure Club, gets a certain sparkle in his eye when he talks about second lining. "The music—it just takes you away from everything. The music is just amazing. It's therapy for a lot of people, and I know I'm one of the people that it's therapy for." Dancing through the streets on Sunday afternoons provides Smith, and many others, with a form of mental, physical, and even spiritual healing that he relies on as a weekly "stress reliever."

Smith, who grew up in the Seventh Ward, attended his first second-line at the age of 13 when some friends brought him along. "I was like, 'What's going on?' I didn't really know what a second-line was." But once he was introduced, he was hooked. "When I saw what people were doing, and how people were having fun, then I thought that that was something I wanted to do." He set about per-



Tyree Smith

fecting his footwork, with help of mentors along the way. Despite the fact that second-line dancing is, first and foremost, "do whatcha wanna," Smith struggled to master the footwork. "It was real hard because, at first, I couldn't keep up." When he started second-lining in the early 1990s, a faster tempo of brass band music, mixed with hip hop influences, was gaining serious popularity amongst second-liners, who in turn innovated quicker footwork techniques. Smith dedicated himself to studying it. "I started going [to second-lines] on the regular—whether it was uptown, downtown—and I just started watching people. And I was like, 'Oh, I got that move. Oh, I got that move. OK, I can do this, I can do that.' So I just put all that together and created my own style."

Today, Smith is encouraging younger generations to follow in his footsteps—literally—in keeping the tradition alive. He looks forward to his own children parading someday. He also founded a new divi-

sion of Family Ties, called D2, to provide an opportunity for younger men to experience the exhilaration of parading inside the ropes. D2, which stands for "Division 2" of Family Ties, came out the door for the first time on October 6, 2013. Long before that, they had established themselves as a presence on the sidelines, as each Sunday, club members and supporters sported a new D2 T-shirt. "We had a movement going on. We called it the D2 Movement."

The D2 Movement came to an end not long after their debut parade, due to a growing public perception that the club was involved with illegal activities, and not just dedicated to parading. Smith firmly denounces these accusations. "We're just about having fun, making people laugh. We're about the tradition. It's something that we try to keep going. I want everybody to know that D2 is a Social Aid and Pleasure Club." He concludes wistfully, "It was great while it lasted, it was."

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# Jackson, Miss., Mayor Lumumba's Legacy Remembered

By Margaret Summers  
NNPA Newswire

Washington, D.C.-area friends and supporters of the late Jackson, Miss., Mayor Chokwe Lumumba gathered on Saturday, April 12 at the David A. Clarke UDC School of Law in Northwest to honor the human rights activist and former "people's attorney." More than 60 people attended the event.

Lumumba took office as Jackson's mayor on July 1, 2013. Barely eight months into his term, he died on February 25, 2014 at age 66. Although the local coroner said Lumumba died of natural causes, Lumumba's family commissioned an independent autopsy.

"We will know the results on April 22, after the special mayoral election," said his daughter Rukia Lumumba, 35, an attorney in Jackson. "The doctor wants to meet with us on that day to discuss [the findings]."

Some question the sudden death and wonder if Lumumba was killed because of his activism, and his association with the Republic of New Afrika (RNA), an organization which believed African-Americans have a right to land in the southeast U.S. and reparations for the hundreds of years of their ancestors' slave labor.

Dr. Gregory Carr, chair of Howard University's Afro-American Studies Department, noted that many of Lumumba's civil rights contemporaries of the 1960s and 1970s were assassinated. "Whatever did or did not happen to set Chokwe on his ancestral journey, he lived long enough to become an elder," said Carr.

"Chokwe embraced the term



**Chokwe Lumumba**(August 2, 1947 – February 25, 2014) was a human rights lawyer, and Mayor of Jackson, Mississippi. Lumumba was born in Detroit, Michigan, as Edwin Finley Taliaferro, the second child of eight born to Lucien and Priscilla Taliaferro. He was elected mayor of Jackson, Mississippi on June 4, 2013.

'revolutionary' as an accolade," said Jonathan Davis of the National Conference of Black Lawyers (NCBL) in New York. Davis said NCBL, to which Lumumba belonged, serves as the legal arm of the black liberation movement. "Wherever [Lumumba] went, it was to meet oppression head on."

Davis knew Lumumba when both attended Wayne State University in Detroit, Mich. Lumumba was a law student, and Davis was an undergraduate student. "Lumumba was lionhearted as an attorney," Davis said. "He represented his clients so ferociously, he was sometimes found in contempt of court by a contemptible [court] system." Lumumba's clients included Black Panther Geronimo Pratt, who was falsely accused of murder, and rapper Tupac Shakur, who was cleared of aggravated assault charges.

John Brittain of the David A.

Clarke UDC School of Law, met Lumumba in the 1970s in Mississippi. Lumumba was still a law student and Brittain had only been out of law school for two years when they worked together on a case involving RNA defendants.

He was surprised when Lumumba ran for Jackson's city council and later for mayor, given Lumumba's revolutionary beliefs. "Lumumba told me he wasn't running for himself, he was running to empower the people [of Jackson]," Brittain said. "He viewed [becoming a city official] as revolutionary, a part of building a community of people in Jackson who stand in opposition to oppression."

Lumumba was born Edwin Finley Taliaferro in Detroit, Mich., the second of eight children. As a child, he helped his mother collect donations for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and

its voting rights campaigns in the Deep South during the early 1960s.

Affected by the 1968 murder of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Taliaferro changed his first name to "Chokwe" after an Angolan tribe that was never captured in the slave trade, and his last name to "Lumumba" after the slain 1960s Congolese anti-colonialist and prime minister Patrice Lumumba.

Chokwe Lumumba's son Chokwe Antar Lumumba, 31, who is also an attorney, is running for mayor of Jackson in the Tuesday, April 22 special election.

"My father had a dream, a purpose, to create a new way of governing by, for, and including the people," Rukia Lumumba told the memorial service audience. "My brother helped my father create that plan. My brother was bred to do this work. We know nothing else but to love and serve the people."

She said her father believed in participatory democracy and self-determination through people's assemblies or town meetings, and worker-owned businesses.

Her mother Nubia, who died in 2003, supported and nurtured her father's vision. "She grew up in Anacostia. D.C. was her hometown. I feel like it's my home, too," Rukia Lumumba said.

Part of Chokwe Lumumba's legacy is an upcoming conference on Sunday, May 4 to Monday, May 5 at Jackson State University. "Jackson Rising: The New Economies Conference" will focus on growing and diversifying Jackson's economy. Chokwe Lumumba and the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, which Lumumba co-founded, are listed among the conference's co-sponsors.

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### Curry, Continued from page 8.

A person with direct knowledge of the arrangement confirmed to me that a deal was indeed made whereby a new Black school would be constructed on the predominantly Black west side of town in exchange for supporting an end of the court-ordered desegregation. However, after extracting what they wanted from Black officials, Whites reneged on the deal and no new school was erected.

"Freed from court oversight, Tuscaloosa's schools have seemed to move backwards in

time," according to the ProPublica report. "The citywide integrated high school is gone, replaced by three smaller schools. Central [the former high school that served the entire city] retains the name of the old powerhouse, but nothing more. A struggling school serving the city's poorest part of town, it is 99 percent black."

Other cities have undergone similar experiences.

A scholarly study at Stanford University found, "Over 200 medium-sized and large districts

were released from desegregation court orders from 1991 to 2009. We find that racial school segregation in these districts increased gradually following release from court order..."

Another reason schools are being resegregated is that segregated housing patterns have remained intact.

"Schools remain segregated because neighborhoods in which they are located are segregated," said the EPI report. "Raising achievement of low-income black children requires resi-

dential integration, from which school integration can flow."

Without dismantling segregated residential housing patterns and getting federal courts or the Justice Department to retain some jurisdiction over court-ordered desegregation plans, public schools are on a path to return to their pre-Brown status of being separate and unequal.

George E. Curry, former editor-in-chief of *Emerge* magazine, is editor-in-chief of the National Newspaper Publishers Association News Service (NNPA.)

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