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Spice Sunday

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December 27, 2014 - January 2, 2015 49th Year Volume 35 www.ladatanews.com

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Mothers and Fathers Unite in Grief at D.C. March



Tens of thousands gathered in Washington DC for the March Against Racial Profiling and for Justice on December 12, 2014.

by **Barrington M. Salmon**
Special to the NNPA from **The Washington Informer**

Madame Kadiatou Diallo belongs to a group she said she'd much rather not be part of: parents of unarmed sons killed by police officers.

She lost her son Amadou, 23, when four New York City plainclothes cops confronted him in the early morning hours of Feb 4, 1999, and as he pulled out his wallet, they fired 41 shots, hitting him 19 times.

The four were indicted but subsequently freed.

"We've been here so many times. It's been 16 years," Diallo told demonstrators that numbered in the tens

of thousands on Dec. 12. "You fought for my son, for Sean Bell, Ramarley Graham, Mohamed Bah. Let me tell you something: As the mother of Amadou Diallo, when those four white officers were freed, I thought my life had ended."

"We have to ask the question. Why were our sons shot down? Leslie's son is supposed to be going to

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DATA NEWS WEEKLY

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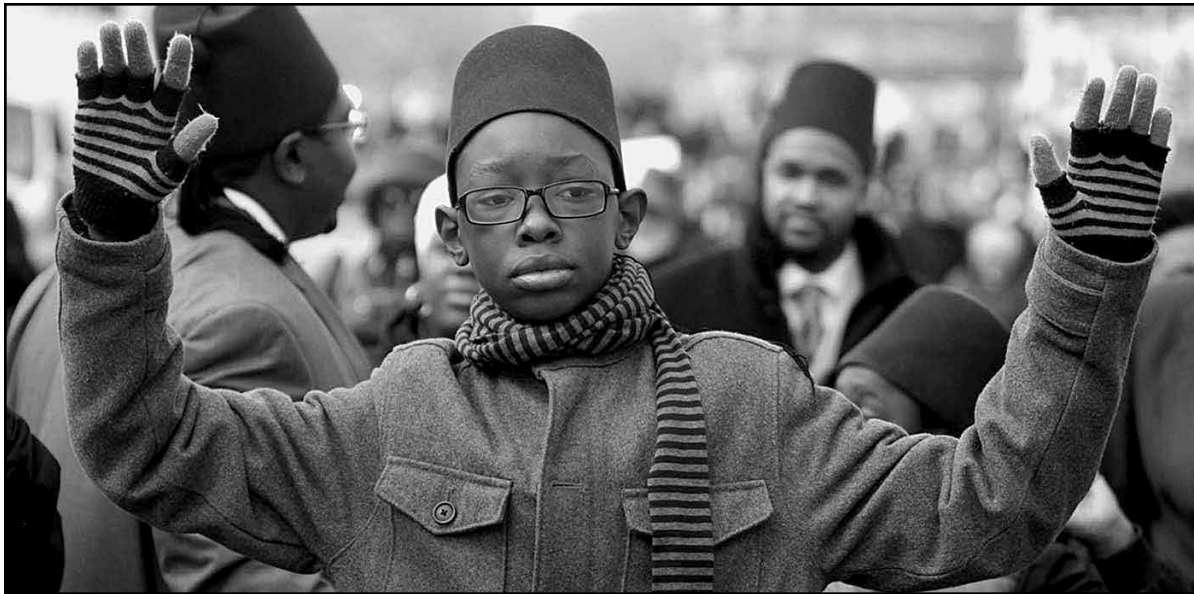
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Please call 504-309-9913 for subscription information or to obtain a back issue of the paper ONLY.
Dated material two weeks in advance. Not responsible for publishing or return of unsolicited manuscripts or photos.

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Jachin Johnson-Bey, 12, a member of the Moorish Science Temple of America, Inc. from Baltimore, Md., joined thousands of people that marched from Freedom Plaza to the United States Capitol on Saturday morning, December 12, 2014 in the National "Justice For All" March. (Photo by Milbert O. Brown, Jr./NNPA)



On the cover and above Photo by Milbert O. Brown, Jr./NNPA)

school. Trayvon Martin went to get something to eat. I relive my tragedy every day. I will not fail Amadou. I will not fail my son. We're sisters. We don't want to belong to this group."

The "Justice for All" rally organized by the Rev. Al Sharpton's National Action Network [NAN] brought a vast crowd of protestors to downtown D.C., some who vowed to make the complacent uncomfortable and others who promised to continue protesting until Congress moves to ensure that special prosecutors investigate controversial police shootings. Similar rallies took place in New York, where more than 60,000 people marched, Boston, Massachusetts, Lexington, Kentucky and in three California cities, Los Angeles, Berkeley and Oakland.

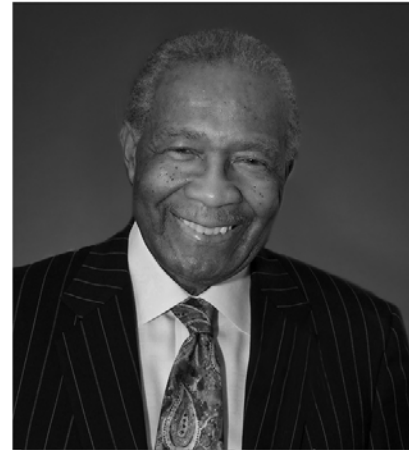
The Brown and Garner verdicts have tapped into a reservoir of anger and frustration that shows no signs of abating.

Diallo, a native of Guinea, held up a copy of Time Magazine with a picture of her son and a story titled, "Cops, Brutality and Race."

"Today, 16 years later, we're standing in the same place," she intoned. "This puts a face, humanity to the victims. My son's wallet looked like a gun, Sean Bell looked suspicious. 50 bullets. I went to the hospital to see the survivors of police brutality. They were chained and handcuffed to the bed and I cried at the inhumanity."

Diallo referred to friends of Bell, 23, who'd joined him at his bachelor party on Nov. 25, 2006. Seven Queens Vice cops, thinking they saw a gun after one of Bell's groomsmen got into an argument with another man, fired 50 shots into the car, killing Bell and wounding two of his friends. Bell died hours before his wedding. Three

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Shoot Ya Best Shot!

Ultra Velvet Saturday

Photos by Brisket

Saturday was a night to remember celebrating Zina's 35th birthday party at Scottie's Ultra Violet Reception Hall. Nearly 200 friends and family members as well as co-workers from the new Whole Foods located on North Broad attended the party. Happy Birthday Zina.



Spice Sunday

Photos by Brisket

Spice was packed Sunday with everyone you know if you spend time at the fairgrounds. The clubhouse was celebrating its 5th Annual Christmas party. Things really started jumping when Miss Tee, the first rapper to sign with Cash Money Millionaires arrived on the set.



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

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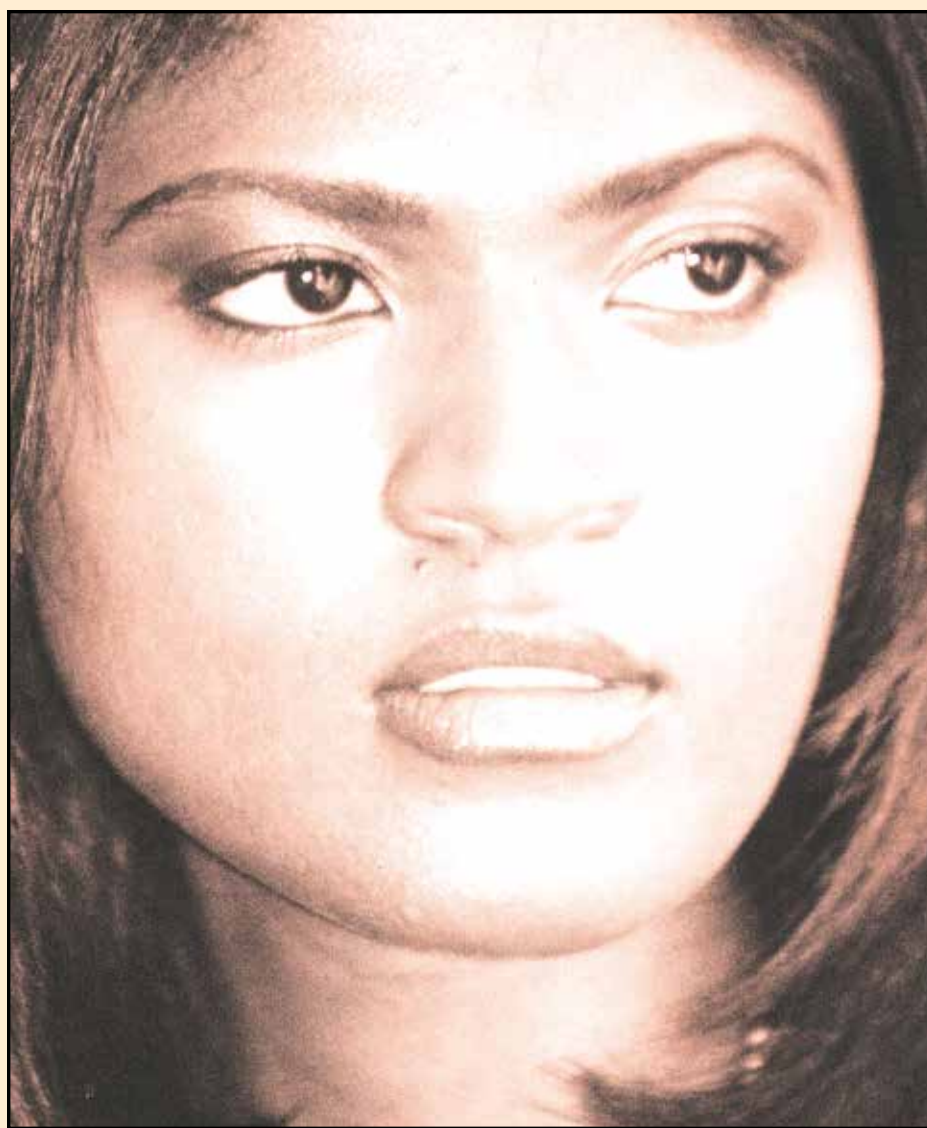
Alexis Sakari

Giving the Gift of Art from the Heart

by: Edwin Buggage

During the holiday season it is a time for selfless giving. Our Trailblazer for the Month of December is a woman who does this year round. Alexis Sakari uses multiple platforms in entertainment and education to help those in need; she is President and Chief Executive Officer of a Drama Kings and Queens, local non-profit that provides a platform for performing artists to develop their skills. Since 2013, Drama Kings and Queens Performing Arts Club, Inc. has been actively training current artists and advising upcoming artists in music, acting, and script writing. Sakari says, "Being the Drama Club President prior to graduating from Southern University at New Orleans redirected my focus toward the many talented performing artists of all ages residing within the City of New Orleans. These artists only need a new positive stage to practice their crafts to advance their entertainment career to the next level in addition to give them life skills that can help them throughout their lives."

Sakari's has taken her time to work with women who are at their most vulnerable time. It is something that is making the



news right now as a result of the Ray Rice incident, and that is domestic abuse. This is something she is on the frontlines combating; spending her time working with victims in battered women's shel-

ters. Throughout the year Sakari leads drives to collect clothes and toiletries for distribution to these shelters. Speaking on why this cause is so dear to her she says, "Unfortunately, I'm a former victim of do-

mestic violence, and I will always volunteer my time

and money to not only raise awareness about this issue, but also support organizations that support these women in their time of need."

In all her creative works it is filled with a larger social purpose. Sakari's putting the finishing touches on a book she plans to release next year. The storyline follows the turbulence of a mother-daughter relationship. Sakari says she chose to write about such a relationship, because, "The most important relationship in the world for any human being is their relationship with their mother. The mother is the child's first teacher, nurturer, and protector. I wanted to expose the importance of this relationship and how it can be both happy and sad." In addition she says, "I hope this book can help people because I feel the best creative works can inspire people and help them reflect on their lives and do things to make it better."

Sakari's also uses her singing voice and musical gifts to help inspire others

overcome the struggles of life. She's completed the recording of her independent album "Journey of a Black Girl" to be released next year as well. The album follows a girl of color on a roller coaster ride ending in her becoming a woman. The album was conceived says Sakari because, "Women, especially women of color, face many obstacles on their quest to find themselves, happiness, and stability. This album is very vocal about the challenges of love, heartbreak, abuse, self-identity, and economic disparity." Continuing she says, my art in whatever form it takes I am about reflecting, healing, rebuilding, celebrating life and giving back. And in this the season of giving the best thing you can give is your time and heart for those in need and whether it is through my work or my creative projects that is what I do. Because so many have come before me and did it and I feel it is my duty to pass it on to future generations."

JMJ
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Happy Holidays From Data News Weekly



Terry B. Jones
Publisher,
Data News Weekly

It is the holiday season and we at Data News Weekly would like to thank all those who con-

tinue to support our mission in giving you news that you can use. Another year has passed and many things have happened that's impacted our community and moved us into collective action. This is something we must continue to do in 2015.

Next year is a very important year as we move towards the 10th Anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. Looking back it seems that it was only yesterday, but we have seen many changes in our City since 2005. Some for the better

and some for the worse, but the one constant that's kept our City afloat and that continued to be the spirit of family and community; these two things along with the resilience and good will of the people both far and near is what's brought this City back from the wreckage of Katrina and the levee breach into a new day for our City.

In this the holiday season let us not forget the spirit of giving and goodwill. These are the things that are important and we must keep in mind, that it is not

the size of the gifts, but the size of the heart when giving them. While we have many issues that we face that are negative in our community we must celebrate our progress. Also as some may be experiencing tough times, there are people who have much less and we must put our collective resources together to help them. And not simply in the holiday season, but year round we must become dedicated to giving to those in providing help to those less fortunate.

This is something we must do on an individual basis and collectively, because we as a community strive to do better. So as we move forward into 2015 let us be our brother's and sister's keeper and live every day like it is the holiday season. Giving back and serving others, it is the thing that's brought this City back, and it is the thing that will make our City better moving forward. So again, we at Data News Weekly wish you safe and happy holidays.

Blacks Should Support Normalizing Relations with Cuba



Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.
NNPA Columnist

President Obama's historic announcement that the U.S. is restoring diplomatic relations with Cuba, after more than five decades of strategic political and military opposition, is today resonating positively throughout Black America. It is in the economic, cultural and political interests of 42.7 million Black Americans across the United States to focus on the new emerging opportunities to strengthen relationships with the people and government of the Republic of Cuba.

President Obama stated, "In the most significant changes in our policy in more than 50 years, we will end an outdated approach that, for decades, has failed to advance our interests, and instead we will begin to normalize relations between our two countries. Through these changes, we intend to create more opportunities for the American and

Cuban people, and begin a new chapter among the nations of the Americas."

A key question that needs to be asked is: How will the changes that President Obama highlighted about Cuba will afford Black Americans in particular more opportunities to establish joint ventures and other business relationships with the people of Cuba? Too often some of us limit ourselves to lengthy debates about our changing world, but miss out on a chance to participate in helping to actually shape and build new world realities.

Our worldview about has always included international perspectives. Our consciousness is informed not just by what might be popular domestically at any given moment in time, but also how we see the international struggle for freedom, justice and equality.

In Black American education, literature, music, sports, business, religion and other cultural realms we have witnessed the benefits of defining and securing the interests of African people throughout the world.

I vividly remember James Baldwin encouraging me to understand better what it meant by the slogan "Viva Cuba!" Baldwin helped me to see the relationship between the Cuban Revolution and the African



Liberation Movement against imperialism, colonization and the sufferings of neo-colonialism in the 1960s and 1970s.

"Viva Cuba" became synonymous with "Viva Africa!" Angola and Namibia, as well as the African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa, all benefited from the enormous sacrifice and support that Cuba rendered to southern Africa during the 1970s and 1980s.

Now that Cuba is once again the subject of solidarity for some and

renewed ridicule from others, I believe it is important for Black Americans to actively support for our brothers and sisters in the island nation of Cuba. More than 11 million people live in Cuba. The 2002 Cuban census puts the Black population at 10 percent, mulatto 23.8 percent, Asian 1 percent and Whites at 65 percent. Most estimates place the people of color figure at 40 to 60 percent of the population.

I have been to Cuba many times and each time I am reminded how

African culture and Latin culture have fused together extraordinarily well in Havana, the capital city, and in the other urban and rural areas of the nation.

I thank Harry Belafonte and others for helping to inspire the current generation of Cuban poets, writers, musicians and hip-hop artists in Havana who will certainly now have a stronger chance to spread their artistic genius throughout the world. We should remain vigilant because the forces of repression and ignorance are still active.

Predictably, some conservatives have already announced plans to have Congress block Obama's plan to designate a U.S. ambassador to Cuba. The economic blockade of Cuba is a matter that only the U.S. Congress can end through legislation. But the will of the people can force Congress to do the right thing regarding Cuba. Let's continue to stand up and speak about Cuba and the rest of the world. This not a time for Black America to be silent.

Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr. is the President and CEO of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) and can be reached for national advertisement sales and partnership proposals at: dr.bchavis@nnpa.org; and for lectures and other professional consultations at: <http://drbenjaminfchavisjr.wix.com/drbcfc>

Green Landscaping

Edited by LMG Calla Victoria

In the gardening world a bold new concept has arisen, the idea of Green Landscaping. With awareness of environmental issues and lessening our carbon footprint, gardeners are looking to green landscaping projects to do their small part to make a difference in the environment. Green landscaping is a sustainable landscape improvement project that satisfies our current needs without compromising the needs of future generations. Whenever the term "green" is associated with a product or way of life, it means environmentally friendly thus nothing harmful to the universe is used.

In gardening, "Green" means utilizing wild flowers, native plant material, and groundcovers (as opposed to labor-intensive lawns) in the landscape; thus reducing overall maintenance and conserving water. Any water use is provided by rainwater harvesting. Water consumption is often the first thing noted about a green landscape's performance; with landscapes they are one of the heaviest consumers of water, water efficiency is an important evaluator of performance. With green landscaping 100% of



irrigation water needs is supplied from on-site gray water and harvested rainwater. Naturally fertilizing the soil by raising chickens or composting is used instead of harsh chemicals. Gardens are laid out and plotted in ways to control storm water runoff, by creating rain gardens, and reusing the water in the garden rather than allowing it to flood streets and waterways. Beneficial insects like bees and ladybugs are introduced into the landscape to control pest rather than the use of pesticide sprays.

Green landscaping is designed to make the outside beautiful,

cost-effective, lean and green. But green landscaping can also have an effect on our heating and cooling bills. Well placed plants can help buildings be more heat efficient leading to reduced reliance on air-conditioning and heating measures. Planting trees as a windbreak to protect homes from cold winds and weather can be a great way to reduce energy bills. Planting deciduous trees or vines on the south side (which gets the most sun for the longest period of time) of a building to shade it in the summer and allow warming sunshine through in the winter. Also planting deciduous

trees and vines on the west side of your garden to block some of the evening glare and heat in the summer, but that same heat can be helpful in the winter months.

The four main aspects of green landscaping are:

1. Minimal maintenance – Longer intervals between feeding, watering, manicuring, and maintaining mechanical systems such as irrigation, lighting and equipment.

2. Reduced labor - Less input and importation required of water, fertilizer, toxic or non-biodegradable chemicals for biological controls, electricity, and fuel for equipment and maintenance vehicles.

3. Environmentally friendly - elimination of pollution caused by synthetic fertilizers, toxic chemicals for biological control, petro-synthetic fuels used to operate systems, equipment and vehicles, and other sources of pollution coming from either on or off site.

4. Healthier Surroundings - Improved vigor and variety of living systems including soil, plants and animals. Green landscaping is good for plants, landscapes, animals, people and the planet.

Check out my "Gardening Tip of the Week" at www.thegardeningdiva.com

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Cover Story, Continued from page 3.

officers involved in the shooting were booted from the force. The rest were acquitted of murder charges and were allowed to retire with full pensions.

Diallo said it's disheartening for black and brown men and boys to still face racial profiling and death at the hands of law enforcement in 2014.

She's not alone. The grand jury acquittals of cops who shot and killed 18-year-old Michael Brown and 42-year-old Eric Garner a week apart has created a groundswell of anger and protest that has persisted in cities across the country. Since Brown's killing on Aug 9, protestors have been on the streets demanding police accountability, an end to racial profiling, police abuse and excessive force as well as substantive changes to laws that target and criminalize young black and Latino men.

Odds of a child becoming a professional athlete: 1 in 16,000

Odds of a child being diagnosed with autism: 1 in 110

Some signs to look for:

No big smiles or other joyful expressions by 6 months.	No babbling by 12 months.	No words by 16 months.
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To learn more of the signs of autism, visit autismspeaks.org

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