Black Men Exposed III

Celebrating African American Fathers

Newsmaker
Cynthia Warrick

State & Local
Chase Family Foundation Gala
Black Men Exposed III
Celebrating African-American Fathers

By Edwin Buggage

Black Fathers Myths and Realities

Many times in the media we all too often see images of African-American men who are not being fathers to their children. We see startling statistics that paint a bleak picture showing the dark side of our community. But there is another story that often does not get told, one of Black men taking care of their kids whether in conventional nuclear family units or in other configurations where there is no absence of love of the children coming from the father. Fatherhood is not a one-size fits all endeavor and it is a forever changing thing as children grow and are faced with new challenges and as parents we have to make adjustments to the different stages of the things our kids face. It is Father’s Day, a holiday our community in some instances ignore because of distorted images and perceptions of Black dads. But the reality is that many dads are in-

On the Cover: Charles Vaughn pictured with his daughters Amara and Liana speaks on one of the rewards of being a dad saying, “It feels good walking through the door and seeing my children, I have been through a lot in my life and it is great to be in a place in my life where I feel my life has value and meaning because of my wife and my children.”

Al “Brother” Mims is a soldier on the frontline trying to save the lives of the young and have passed on this spirit of giving to his son Cameron saying, of fatherhood, “As I have raised my son I have given him the spirit of selflessness, where he saw the need to serve others and I am proud that he is out there doing the work to serve those less fortunate.”

Almore Cato, pictured with his wife and children beams with pride when speaking of his kids and his role as a father saying, “I planted the seeds that are now blossoming into potential greatness for their lives, and that all our work is paying off.”

Data News Editor and author of this story Edwin Buggage and son Eric.

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Insider Data Editor and author of this story Edwin Buggage.

Cover Story, Continued on next page.
involved in their children’s lives and Data News Weekly spoke to a few of them about their experiences as fathers.

**Married with Children**

Dr. Joe Ricks, a Professor and Chair of the Business Department at Xavier University, has been married to his wife Dianne Way-Ricks for 13 years and is a doting father to his 10 year old daughter Jaelynn. There is not a time when you speak with him that he will not bring up his daughter and something she is doing. Speaking of his approach to parenting and being a dad he says, “I love being a dad but the challenge is sometime finding the balance between guiding my daughter in ways that will help her but giving her the space and knowing when to let her make mistakes or when to intervene.”

Continuing he says, “It’s funny raising kids because when you think you have got a grasp on parenting they move to another stage and you have to adjust the way you parent. For example, when she was a toddler I thought I had it down, then she turned four and I faced another set of challenges and then when I thought I had a handle on it: when she was 9 then she turned 10 and now it is something else. I have come to discover at different stages kids need different things.”

It is true that there are different stages of parenting and the role of the father and Almore Cato has seen many of them. He is a retired Educator with three children that are young adults. When he speaks of his three kids Terreca, Erreca and Almore II, he beams with pride at their accomplishments and the job he and his wife Deborah who is also a retired Educator have done with them. “At this point my kids are about 90% independent, it is great to have kids who are doing wonderful things with their lives. They all have pursued their education and creating a sound foundation for their lives and when I think of them I am proud of them all, and feel great that my wife and I planted the seeds that are now blossoming into potential greatness for their lives, and that all our work is paying off.”

Sometimes when one is married they find themselves with children from another relationship and this can be challenging. Larry Panna, is the Owner of a video production company and has two children with his wife Sandra of 13 years. His daughter Imani is 12 and his son Khalil is 11 and he has a daughter from a previous relationship Ebony who is 20. Having two sets of children is not an ideal situation, but it is a balancing act he continues to be successful at, parenting to his daughter who does not live with him. Showing that in spite of the circumstances that he is trying to be there and be the best dad he can be. Saying of his situation, “I have 3 children. I have had some special challenges when it comes to being a father. My first born wasn’t near me and I missed a lot. It also taught me a lot. My two other children have been with me since they were born and there is a special bond. Regardless of situations and circumstances, I love them all equally. I’m going to be Dad forever,” says Larry Panna pictured with his children Ebony, Khalil and Imani.

The Plight and Fight of a Single Dad

While it is desirable that many families stay together like Almore Cato and his wife of several decades to raise their children sometimes things does not happen this way. It is something that can cause challenges for the father, who does not live in the home, but this is something Jamie Jones, an Educator and retiree from the military.

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Turning tragedy into triumph Jamie Jones pictured with his son Jamie Jr. says of growing up without a father gave him the motivation to be a better dad, “I lived my life without a father, so when I was growing up I would watch friends who had fathers and saw things that I said I would emulate if I had children myself.”

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University of Louisiana System President Sandra Woodley will recommend the UL System Board of Supervisors appoint Cynthia Warrick to serve as Interim President of Grambling State University effective July 1, 2014. Warrick’s appointment will be considered by the Board at its June 27 meeting in Baton Rouge.

“While we search for a permanent leader for Grambling State, the university needs an interim president with the skills and expertise to address a variety of issues. Dr. Warrick has proven capable of enacting positive change in the face of significant challenges, and, I believe, she is the right person to move the university forward during this transitional period,” said Woodley.

In the 2012-13 academic year, Warrick served as Interim President at South Carolina State University, the state’s only public HBCU. During her one-year appointment, she accomplished the following:

- Recruited a team of professionals to address legal, financial, criminial, political, academic, and student issues related to failed management and oversight.
- Prevented the closure of a major academic program threatening the degrees of over 200 professional nursing students;
- Developed and implemented a mobile app and social media networking center to address campus security, customer service and communication issues, and to enhance student trust and awareness, stakeholder involvement and campus cohesiveness;
- Successfully lobbied the SC legislature to increase university funding and improve the institution’s public relations in the wake of negative publicity; and
- Established key agency and private sector partnerships.

A pharmacist by trade, Warrick ventured into higher education 16 years ago. She has served in multifaceted leadership roles as an administrator, public servant, health-care professional, environmental research scientist, faculty member, and accreditation reviewer.

She currently serves as Senior Fellow for the Center for Minority Health Services Research at Howard University’s College of Pharmacy, a position she has held since 2009.

Prior to her interim presidential appointment at South Carolina State, Warrick was Dean and Chief Research Officer and Professor of Pharmacy at Elizabeth City State University in North Carolina. Associate Professor and Director of Environmental & Occupational Health...
Edgar “Dooky” Jr. and Leah Chase Family Foundation Annual Gala

Proceeds to benefit non-profit organizations in Louisiana

The Edgar “Dooky” Jr. and Leah Chase Family Foundation will host their Annual Gala Fundraiser on Saturday, June 14, 2014 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel at 6:00PM. Proceeds raised will benefit local non-profit organizations focused on culinary arts, education, cultural arts and social justice activities. The evening will feature a four-course meal prepared by Empowered Women Chefs, Chef Susan Spicer, Mary Sonnier and the Finalists from Food Network's show Top Chef Shirley Chung and Nina Compton.

Entertainment will feature a collaboration of New Orleans' top musicians, including Irma Thomas, Rockin Dopsie, James Andrews, Opera Creole and Robin Barnes.

The Edgar “Dooky” Jr. and Leah Chase Family Foundation issued eleven grants in its inaugural year to local non-profits in Louisiana which included the Uptown Jazz Orchestra, Chef John Folse Culinary Institute, State the Adventure in Reading and the Silverback Society as recipients.

Tickets and Tables are available online at www.DookyChaseFoundation.org.
Why We Celebrate Juneteenth

It’s really simple, as simple as JUNETEENTH!

Juneteenth is a Black American celebration commemorating the end of slavery in the United States. It was on June 19, 1865, that Major General Gordon Granger landed at Galveston, Texas, to announce the news that slavery had ended and all the slaves at Texas were thereby set free from bondage. This day is celebrated to honor the African American heritage and to remember and rejoice the emancipation of the slaves. This day also gives an opportunity to reflect on the past and to plan into a better, kinder and brighter future. JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION is a way to honor and remember this day.

Why do we even bother to celebrate Juneteenth?

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Celebrate Activities for Juneteenth

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A wide range of activities and events are organized for the people to celebrate the Juneteenth Festival. Festivals, parades, street fairs and reunements of the Juneteenth day are planned on the day that highlights the African American culture and the slavery practice on the African Americans in the last century. Miss Juneteenth contest and fun games like eating watermelon and traditional American games like football, basketball and baseball are held on this day. Competitions of strength, talent, dancing and cultural exploration are also conducted on the day that brings joy and make the celebration more interesting.

Churches and civic organizations organize activities such as barbecues, contests, family get-togethers, plays and other events that provide an opportunity to come closer with family and fellow men.

Schools and educational institutions conduct seminars, workshops and classes to educate the children about Juneteenth day and its importance. Quiz competitions, essay writing and craft making are also held during Juneteenth week, so as to make the children more aware about the culture and history of the country. Skills and remembrances of slavery and emancipation day are also held during the celebrations. The seminars and other activities conducted during the week also impart the importance of treating every fellow human and their culture with respect, into the new generation.

Government institutions and libraries hold exhibitions, and debates are conducted during the month of June.

The different activities and events that are planned to celebrate Juneteenth are aimed at educating the generations today about the cruelty and difficulty the African American slaves had to face in the last century. And for those who are unaware of the history of the Juneteenth day, this day is a reminder of the slavery and its effects. The Juneteenth celebration is a way to honor and remember this day.
The Legacy of Slavery!

The fact that it took a Civil War to finally put an end to slavery left a bitter taste in the mouths of many Americans. But how did this event shape the future of the country? How did it influence the development of society? And what lessons can we learn from this historical event?

According to historian John Hope Franklin, “The Experience of Slavery” (by allowing slavery) was the stage for every succeeding generation of American to apologize, compromise, and forget or atone for the sins of the past. This is because slavery was perceived as a great evil that had to be eradicated in order to create a just and equitable society. But many historians believe that slavery was an integral part of American history that cannot be fully understood without considering its legacy.

The story of slavery in the United States is a story of struggle and survival. It is a story of the resilience of the human spirit and the determination of those who sought to free themselves from the oppressions of a system that sought to enslave them.

The legacy of slavery continues to shape American society today. It is reflected in the way we view race, class, and gender, and it is a reminder of the ongoing struggle for equality and justice.

The History of Juneteenth

Juneteenth is the oldest known holiday commemorating the end of slavery in the United States. It is a day of pride and patriotism for African Americans, but also a day of reflection and commemoration.

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Commentary

To Be Equal

New York City
A Big Opportunity to Fix a Big Problem

Mayor de Blasio took office in January 2014 determined to “leave no New Yorker behind.” But a recent article by freelance journalist John Surico concludes that “the contracts between the city’s bureaucracy and its businesses do not reflect a commitment to diversity.” Surico adds, “For thousands of companies in New York City, obtaining a city contract is one of the most important financial benefits of civil government. Last year alone, roughly 40,500 transactions between the public and private sector translated into this $16.5 billion in revenue for vendors.” While M/WBE firms comprised 7 percent of New York City’s vendors and were awarded 23 percent of the City’s sub-and-prime contracts in 2013, they only received $439 million, or 2.7 percent, of total contract dollars. Despite the existence of the Federal Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) and dedicated minority business development offices in New York and most major cities, this disparity is echoed throughout the country. Reasons for this include cumbersome and complicated contracting rules and the often prohibitively high cost of navigating the procurement process. Unfortunately, too many minority and women-owned businesses also still find it difficult to secure critical bank loans. Everyone agrees that small and minority-owned businesses are essential to America’s economic recovery, but not everyone has stepped up to give them the support they need to succeed.

That is why the National Urban League has made entrepreneurship support, tax credits and small business financing a key part of “Jobs Rebuild America,” our $100 million partnership across the public, private and nonprofit sectors to improve outcomes for job seekers, vulnerable youth and entrepreneurs in hard-pressed urban communities. We were also pleased that last year, the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation invested $5 million in five Black-owned banks across the country both to support the dwindling number of Black banks and to strengthen the ability of these financial institutions to make loans to neighborhood businesses. We also applaud measures taken by the Obama Administration, including the current effort by the MBDA to bring more minority businesses into high growth industries such as green technology and clean energy.

Mayor de Blasio has pledged to increase New York City’s usage of minority businesses from three percent to 10 percent. He shares our understanding of the importance of minority and women-owned businesses to revitalize struggling urban communities, closing the wealth gap and improving the American economy. But none of us can do this alone and good intentions are not enough. Washington, local governments, big banks and major corporations across cities and the nation must do more to remove barriers and erect stronger incentives to unleash the entrepreneurial potential of minority and women-owned businesses.

Marc Morial
President and CEO
National Urban League

“In Fiscal Year 2013, the City procured $16.5 billion worth of goods and services and only $439 million went to Minority and Women-owned business enterprises—a mere 2.7 percent. That’s simply unacceptable.” Michael Nitsky, director of communications for New York City Comptroller Scott Stringer

Most discussions of economic inequality focus on the need for more equity in employment and income. There is no doubt that expanding job opportunities and providing living wages for workers in communities of color are essential to closing the great divide between the vastly affluent and the rest of us. But even more troubling is the huge wealth gap, invariably linked to glaring disparities in homeownership and entrepreneurship that continue to break down along color and gender lines. The National Urban League’s 2014 State of Black America Equality Index found that Black households have just $6 in wealth for every $100 in wealth of white households—or a median wealth of $6,314 vs. $110,500. The Obama Administration, leaders across the nation and globe and a number of progressive mayors across the country—including New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio—have identified the need to close that gap. A key part of the solution is increasing the number and worth of government contracts available to minority and women-owned business enterprises (M/WBE). As Mayor de Blasio is learning, while not an easy task, he has a substantial opportunity to fix a big problem and put forth a scalable model for how New York City can and should engage with M/WBE.

Data News Weekly is Hiring

Editor/Reporters

About the Job

Journalists — tired of reading of layoffs, closings, the dire straights of the profession? Recent college graduates — think your job prospects are bleak? Not with us!

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Sales Manager/Retail Ad Manager

About the Job

Data News Weekly is the leading African American media company in New Orleans, publishing a weekly newspaper. Additionally, its website under ladanews.com is the most read Black website in the region.

We are currently seeking a strong leader to proactively manage broad aspects of the advertising division. You will be working in a positive team-oriented atmosphere which has a modern press, leading website and award-winning newspaper.

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Our company provides a competitive salary and an environment that encourages personal and professional growth. We are an equal opportunity employer.

If you are interested in a rewarding career, email a cover letter and resume to: terryjones@bellsouth.net or mail to: Data News Weekly, c/o Terry Jones, Publisher, 3501 Napoleon Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70125.
In Recognition and Celebration of Juneteenth
Mississippi Leaders and Activists to Address Serious Issues Facing Black Men and Boys on June 26 in Jackson

On June 26, local elected leaders, educators, community leaders, business professionals, legal experts, and respected clergy will gather for a roundtable discussion, titled “Our Fathers, Our Brothers and Our Sons: Building Strong Family Legacies in Mississippi,” at the Hilton Garden Inn in Jackson, Miss. June 26 from 9am to noon. According to the 2011 U.S. Census, the Jackson metropolitan area has one of the largest percentages of African Americans of any metro in America at 48 percent, with many more Blacks living in rural majority Black counties throughout the state. Too many of these Black families live below the national poverty line due to wage gaps, as well as a lack of access to legal, educational, healthcare and economic resources.

“For far too long African American men of color have been left out of the family circle and as a result there a brokenness. These fathers have a vital role to play in their children’s lives,” said Melbah Smith, Director of the Coalition for a Prosperous Mississippi.

“Our Fathers, Our Brothers and Our Sons” is expect to attract between 50 to 70 invited speakers and guests who will examine a wide variety of topics, specifically on the law, education and work. Kevin E. Hooks, President & CEO of the Las Vegas Urban League will serve as the moderator. The conference is organized by the Closing the Racial Wealth Gap Initiative at the Insight Center for Community Economic Development, as part of a strategic partnership with The Coalition for a Prosperous Mississippi (CPM) and the Center for Family Policy and Practice (CFFPP).

“The aim of our collective efforts has been to gather what is known about the conditions of African American men’s lives and use that knowledge to inform advocacy,” added Anne E. Price, Program Director for the Closing the Racial Wealth Gap Initiative. “We need a comprehensive advocacy campaign on behalf of black men that challenges inaccurate and negative stereotypes, is grounded in a social justice framework, challenges the myth that everyone can ‘pull themselves up by their bootstraps,’ and aims to break down the institutionalized barriers that keep African American men from making their desired contributions to their children and families, and their communities.”

The roundtable will highlight promising solutions in communities around the state that are connecting black men to opportunities. (View Document: http://www.insightcced.org/uploads/crwg/What-We-Want-to-Give-Our-Kids.pdf)

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Walmart Reveals New Store to New Orleans Shoppers

New Walmart provides approximately 400 jobs, plus savings on wide selection of merchandise

A new Walmart opened Wednesday, June 11, after a brief ribbon-cutting ceremony. The new store at 6000 Ballard Ave. is located off I-10 and is open 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., seven days a week providing New Orleans residents shopping convenience for their grocery and general merchandise needs. The store also offers pharmacy services. The new Walmart aids in the revitalization of New Orleans East, a community that has been underserved since Hurricane Katrina. Approximately 400 jobs have been filled and twenty-five of these hires are associates formerly employed at the New Orleans East Walmart prior to Hurricane Katrina.

“The opening of this new Walmart not only gives the residents of District E the convenience of shopping nearby, it allows the City of New Orleans to capture sales taxes on the millions that will be spent here every year – tax money that can be used to replace street lights and pave roads,” said District E Councilmember James A. Gray II. “Additionally, Walmart acts as a magnet for development. My office has talked with numerous businesses about locating to District E.

Everyone is very interested now that Walmart is opening, District E is booming.”

Fannie C. Williams Charter School marching band helped kick off the grand opening ceremony and led the procession once doors opened at 8 a.m. Local vendors including Community Coffee, Cajun Country, Abita Root Beer, and Manda Fine Meats participated in the grand opening events, offering guests samples of their products.

Community Giving

The grand-opening media sneak peak included presentations of $4,000 in grants from Walmart to local community groups. Recipients included Fannie C. Williams Charter School, Blessed 26 and Greater St. Stephen Ministries.

New Store, New Jobs

The new store employs approximately 400 full- and part-time associates. Store manager Michael Nowell began his Walmart career in 2000 as a co-manager of the store in Harvey.

“This store will provide New Orleans shoppers with a convenient shopping option,” said Nowell. “Our team has been working hard to prepare the store and we welcome residents to join us in celebrating on grand opening day.”

Xavier Sports Information Director Cassiere Receives 2 NAIA Writing Awards

Xavier University of Louisiana’s Ed Cassiere received two awards Monday in the NAIA’s 2013-14 Dr. W. Jack Bell Writing Contest.

Cassiere was honored for a pair of game recaps. He placed seventh for his XU-Spring Hill men’s basketball story on Dec. 17 and ninth for his account of the finals of the NAIA Unaffiliated Group 2 Tennis Tournament on April 26. Cassiere, who in July will begin his ninth year as Xavier’s sports information director – has received 19 NAIA writing awards the past six years, including four firsts. During the past three years, Xavier and Cassiere’s 11 awards are the most by a university or individual in the Dr. W. Jack Bell Writing Contest.
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