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A Bridge to Learning, A Lesson in Living

A Candid Conversation with Toni Enclade

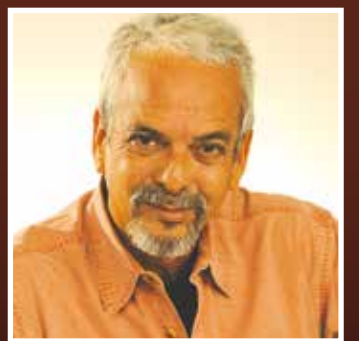
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A Bridge to Learning, A Lesson in Living

A Candid Conversation with Toni Enclade the Mother of Terrilynn Monette



Pictured above is Toni Enclade, who is remembered by most as the mother who made passionate pleas to find her daughter Terrilynn Monette. Today she keeps a brave face and wants people to remember the life and legacy of Terrilynn.

By Edwin Buggage
Photos by Larry Panna

Terrilynn Monette: A Beautiful Life Ends Tragically
In March of 2013 the City was rocked by the news of Terrilynn Monette, a native of Long Beach, California who came to New Orleans and was a second

grade teacher at Woodland West Elementary School in Harvey was reported missing. She was a woman full of compassion and love for children who came to the City to pursue her dream of becoming an educator and helping to shape young minds. She was at the beginning of that journey and was recognized for it by being nominated for "Teacher of the Year". While

celebrating with friends at Parlay's Bar during a night that was joyous would later turn tragic. It was soon reported that Terrilynn was missing and people from around the City and nation were concerned about the welfare of this young lady who'd given of herself to serve young people. But after three months there was no trace of Terrilynn or her black Honda Accord. Then

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Pictured is Toni Enclade (center) with a teacher and the principal from Crocker Elementary



Pictured(l to r) are family members Toni Enclade, Terrilynn's sister Kandice and Terry Monette
Terrilynn's father.

on the 98th day after her disappearance the car was found in Bayou St. John on Harrison Avenue and Wisner Boulevard with a decomposed body in it according to reports by NOPD.

The one person who became part of everybody's consciousness during this time was her mother Toni Enclade, a native of Louisiana who's lived her adult life in California who made passionate pleas to find her daughter. Today while some answers surrounding the death of her daughter still are unanswered, she holds a brave face and wants people to remember the life and legacy of Terrilynn. As we began our conversation she recalls when she first heard her youngest daughter was missing. "We kept in touch all the time, I knew she went out Friday night and I called her phone and it went straight to voicemail, I found that unusual. I kept calling and she did not answer, I thought something was not right. I called my sister who lives in New Orleans and asked if she'd heard from her and she said she hadn't and as the day went on the phone continued to go to voicemail. I called my brother where she was supposed to go the following Wednesday because it was his birthday. He said he didn't hear from her, I am thinking this is odd. I am at this point losing it because no one heard from her. I remember that last time I spoke with her was 9:30 Friday night. At 9:30 A.M. New Orleans time I called the police and said I have not heard from my daughter in 24 hours. They said where are you, I said I live in California and they said we can do nothing about it because you live in another state. It has to be somebody local to file a report,

I was hesitant but I called my sister and told her to call the police and report Terrilynn missing."

While she still struggles daily with her loss and several times during the interview tears rolled down her face when speaking of Terrilynn she accepts that she will never see her daughter again and nothing can replace the void she feels inside. She feels the immediate response by 3rd District police could have been done differently and the body could have possibly been found earlier. "I feel they should have moved faster in the beginning. I didn't understand why I could not have filed a report in California and they could have sent it to the New Orleans Police Department. I think they lost valuable time. I think the outcome may have been the same, but I think they could have don't things differently and found her body much sooner. This is a nightmare I live with every day. I sometimes feel I was robbed and could not say goodbye to my baby." The case surrounding her death is still open and according to police if there are any breaks in the case they will investigate possible leads.

A Mother's Love... Remembering Terrilynn

Through tears she speaks of the love she had for her daughter. Speaking of her as her voice cracked, "I knew that her destiny was to be a teacher. I knew she would become a teacher when she was in 3rd grade and she did a poster and she stated that she would be a teacher when she grew up. She always like to play school and was the teacher and she was always reading even when some of the other little girls were playing with baby dolls

she would be reading. It was something that was her passion learning new things and sharing it with others."

As we all know, holidays are times when families come together, Enclade, talks about how these times of year are not the same and recall the first year she was without Terrilynn. "The first year my daughter Kandice said I don't think you should be alone for the holidays so I went to Houston for Thanksgiving in 2013. And for Christmas she came to California and for those two holidays I was fine. But it was very different, I woke up and I thought I heard her voice saying mom." Continuing she says, "Christmas time which was her favorite time of the year and she loved my stuffed bell peppers. Last year I was looking at Kandice and my granddaughters putting the Christmas tree together and I just started crying because she would have been all involved with the children. I remember one year we all were singing the twelve days of Christmas and she was nine ladies dancing. To feel my pain over the last two years, they say it gets easier with time, no it doesn't. I have gone through the second Christmas without her and it was worse than the first. Holidays to me will never be the same."

When Toni Enclade is talking about her daughter it is hard, as is expected and easy to understand especially for those of us who have children. Who would ever think as a parent that they would have to bury their child? Especially in a case like this with so many unanswered questions surrounding how she died. Enclade says that getting closure is something that is very hard for her, in her home in California she says

she holds onto many keepsakes that keep her daughter alive in her mind. "I have her class rings; I have her dress when she turned 26. I still have birthday cards she gave me. I have everything. It is hard for me to part with certain things it's like if I part with these things I am letting her go and I don't want to let her go."

98 Days and the Legacy of Terrilynn Monette

Toni Enclade did not want the world to forget about her daughter or simply think of her and the incident that ended her life. She wanted people to know more about her daughter, who she was and what was her purpose in life which was to educate young people helping them aspire to reach higher. "I want the world to know more about my daughter and how her life inspired so many and wanted to make a documentary about her life. I ran into a guy named Shedrick Roy who was very supportive. I said I needed someone who could help me make a documentary on Terrilynn's life. He said I have the right person who can do this the job my friend who is a producer his name is Larry Panna."

Larry Panna Jr. is the owner of Panna Productions and is an Independent Filmmaker from New Orleans. He is working closely with Toni Enclade on a film that's called "98 Days: The Terrilynn Monette Story, School Teacher of the Year." With a trailer already on social media already generating anticipation for the completed film it is scheduled to begin national screenings in May of this year and they are in the process of beginning talks with several networks to air the film. "I

feel this is an important film that needed to be made and I am honored to be a part of chronicling the story of such an amazing young woman whose life ended way too soon," says Panna. Continuing he says, "There are still so many unanswered questions surrounding her case and we look at that in the film. In addition it looks at who she was as a person and also it touches on keeping her mission of educating young people alive."

Terrilynn's Mission Lives On

Toni Enclade did not want her daughter's passion for teaching and inspiring young people to end also because of her untimely passing. So upon one of her visits last year to New Orleans she issued a challenge to people to donate books to schools so young people could become lifelong readers. "I am issuing a challenge to people that was initiated right before Terrilynn's birthday which was Sept. 6. I was looking at social media with ALS with the ice bucket challenge where people can donate 100 dollars. I thought how about everybody donate a book in the name of Terrilynn. I had quite a few people in California donate books. I have also worked with the fraternity of Alpha Phi Alpha's Louisiana statewide chapter. At their convention they presented me with the books they collected and we donated them to Woodland West Elementary where Terrilynn taught and Crocker Elementary."

Terrilynn Monette's name will live on in many ways because of her commitment to education. In her native California at her alma mater, a scholarship has been named

Cover Story, Continued
on page 3.

Cover Story, Continued from page 4.

MISSING

New Orleans, LA 3/2/2013 **Terrilynn Monnette**

Monnette is described as being 5 feet, 8 inches tall, and weighs 180 pounds. She has a light brown complexion with long brown hair.

She was last seen wearing a pink and yellow sweater with blue jeans. Monnette has a tattoo on her left leg.

Monnette's vehicle is described as a black 2012 two-door Honda Accord with Louisiana license plate WUN494.

Monnette was last seen on Saturday, at 5 a.m., at Parlay's Bar on the 800 block of Harrison Avenue in Lakeview.

Monnette works as a second-grade teacher at Woodland West Elementary School in Harvey. She came to New Orleans from California in 2011 as a fellow with TeachNOLA, a nonprofit group that places educators in metro area schools. She began working at the Harvey school after completing the program.

Monnette's mother told police that Monnette had gone to the establishment at 3:30 a.m. and was last seen sleeping in her vehicle in the rear parking lot about an hour later. Monnette allegedly told her acquaintances that she was going to sleep in her car before driving home because she had had a few drinks. Police say a witness told detectives that he saw Monnette in the parking lot at about 4 a.m. with an unidentified man. Monnette has not been seen nor heard from since.

facebook.com/blackandmissing

Toni Enclave did not want the world to forget about her daughter or simply think of her and the incident that ended her life. She wanted people to know that her purpose in life was to educate young people.

in her honor. Speaking about the scholarship with pride Enclave says, "I was approached by one of the administrators at Cal State of San Bernardino which happens to be an AKA like Terrilynn. She contacted me last year and said that they are going to create an ongoing scholarship in memory of Terrilynn. This scholarship will be awarded to a student that is pursuing a degree in Liberal Studies. I was overwhelmed; it was something that was not going to be a one-time thing. It is an awesome honor to be at the event when they award the scholarship; I feel it is trying to do what Terrilynn did in her life to give people a chance to reach their full potential."

Ms. Enclave is forever grateful for the people of New Orleans who continue to give their support, encouragement and condolences. "I was overwhelmed at the community involvement of people who were passing out fliers and doing searches on their own. Going through

abandon houses and buildings and felt my pain. They were putting themselves in my place. I heard so many people from all walks of life tell me they were looking for her. People even to this day who say I felt your pain. I will always love the people of New Orleans and what they did for me and my family."

Terrilynn Monnette: A Bridge to Learning...A Lesson in Living

The bridge on Harrison Avenue and Wisner Boulevard where Terrilynn car was found has come to symbolize something deeper for Toni Enclave. It has become a bridge where her life tragically ended, but where her legacy lives on as so many people are reminded of her when they drive past it. It has become a place that is somewhere she visits every time she comes to the City and walks towards the bridge and looks up in the sky and think of Terrilynn. "Every time I come here I go to that spot by the bridge. I just think this is where she

lost her life on earth, but I know she lives on because she touched so many lives."

Today as Toni Enclave continues to live life, it is an everyday struggle knowing that she will not receive the several phone calls a day and hearing Terrilynn's voice on the other end of the phone. Or the holiday visits when she comes home and the family is all together enjoying each other. For Ms. Toni Enclave there may never be full closure on the death of her daughter, but as she continues her life she says it is her faith and determination that keeps her going and also to let the world never forget about Terrilynn. "I think my faith in God is what's got me through most of this and wanting to keep her memory alive, that's why I am doing the book drive, that's why the documentary is being done and I want everybody to know her and keep her memory alive."

Data News Weekly is Hiring

Data News Weekly Newspaper, The People's Paper, is hiring for two positions in our New Orleans Office.

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!

At Columbia-Greene Media, we are expanding! This includes starting a print newspaper/digital endeavor in one of the most dynamic and exciting cities, New Orleans.

If you want to be an integral part of your community, tell stories in a multi-media environment — look no further.

If interested, send your resume, cover letter and at least three clips of your work to Terry Jones Publisher, Data News Weekly, 3501 Napoleon Ave, New Orleans, LA 70125, or via email to terrybjones@bellsouth.net, or call (504) 821-7421.

Sales Manager/Retail Ad Manager

About the Job

Data News Weekly Newspaper is the leading African American media company in New Orleans, publishing a weekly newspaper. Additionally, its website under ladatanews.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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- Increase overall revenue opportunities in both print and online
- Develop a team sales atmosphere

Our ideal candidate will possess the following education,

skills and experience:

- Minimum 5 years print and digital sales and manager experience
- Self-starter, capable of executing within all phases of sales cycle
- Strong relationship building and client service background
- Strong organizational, communication and presentation skills
- Team player and leader
- Understanding of Analytics and ad serving technology
- Strong motivational skills
- Recruit talent

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: terrybjones@bellsouth.net or mail to: Data News Weekly, c/o Terry Jones, Publisher, 3501 Napoleon Avenue, New Orleans LA 70125

Harold Baquet

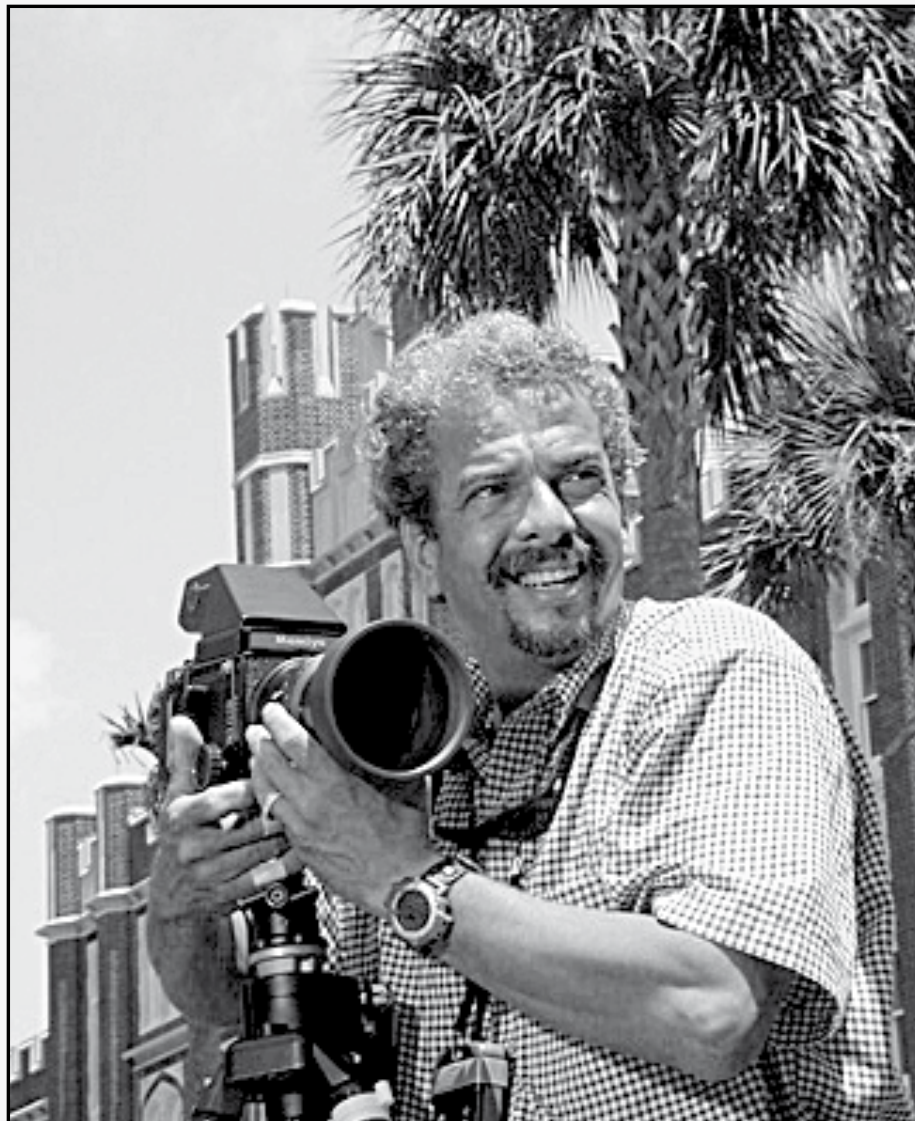
A Picture of Success and Service to Others

by: Edwin Buggage

As we near Black History Month, a time where we honor those who give selflessly of themselves to serve others, January's Trailblazer, the Life of Harold Baquet is a portrait of a man who has spent his life helping those in need. He says it is out of respect for those who came before him that's contributed to his being successful, is the reason he gives back. "I realize that none of us have gotten where we are by ourselves. That there have been parents, teachers, family members and others who've helped us along the way; and it is our responsibility to do the same for others."

He is a man who has lived a passion filled life; guiding young people while working at Loyola University in addition to encouraging people, when choosing a career find something that they love. "When I am around young people I tell them try to do something that you love, find something that you are passionate about and would do it for free and figure out how to make a living at it."

Baquet is a man who loves the water. He was the first African-American certified Scuba Diving Instructor in Louisiana helping 300 people become



certified. He uses this experience when talking to people, to helping them overcome the fear that sometimes keep people from reaching their full potential. "Sometimes to get what you want out of life you have to take risks and

not be afraid, and when I talk to young people. I also tell them to work hard and setting goals are important and when an opportunity presents itself you will be prepared."

In his career as a photographer he was able

to be on the frontlines of change in the political and social landscape of the City, something that greatly affected his outlook in regard to service. "I learned a lot working with Ernest "Dutch" Morial as the City's Photographer during his second term. He was a great man. He was someone who knew Dr. King and was connected to and was responsible for doing so much for society. Having an opportunity to work with him I saw his genius, and as he served others and he expected all of us to serve and give back."

Seeing up close the leadership of the City's first African-American Mayor he saw the template of when government works to benefit people. He feels today there is a void in African-American leadership in New Orleans. "We need public servants and not political industrialists. We need people who are willing to serve the community and themselves and it is not something you do

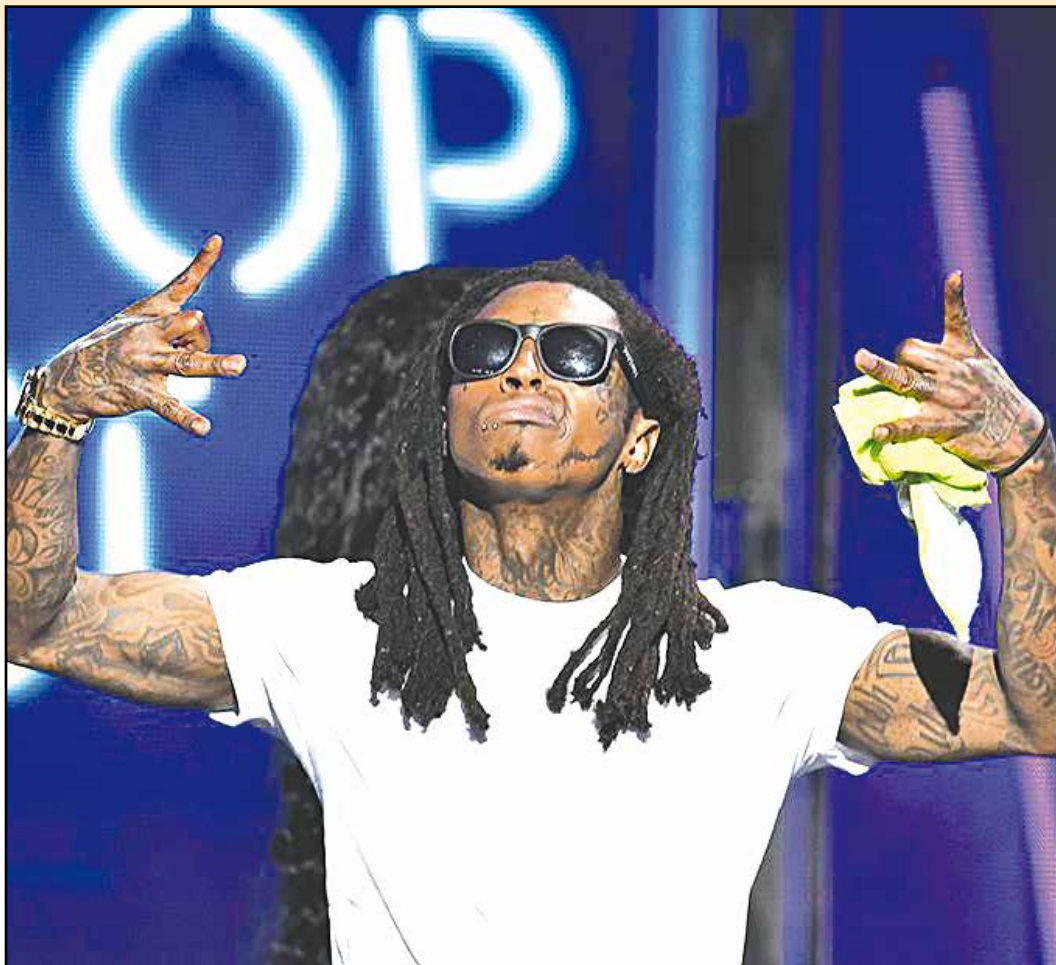
your whole life and make a career of. I think when people are young and enthusiastic and idealistic then they should serve in government then apply what you learned outside of politics."

Baquet is encouraged by the advances made for African-Americans but feels that there is still a long way to go and it is up to young people to understand the history of those who came before them and take the reins of leadership. "As we have moved into more spaces, experience where we have a generation removed from that; so it is us who are the older generation to pass on the history and legacy that we have so that people can continue to fight and struggle for their rights while enjoying the freedoms so many helped to provide for them. "Harold Baquet is a man who is a picture of success and service and Data News Weekly is honored in announcing that he is our Trailblazer for the Month of January 2015."

JMJ
Joseph M. Jones
Continuing Education Fund



Lil Wayne Sues Cash Money for \$51 Million



Lil Wayne is suing Cash Money with the hopes of ending his contract with the label, according to TMZ. The lawsuit alleges that CEO Bryan "Birdman" Williams and the company have withheld a substantial amount of money that it owes him with regard to the rapper's still-unreleased new album, *Tha Carter V*. Because the label has not paid him the money he claims he's owed, Wayne contends that he should be able to leave Cash Money.

40 Best Rap Albums of 2014

In addition to severing his contract, Lil Wayne is seeking \$51 million and has asked a judge to declare him the joint copyright holder of everything released on his Cash Money imprint, Young Money, including recordings by Drake and Nicki Minaj.

A spokesperson for Birdman was not immediately available for comment.

Last month, the rapper publicly spoke out against Cash Money, tweeting, "I want off this label" and calling himself a prisoner. *Tha Carter V* was originally due out last May, but was delayed to a December release; it did not come out and the Cash Money website still advertises it as "coming soon." Around the time of Weezy's tweets, his manager, Cortez Bryant, told TMZ that the rapper had no intention of leaving the label.

Last week, Lil Wayne put out a new mixtape, *Sorry 4 the Wait 2*. He preceded the release with a song, "Sh%^ (Remix)," which contained the couplet: "Did my time at Cash Money, time served and released/But this agent ain't free, word, that's the word on these streets." Another track, "CoCo," found him comparing himself to Scarface. "Cash Money is an army, I'm a one-man army/And if them n*%#as comin' for me, I'm goin' out like Tony/Now I don't want no problems, I just want my money." The compilation is available for download via DatPiff.

Story by Kory Grow, for Rolling Stone magazine

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Buying Plants, Seeds, and Gardening Supplies Online



Edited by LMG Calla Victoria

Avid gardeners shop for plant material everywhere. Always on the lookout for a good price or a rare find we shop local nurseries, local greenhouses, the grocery stores, big box stores, Craigslist, and online. Of course the advantage of buying plant material locally is the instant gratification of grabbing what you want and taking it home right then. The advantage of shopping online is convenience as well as the ability to locate rare plant material, and the Direct Gardening Association is striving to make our online shopping experience even better.

The Direct Gardening Association (DGA), formerly the Mail Order Gardening Association (MGA), is a member organization of gardening and garden magazine companies. The ultimate goal of the DGA is to provide the finest gardening products, information, and services through the catalogs, magazines and online websites of its members.

The Direct Gardening Association (DGA) held their winter conference in New Orleans last month. Their membership reached out to The Master Gardeners of Greater New Orleans (MGGNO) and requested we provide a panel of Master Gardeners to participate in a

question-and-answer segment as part of their conference. I was one of five Master Gardener's from our organization to participate in the panel. With the increase in online sales, DGA membership mentioned missing the personal interaction with customers and genuinely wanted feedback on our online experiences; what we expected, what we experienced, and how they can improve the online shopping experience.

The panel was quite an eye-opening session with knowledge gained and shared on both sides of the table. We as gardening customers had certain expectations and ideas, while they the suppliers on the other hand are faced with certain challenges with reference to getting their products into our impatient little hands in a timely manner.

Shopping online is amazing. It's like magic, you place an order online and presto, it shows up in your mailbox. However there are a few things to be aware of to ensure a positive online shopping experience with plant material.

1. Know that the online nursery that you are ordering may be located in one of the northern states.
 - a. If that is the case they may be limited as to when they can get outdoors to dig up seedling.
 - b. They also may be limited as to when

they can ship due to their harsh winter conditions.

2. Pay attention to when the supplier plans on shipping your item. If that information is not clearly listed call them and inquire prior to completing the order. In most cases if you order in January or February you may not receive your plant material until late April or early May. In zones 9B and above where we can plant almost year around, we do not expect to wait until May to plant because of our very hot summers. Several companies do offer you a few shipping date options.
3. Make sure that you are aware of the size seedling that you are purchasing. In many cases when you purchase online what you receive is a small plug sized seedling or smaller. I once ordered 20 periwinkles online and what I received was a plastic baggie that was filled with what looked like spaghetti or bean sprouts. Needless to say I was not too happy with that purchase.
4. Orchids and certain other bulbs will not survive below 40 degrees, therefore depending on where the supplier is located and where they have to ship through will dictate when you will receive your items. The suppliers wants you to be happy and receive a living healthy specimen. They do not want a

lot of dead plant material returned to them.

5. Also do a little research before purchasing fruit bearing trees and shrubs, there are a few varieties like blueberries that require having two separate plants to set fruit.
6. Make note of the return policy of any online suppliers and hold on to your receipts.
7. If you are unclear on anything by all means call the company or email them prior to completing any purchase. I wanted to create a living willow gazebo and I found a company online to purchase the plant materials from. As the willow rods must be shipped and planted while they are dormant there is only a small shipping window. I was able to coordinate everything with the supplier, I received and planted the willow rods last fall, and I look forward to seeing them start to grow and green up with foliage in the spring.

With a little research and communication your online shopping experience for plant materials and seeds can be quite gratifying.

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

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

The Real Barack Obama Re-Emerges



Julianne Malveaux
NNPA Columnist

President Barack Obama knocked it out of the park during the State of the Union address. He was strong, progressive, firm, and relaxed. He was almost cocky as he offered a few jokes, smugly announced that he would have no more elections, and just generally exuded confidence. Instead of the kumbaya thing, he laid out his priorities to a Republican Congress that will likely block much of what he proposed, especially when it comes to raising taxes on the wealthy to support his free community college program.

President Obama “threw down” in the hour-long speech that was

frequently punctuated by applause. Republicans frequently withheld applause, but his confidence suggested that whether they offered applause or withheld it was of no concern to him.

Michelle Obama wasn’t playing, either. While she has usually worn her trademark sleeveless dresses with pearls, once a puffy skirt, once with long sleeves. The shift look certainly flatters her figure and her toned arms tout her fitness. Her two-piece tweed suit, though, was a business suit. It reminded us that she is a lawyer (with a nod and a wink to CBS hit show “The Good Wife”) in addition to being a stylish first lady. Hopefully, the business attire signals that she will take care of business in the next two years. Her “Get Fit” initiative is much needed, and her partnership with Jill Biden to focus on military families is consistent with the president’s in providing jobs and other assistance for veterans.

In these last two years, perhaps the first lady can spread her wings

and focus on the work and family issues she lived and that so many women juggle. I hope for too much, I think, when I suggest that she deal with the gender pay gap, but that is also an issue that would benefit from her attention.

While the president highlighted efforts to benefit the middle class, he mentioned poverty just once. There are 45.3 million people who lived in poverty in 2013, the last year for which data are available. The rates are 9.7 percent for Whites, 12.3 percent for Asian-Americans, 25.3 percent for Hispanics, and 27.2 percent for African-Americans. In mentioning poverty without mentioning that some experience poverty differently than others, the president failed to put a tiny pin in his own celebration. I wouldn’t expect him to mention race explicitly, but he could have said, “And while poverty rates are falling, one in four families in some communities still experience poverty.”

Similarly, President Obama justifiably touted falling unemployment,

which dropped from 6.7 percent a year ago, to 5.6 percent in December. The decrease has been across the board and included African-Americans and Hispanic as well.

However, there are 700,000 fewer people in the labor market than a year ago, indicating that more people are entering the labor market in response to its perceived strength. Without indicating race, the president could have talked about the high unemployment rates among some groups.

Of course, presidents traditionally offer a laundry list of issues, with few getting more than a couple sentences worth of attention. Still, since the economic success story is one that President Obama correctly touted and it would have been appropriate for him to simply mention the unevenness of recovery.

And since the Affordable Care Act is a successful part of the Obama legacy, with nearly 7 million more people enrolling in the program, and some of the 2014 glitches eliminated, it would have been appropriate to mention it,

specifically and in depth. Some might consider that waving a red flag in the faces of bullish Republicans, but in some ways the speech was a red flag, anyway.

When I listened to the State of the Union address, I thought “this is the Obama I voted for – twice, the Obama that was but a rising star in 2004, whose rousing speech at the Boston Democratic convention propelled him to national attention.” This Obama seemed presidential, not conciliatory. He stood by the executive orders he issued in 2014, and stated that he will his veto pen if Congress attempts to overturn his effort.

As he did in Boston, President Obama ended on a unifying note, a line that he has used often: “We are more than red states and blue states, we are the United States of America.” He was motivated when he said, “let’s start the work right now.” Bravo, Mr. President. Welcome back!

Dr. Julianne Malveaux is an economist and author based in Washington, D.C.

50 Years of Black Progress



Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.
NNPA Columnist

Has Black America made significant progress politically, socially and economically over the past 50 years? This is not only an important question to pose, it is equally important to answer. And the answer is a resounding yes. In fact, 1965 to 2015 has been a remarkable period in the history of Black America. But make no mistake about it: all of our progress has come as a direct result of a protracted struggle for freedom, justice and equality.

The universal right to self-deter-

mination is a fundamental human right recognized by the United Nations. We have too often allowed non-Blacks to mis-define our reality with distorted myths, negative stereotypes and cynicism.

This year will mark the largest Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) with 46 members. In 1965, there were only five African Americans in the Congress. We have come a long way politically in the past 50 years at the federal, state and local level. In addition to representation in the House and Senate, we have served as mayors of big cities, as governors, as lieutenant governors, as speakers of state legislatures, as county commission chairs, as city council chairs, as school board presidents and as national party chairs. Black participation in state legislatures alone has increased five-fold over during past five decades.

Since the passage of the 1965

Voting Rights Act, Black Power has moved from becoming a chant to a political reality. The late Edward Brooke (R-Mass.) blazed the way as the first Black attorney general of a state and later as the first African American popularly elected to the U.S. Senate. Following suit as governors were Doug Wilder in Virginia and Deval Patrick in Massachusetts.

Jesse L. Jackson’s 1984 and 1988 presidential campaigns paved the way for Barack Obama’s successful campaign in 2008 to become the first Black elected president of the United States of America.

On the heels of that success and Blacks voting at a higher percentage than Whites in 2012 for the first time, have come efforts by Republicans to suppress the Black vote. This effort, carried out largely by Republican-dominated state legislatures, is underway as America experienc-

es a dramatic demographic shift.

We are grateful that Sister Jeri Green and others at the U.S. Census Bureau that have assembled the latest social and demographic statistics for Black History Month observance:

- As of July 1, 2012, there are now 44.5 million Black Americans, either alone or in combination with one or more other races, in the U.S., up 1 percent over 2011;
- New York is the state with the largest Black American population with 3.7 million. The District of Columbia has the highest percentage of Black Americans at 51.6 percent, followed by Mississippi at 38 percent. Texas has the highest numeric increase in Black Americans since 2011 (87,000. Cook County, Ill. (Chicago) had the largest Black American population of any county as of 2012 at 1.3 million;
- The percentage of Blacks 25 and older with a high school diploma

or higher was 83.2 percent;

- The percentage of African Americans in that same age group with a bachelor’s degree or higher in 2012 was 18.7 percent;
- There were 3.7 million Blacks enrolled in college as of 2012, a 28 percent increase over the 2.9 million in 2007;
- The annual median family income of Black households was \$33,321 in 2012, compared to the national figure of \$55,017;
- The poverty rate for African Americans was 27.2 percent in 2012, compared to 15 percent nationally;
- There were 9.8 million family households in 2013 and among Black households, 45.7 percent contained married couples;
- There was a record 17.8 million Black voter turnout in 2012, a 1.7 million voter increase of the num-

**Commentary, Continued
on page 10.**

Get More Of Your Refund.

Free Tax Preparation on Super Tax Day.

If you earned \$53,000 or less in 2014, you could get up to a \$6,000 refund through the Earned Income Tax Credit program. Super Tax Day makes it easy to find out if you qualify.

Entergy is proud to partner with local community advocates to sponsor Super Tax Day at IRS-certified Volunteer Income Tax Assistance sites in your community. These sites provide free tax preparation. They'll also make sure you get the full refund you have coming to you, including any available credits.

So don't pay hundreds of dollars on tax return preparation. Get the help you need, free of charge on Super Tax Day. It's the smartest, easiest way to get more of your refund.

What to bring:

- A valid photo ID.
- Your W-2s and/or 1099s.
- Social Security cards for you and everyone you claim on your returns.
- Previous years' tax returns (if you have any).
- For direct deposit refunds, bring a canceled or voided check, or your bank account number and routing number.

Attend Super Tax Day!

Friday, January 30, 12 noon – 4 p.m. and 5 – 7 p.m. • Saturday, January 31, 9 a.m. – 12 noon • Dillard University, 3301 Annette, New Orleans
Saturday, February 7, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. • United Way Single Stop Delgado, 615 City Park Avenue, Building 22, New Orleans

For more information, visit entergy.com/eitc today.

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Councilmember Brossett Proposes New Orleans Living Wage Ordinance

At the Regular City Council Meeting on January 22, District "D" Councilmember Jared C. Brossett introduced Ordinance Calendar 30,550 on first reading. If adopted, this ordinance will require city contractors and recipients of grants to pay their employees \$10.10/hour and provide a minimum of 7 paid sick days. It will apply to contractors with \$25,000 or more in annual city contracts, recipients of city financial assistance of \$100,000 or more, and employee time that is spent on city contracts or projects involving city aid.

Councilmember Brossett said, "The Living Wage Ordinance will help improve the standard of living for many New Orleanians that work hard but struggle to put food

on the table for their families. The City of New Orleans is limited by State law as to our ability to affect the minimum wage. But we have it within our power, and I would say our moral duty, to ensure that the workers who are paid with City money receive fair wages."

"We all know you can't feed a family on \$7.25 an hour. That's about \$15,000 a year. We should do better. No, we must do better. And that is what I am proposing. I am a firm believer that economic opportunity is one the cornerstones of a thriving city. Sadly, too many of our citizens don't have that opportunity. A job by itself is not the type of opportunity we need. A good-paying job is what our people need. And if your company wants to do business with



the city, we want them to pay you a living wage," Councilmember Brossett also said.

The purpose of the Ordinance is to ensure that taxpayer dollars extended by the City to private contractors are used in a manner that creates jobs and keeps contracted and subcontracted workers and their families out of poverty. This living wage will enable those full-time workers to support a family at a level that meets basic needs and avoids economic hardship. The payment of higher wages is associated with increased levels of business investment and employee training, higher worker productivity, and lower employee absenteeism and turnover. A vote on the Ordinance is expected to occur in the near future.

NORDC Teen Council to Host Mardi Gras Masquerade Ball

On Saturday, Jan. 31 at 7 p.m., NORDC and Chevron will host a Mardi Gras Masquerade Ball at the Behrman Recreation Center at 2539 General Meyer Ave. Led by the NORDC Teen Council, the free event will feature music by DJ Chicken, a photo booth, giveaways, food and a special musical guest. All teens are invited to celebrate a happy and safe Mardi Gras with members of the NORDC Teen Council.

Supported by Chevron, the NORDC Teen Council empowers youth, ages 12 to 17, by developing a social growth environment through structured teen programs. These emerging leaders actively participate in civic and community engagement by designing and implementing citywide teen programming. At each monthly NORDC Commission meeting, a teen is selected to address the commission with a report on recent and current activities. The teens also speak personally about what the Teen Council means to them.

Select NORDC Teen Council members are chosen for the Chevron Future Leaders Program, which offers an array of monthly learning activities, events and trips. The program supports leadership and skills development and enables early career exploration.

Teens must present photo ID upon entrance. Transportation will be provided to those in need- must make arrangements with the NORDC Teen Council by Jan 28.

For more information, please visit <http://www.nola.gov/nordc> or call NORDC at (504) 658-3000.

International High School of New Orleans Students Win Big at Speech Tournament



Members of the Speech and Debate team at International High School of New Orleans all brought home trophies at a recent competition at Ben Franklin High School. (l-r) Senior Markus Reneau, senior Saya Meads, Coach Mr. D, senior Michael Kuckyer, and junior Sylvia Jones

are pictured with their trophies. Saya Meads placed 3rd in Humorous Interpretation, Michael Kuckyer placed 3rd in Extemporaneous Speaking, Sylvia Jones was 2nd in Oral Interpretation, and Markus Reneau placed 5th in Original Oratory and placed 1st in Impromptu Speaking.

Commentary, Continued from page 8.

ber of Black Americans who voted in 2008 and

- The record 66.2 percent of Black Americans who voted in the 2012 presidential election was higher than the 64.1 percent of non-Hispanic Whites who voted in 2012.

Yes, we have made progress over the past half-century, but future progress will not happen by osmosis. Rather, it will happen when we become wiser about how we spend more than \$1 trillion each year. We will also need to focus on strengthening Black-owned businesses and grow a new generation of committed young entrepreneurs.

To be blunt, Black Americans cannot afford to entertain any ideas of not moving forward to make more progress over the next 50 years. We have come too far to turn back now.

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/drbc>

New Education Official Wants to Reform NCLB

By Freddie Allen

WASHINGTON (NNPA) – John King, Jr., a highly-respected educator from New York City, says that teachers saved his life and in his new post as the deputy secretary at the Department of Education, he wants all children to have the support in school that he had growing up.

Both of King's parents were life-long educators. His father, John King, Sr., was the first Black principal at an integrated school in Brooklyn, N.Y. and also served as the deputy superintendent for New York City schools after the Supreme Court ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* banned "separate, but equal" practices in public schools.

In elementary school, King used to ride to work with his mother, Adalinda, who worked as guidance counselor at the middle school. When King was in the fourth grade, his mother suffered a heart attack at work. That night he went to the hospital with his father and the next morning, his father broke the news to him. His mother was gone. She was just 48. It was hard for the younger King to understand at 8 years old.

"Losing my mom in a lot of ways was the moment when school took on this much larger importance in my life," said King. School became the safe harbor from the turmoil in his home life that slowly deteriorated after his mother passed away.

His father, then in his 70s, started to forget things.

"I didn't know why he would forget things," King recalled, though he later learned that his father suffered from Alzheimer's disease. "I didn't know why he would be upset one moment and not upset the next."

In an environment where there was a lot of instability, King said school was a source of stability, structure and support and for three years, from the fourth grade to the sixth grade, Alan Osterweil's classroom anchored that stability.

In that class, King read the New York Times every day, memorized the capital and leader for every country in the world and performed Shakespeare. King said he felt free to be a kid.

"He set very high expectations for us," said King. "Sometimes people think that kids will be overwhelmed by higher expectations,



John King Jr., the new Deputy Secretary for the Department of Education, wants to reform the No Child Left Behind Act. (Freddie Allen/NNPA)

but I think that kids rise to higher expectations and one of the things that I experienced in his classroom was that his high expectations were motivating and encouraging to all of us. He also paid a lot of attention to a full range of subjects."

King said that Osterweil saw his role as a teacher wasn't just about conveying knowledge, but it was also about mentoring and supporting students.

John, Sr. died at 79, when John Jr., was 12 years old. He then lived with a half brother on Long Island and later, an uncle and aunt in Cherry Hill, N.J.

King said that he carried the lessons he learned in Osterweil's class with him when he taught his own social studies class and co-founded a charter school in Boston, Mass., after attending Harvard University and earning a master's degree at the Teachers College at Columbia University in New York.

Following in his parents' footsteps, King dedicated his life to education, rising through ranks to become the first New York State education commissioner of African American and Puerto Rican descent in 2011. King was recently selected to become the deputy secretary of the Department of Education.

"Not only am I here doing this today because of that teacher, but I'm alive, because [Osterweil] provided stability during that period in my life," said King.

In his new role, King will manage the agency's major initiatives that includes working to revise Presi-

dent George W. Bush's 2002 "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB) law.

King noted that, by some measures, student achievement has improved since NCLB updated the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), originally signed into law in 1965.

King said ESEA is really a civil rights law that was intended to ensure equity for all students across the country and there is still a lot of work to do.

"One of the problems with the NCLB law is that it focused just on absolute performance," said King. "What we've tried to do at the department with the 'waiver process' is to focus on growth."

Through the waiver process, the Obama administration freed more than 30 states and Washington, D.C. from NCLB's stringent testing requirements, which often faced sharp criticism from educators and school administrators. Exempt school districts tracked the individual progress of students independent of how they ranked against other students on a standardized test.

More than a decade since NCLB was enacted, civil rights groups and Washington lawmakers are now focused on improving it.

Nearly 30 civil rights and education advocacy groups united to express their concerns about the reauthorization of the ESEA in a joint statement.

The coalition recommended that each state provide annual assessments for all students in the

third grade through the eighth grade and high school and that targeted funding be used to meet the needs of the most vulnerable children in our nation's schools including youth in juvenile and criminal justice system. The group also said that states should expand data collection and reporting to parents and the public on student achievement, course-completion and graduation rates.

Marc H. Morial, president and CEO of the National Urban League, said his organization is deeply opposed to Senator Alexander's approach to reauthorize ESEA.

"When President Johnson signed ESEA into law he said that the bill represented 'the commitment of the federal government to quality and equality in the schooling we offer our young people,'" said Morial in a statement. "Yet, with this draft, Chairman Alexander moves our nation in the opposite direction and strikes at our most cherished civil rights principle: that every child has fair and equal access to a quality education regardless of family income, ZIP code, disability, language or race."

Morial said that lawmakers must rewrite the bill and commit to strong federal oversight in education and equity in access to high quality instruction and resources for all students.

Morial continued: "This partisan bill, drafted with little input from civil rights partners, cannot be tweaked to meet the needs of the communities in which we serve. We believe that Chairman Alexander's ESEA draft moves us backwards—it ignores equity, guts federal accountability and shifts resources away from children in most need."

King echoed Morial's concerns and said that the fear is that some of what has been proposed would be a step backwards from equity and opportunity.

"We know that for our kids, their best shot is if they have a high quality education that prepares them to be successful after they graduate from high school," said King. "We have no future as a country if we don't ensure that African American students get a high quality education, that Latino students get a high quality education, that our English language learners get a high quality education. Our future depends on ensuring that every student has the full range of opportunities."

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