

*Lighting The Road To The Future*

**New Orleans**

**Data**

**News Weekly**

*"The People's Paper"*

# **Diana Ross In The Name of Love**

**FREE  
COPY**

**Data  
Zone  
Page 5**

March 7 - March 13, 2015 49th Year Volume 45 [www.ladatanews.com](http://www.ladatanews.com)

A Data News Weekly Exclusive

# **Rep. Wesley Bishop**

**Discusses the State  
Budget, the Future of  
New Orleans and the  
Lower 9th Ward**

**Page 2**



**State & Local  
Spears Agency  
Wins 3 ADDY  
Awards**

**Page 7**

**Commentary  
Fifty Shades  
of Gray....**



**Page 6**

# Data News Talks to State Representative Wesley Bishop

*A Candid Conversation about the State Budget and the Future of New Orleans and the Lower 9th Ward*



One of the persons that's been in the middle of many of these budget discussions is Louisiana State Representative from District 99 Wesley Bishop (pictured above, who is also Associate Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs at Southern University at New Orleans (SUNO)).

By Edwin Buggage

**Louisiana Budget 2015-16**

Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal recently submitted a \$24.6 billion dollar State Budget Proposal, while there were reports prior to his giving his budget to state legislatures of doom and gloom scenarios being floated around surrounding the possibility of deep cuts to health care and higher education. In the 11th hour he showed lawmakers a budget that he hoped would close a \$1.6 billion dollar shortfall for the budget that will start in the beginning of the fiscal year on July 1.

One of the persons that's been in the middle of many of these budget discussions is Louisiana State Representative from District 99 Wesley Bishop who is also Associate Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs at Southern University at New Orleans (SUNO). Data News Weekly had a chance to speak with Bishop about the upcoming budget and issues affecting the City of New Orleans and District 99, which covers the Upper and Lower Ninth Ward and parts of New Orleans East.

"I am working with other lawmakers on issues that affect the quality of life of people in the state," says Bishop of his work in Baton Rouge. "Initially, I had a great deal of concern about proposed budget cuts particularly in the areas of healthcare and education. These cuts would have been devastating but in the end they were not as bad as projected."

As Louisiana Governor Bobby

Jindal may be preparing for a Presidential run in 2016, Bishop feels since Jindal became Governor the state budget went for a surplus to a deficit under his leadership, and questions his ability to lead the nation.

"When Governor Jindal was elected we had a 1 billion dollar surplus when he came into office, and as he is leaving office soon we have a 1.6 billion dollar deficit, and many of the programs that would possibly be cut would affect the most vulnerable people of our state; that is not good for Louisiana and if he were to use his record as Governor as an example of what he would do as President this would not be good for the nation."

**District 99 and the Lower 9**

Bishop represents District 99 which he calls ground zero for Hurricane Katrina and the breaching of the levees that washed away the homes and lives of those who lived there. Today nearly a decade later these communities are still struggling to fully recover.

"House District 99 is the Upper and Lower Ninth Ward and New Orleans East. I am distressed by the lack of progress we have seen for most of the recovery," says Bishop of the lackluster recovery of many of the areas of his district. "If I had to grade the recovery effort before three years ago I would have given it a D, but in the last three years I have become more optimistic."

Bishop says there are several projects on the horizon that would give a lift to the Lower Nine, but there are still many more things to be done

Cover Story, Continued  
on next page.

## INSIDE DATA

Cover Story . . . . .	2	Commentary. . . . .	6
Data Zone . . . . .	4	State & Local News . .	7

## DATA NEWS WEEKLY

P.O. Box 57347, New Orleans, LA 70157-7347 | Phone: (504) 821-7421 | Fax: (504) 821-7622  
editorial: datanewseditor@bellsouth.net | advertising: datanewsad@bellsouth.net

Terry B. Jones	Contributors	Art Direction &
CEO/Publisher		Production
Edwin Buggage	Analog Factory	MainorMedia.com
Editor	Edwin Buggage	Editorial Submissions
Calla Victoria		datanewseditor@bellsouth.net
Executive Assistant	Peter C. Groff	Advertising Inquiries
June Hazeur		datanewsad@bellsouth.net
Accounting	Calla Victoria	bellsouth.net

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.

Cover Story, Continued from previous page.

before this area once inhabited by many people and businesses both large and small will reach pre-Katrina numbers. He also feels that in the rebuild there is a unique opportunity to do some different things that would improve the area.

"There are several projects in the Lower Nine. I am excited about the CVS on North Claiborne and Forstall, but we need to take greater steps to make the whole area more attractive to live and invest in. And while there lies great opportunities in the Lower Nine; there are things I am concerned about that are near and dear to me like the lack of quality businesses and family oriented things to do in the Lower Nine. This is something we need to think about as we work to repopulate and rebuild."

This is a major goal for Bishop, to bring people back to the Lower Ninth Ward where he grew up. Last year he sponsored the Lower Ninth Ward Redevelopment Act HB 489

as a proposed constitutional amendment, which would allow the parish's "governing authority" –

which in this case is the New Orleans City Council – to donate abandoned or blighted property in the Lower Ninth Ward to residents of that community. And also HB 1001 would allow the City of New Orleans to sell abandoned and adjudicated properties it owns in the Lower Ninth Ward for \$100. This legislation passed in both houses of the Louisiana Legislature; and was on the November ballot as a Constitutional Amendment, but failed to pass in a statewide vote by a 59% to 41% percent margin.

"Even though the Constitutional Amendment did not win at the polls, I still feel good about over 500,000 people supported it and also that the bill passed in both houses of the Louisiana Legislature. It made the Lower Ninth Ward and its redevelopment part of the conversation and I feel that is an important step in the right direction. We have to find a way to take those 602 lots in the Lower Nine and put them back into commerce."

#### Working together to Rebuild New Orleans and Opportunity for All

Many of the things Bishop is working to accomplish are a joint effort. He says that he is working

closely with members of the New Orleans delegation in the legislature and also with others in the State House of Representatives. He is also working with other elected leaders in both New Orleans and Washington D.C. to bring resources to District 99.



Bishop says there are several projects on the horizon that would give a lift to the Lower Nine, but there are still many more things to be done before this area once inhabited by many people and businesses both large and small will reach pre-Katrina numbers.

"I am working closely with City Councilman from District E, James Gray on many issues that affect both our districts. I am also glad to be working with Joseph Bouie who has been elected to the State House and U.S. Congressman Cedric Richmond to improve the quality of life in District 99."

As the devastation that impacted the City affected all people; today there still exists racial and class disparities in the place of recovery and in economic opportunities in New Orleans.

"We would be foolish to think that race and class are not issues," says Bishop. I feel everyone should have a share and an opportunity in this redevelopment. For example; there is a building boom going on and minority contractors and potential employees must be part of that equation, because if they benefit they raise their quality of life and all the people of the City benefit."

#### Wesley Bishop: Legislator of the Year and Fighter for the People

Wesley Bishop has become a champion of the underdog and for those who strive to have a better life. As an elected official and an ed-

ucation administrator, he is making his mark leading his community to recovery. For his efforts in 2014 he was recognized by the Alliance for Good Government as the Legislator of the Year for Orleans Parish.

"I am humbled for being recog-

nized for my work as a legislator, but it is all connected to what I do as a servant of the people. And I will continue to fight to make sure our people have access to quality education, healthcare and economic opportunities," says Bishop. "Also I am

most proud of the work we have done to address the 9th Ward Redevelopment, although it did not become law it got over half-million votes throughout the State of Louisiana and it is only the beginning of what I feel will be a full recovery for the Lower 9."

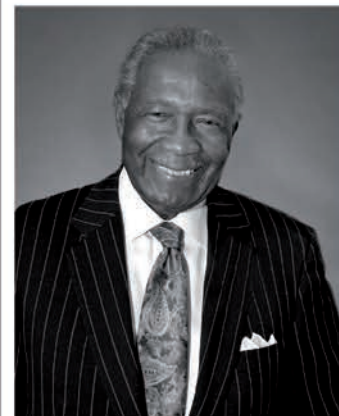


**First NBC Bank** recognizes that a community based financial institution grows when it has professional and caring employees. We strive every day to supply the best banking services to each of our customers.

Majority local ownership allows us to cut through red tape and make decisions quickly when responding to our customers' financial needs. The Bank's flexible organizational structure affords our clients access to highly skilled and empowered bankers who are valued as trusted financial partners. And because we believe in open communication with customers, we will always encourage you to discuss your financial objectives and look for ways to implement them. First NBC Bank never stopped lending even during days of market instability. We're recognized as one of the top lending and service related banks throughout the Crescent City and the Metropolitan Area. So, if you want to work with a bank that makes client services its primary concern, you know who you can turn to-First NBC Bank.

**504-566-8000**

[www.firstnbcbank.com](http://www.firstnbcbank.com)



**Charles C. Teamer Sr.**  
First NBC Bank  
Board Member

#### JEFFERSON PARISH

**Elmwood Office**  
504-671-3510

**Kenner Office**  
504-671-3540

**Lapalco Office**  
504-671-3570

**Veterans Office**  
504-671-3530

**Transcontinental Office**  
504-671-3425

**Terrytown Office**  
504-671-3550

**Manhattan Office**  
504-252-4315

**Cleary Office**  
504-252-4360

#### ORLEANS PARISH

**Main Office**  
**210 Baronne Street**  
504-566-8000

**Mid City Office**  
504-252-4345

**St. Charles Office**  
504-252-4330

**Read Office**  
504-671-3875

**Carondelet Office**  
504-671-3560

**DeGaulle Office**  
504-252-4300

**Lakeview Office**  
504-671-3520

**Poydras Office**  
504-239-4560

# Shoot Ya Best Shot!

## Ashé Power House Grand Opening

Photos by Analog Factory

Recently, Ashé Cultural Center celebrated the grand opening of the Ashé Power House with an event called Lyrics Beats and Brushstrokes. It was a great night of music and art and Data News Weekly was there.



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

# Diana Ross

## *In the Name of Love Tour*



By Calla Victoria

If you missed the sold out Diana Ross "In the Name of Love Tour" at the Saenger Theatre last weekend, you missed an amazing performance. Like myself, and many of the attendees sitting around me, it had been quite a while since we saw Diana, but it was also our first time back in the magnificent Saenger Theatre since Katrina. So everyone was filled with emotions.

As we sat waiting for the concert to begin, we enjoyed the lavish surroundings of the restored Saenger Theatre, it was like Katrina never happened. All of the intricate carvings and gilding throughout this awesome venue make

one appreciate the pride of workmanship that existed so many years ago, as well as the team of workers and the \$53 million it took to restore this marvelous piece of New Orleans history and the crown jewel of Canal Street.

The stage was draped with an opaque blue veil, so we could only see silhouettes of bodies moving behind the veil as the band played. We heard Diana Ross' voice singing, "I'm coming out," then the veil dropped and there was the pianist on a riser to the right of the stage, in the center of the stage on a riser were the two percussionists, and to the left of them was the string section. On the stage, on the left in front of the string section, was the horn section; and on

the right side of the stage were the three back-up dancers. And there in the center of the stage was Diana Ross, resplendent in a turquoise blue sequined gown covered with a cloud of ruffled pastel blue netting, and the audience was on its feet grooving to some of Diana's hits! After that Diana left the stage for about 30 seconds as the band played.

Diana returned to the stage in a bedazzled tomato-red beaded kimono-sleeved gown with a poof of a red ruffled net jacket and matching red fan, which she used to cool herself with as the hot lights of the stage bared down. Only Diana Ross can make sweating look elegant! Later she changed into an electric yellow beaded two-piece gown with a

ruffled yellow jacket and matching yellow fan. She made five wardrobe changes in all. This was classic Diana Ross, the diva, the boss! Lots of large gesturing, wind in the hair, head thrown back and hands raised in the air at the end of a tune, you know...Diana! And she did not disappoint, Diana Ross rocked the house and everyone was on their feet dancing, including some City Council members.

The "In the Name of Love Tour" was a fabulous evening of entertainment. Diana Ross is monumental, and the only place in this town grand and opulent enough to host the tour was the exquisite Saenger Theatre. Thank you Diana Ross, and thank you Saenger Theatre.

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

## Connect to the Source

Data News Weekly, your one stop for what's happening in New Orleans.



[ladatanews.com](http://ladatanews.com)



# WBOK 1230AM

**A BAKEWELL MEDIA COMPANY**

**Real Talk for Real Times...**

1639 Gentilly Blvd. New Orleans, LA 70119 (504)942-0106

[www.wbok1230am.com](http://www.wbok1230am.com)

# Fifty Shades of Grey

## *A Male Perspective*



By Edwin Buggage  
Editor, Data News Weekly

Fifty Shade of Grey, the E.L. James book that went on to sell 100 million copies worldwide and is translated into over 50 languages recently made it to the big screen to mixed reviews. But despite that it was a film that still did well at the box office as many women and couples went to see the film. After talking to many women about the film and the book I wanted to write about it from one male's perspective. I do not in any way claim to speak for other men only myself.

After viewing the film twice and perusing through the book I have to say that the film pales in comparison to the book, as is usually the case when books are made into films. I can see in the book how one can get swept into the fantasy of Christian Grey's character, the rich handsome man that the young virgin Anastasia meets and engage in a relationship full of intrigue, excitement and adventure. And I fully understand from my many conversations with women how she becomes fascinated with the façade of Christian and all the things he possess outwardly. But as she begins to know him many things begin to unfold that this man is not exactly who or what he portrays himself to be, which the case is often when people meet and begin to know each other.

In the book there are many steamy scenes, but the film does not focus on this and the scenes that delve into the more erotic aspects

of their relationship are done in a very tasteful way to interesting remixes of Beyoncé songs that serve as a soundtrack to these erotic interludes. Speaking with some about the film they felt Ana gave away some of her power, I beg to differ in this regard, I felt the film made an important point in speaking to the woman of today as empowered in many ways. Where she makes choices as to what she would and would not do in this relationship with Christian. In many ways this film is about Anastasia making rational choices about who she will be in this relationship.

As for Christian, he is everything that a woman may want on the outside, but behind the veneer of outward perfection is an extremely tortured, damaged individual. His quest for control and power is fueled by a host of problems including insecurity and emotional instability. He is a toxic stew that Ana

eventually decides to leave and go back to her life of what some would call nothing materially, but having everything that matters. Her integrity, complete control of her life and to make the choice to pursue a partnership with someone who is open, honest, loving and giving of themselves in every way.

This film explores the Faustian Bargain that some make when they enter relationships. And lends itself to these questions: Do you feel you have to give up yourself to be with somebody else? Do you let yourself be controlled, but with limits? In some ways these are things that people must do to be in a relationship, but in 50 Shades of Grey, Christian although rich in many ways was a poor lost soul who would not allow himself to be vulnerable; and know the redemptive power of true love. This is the sad irony of this story, here is a man who has the resources to do what

ever he wanted to do in life, but did not have the inner resolve to allow himself to do the things that equal a functional relationship with a woman.

While 50 Shades of Grey could have been a much better film, it is still something worth going to see. It is one of those movies that when you look beneath the surface there are a great many things that could be discussed about how we relate in intimate relationships. Ana who was just getting out in the world represents the purity we all have in us and Christian is all that we aspire to be on the outside. And when their world intersects it brings into question in our journey in life what is it that really matters? Also what do we choose to pursue to be happy and content, and the answer to that question is not black or white, it is somewhere in the middle in the many "Shades of Grey" that is our lives and the choices we make.

# The Way Forward for Black Students



By Honorable Peter C. Groff  
Data News Weekly Guest Columnist

For good reasons many African-Americans have wonderful memories of their time in public schools. Among those recollections are the family and community legacies, the favorite teacher and the lifelong friends that were made. Even for those, particularly in the south in the 1950's and 1960's, who have mixed feelings about their public school experiences they also remember the solid foundation that public education provided for college and a career. The system, even with its flaws, was good enough for our parents and, in some cases, for us.

However, that nostalgic era must

come to an end and African-Americans need to remake public education for our kids.

Too many of our kids have fallen through the cracks of the one size fits all public education system that was created in the 19th Century. According to the U.S. Department of Education, an academic achievement gap exists that has been created and is widening. Nationally, on average, African-American twelfth graders read at the same level as White eighth graders, and barely more than half of African-Americans graduate from high school. These numbers and other statistics like them are stunning, but when you realize that the majority of people incarcerated in the U.S. are people of color who have low educational attainment, and every person who drops out of school costs society about \$260,000 in earnings, taxes and productivity, the numbers are frightening.

If our kids are going to be competitive in the burgeoning global economy we must prepare them better. President Barack Obama outlined the challenge in Febru-

ary of 2009 during his first address to Congress.

"In a global economy where the most valuable skill you can sell is your knowledge, a good education is no longer just a pathway to opportunity – it is a pre-requisite.

Right now, three-quarters of the fastest-growing occupations require more than a high school diploma. And yet, just over half of our citizens have that level of education...and half of the students who begin college never finish."

So how do we create a better way forward for our kids? How do we create high quality options and opportunities for all students?

1. Far too often our children enter kindergarten unprepared to learn; thus, they are more likely to fall even further behind in the critical first four years of kindergarten and elementary school. Responsively, our community must demand high quality preschool programs for every four and five year old child, especially our poorest kids, and guarantee access to affordable, quality and safe child care.

2. Once our kids are properly prepared for K-12 education we need to ensure their learning does not stagnate or falter. We must require that our legislators and school districts give our parents high quality choices within the public school system. Innovative options like charter and online schools, homeschooling and even high performing traditional schools recognize the overwhelming body of research that shows not all children learn the same and that a one size fits all system is destined to leave countless students behind. Policymakers must deliver the K-12 choice, innovation and quality that numerous national polls show that parents are demanding, especially African-American parents.

3. Finally, the President often reminds us that "...three-quarters of the fastest-growing occupations require more than a high school diploma", but African-American students are 45% more likely to take remedial classes if they attend college, and then less than 40% graduate often because of economic pressures. The community must demand that school districts better prepare

African-American students for college and that legislators increase Pell grants, help families manage loan debt, slow tuition costs, and undergird community colleges. In addition, the community should clamor for high-quality vocational training programs and meaningful apprenticeship opportunities for those students who elect not to attend college.

The schools of today have a unique challenge to prepare all students to compete on the world stage where critical and cutting edge thinking and knowledge are a must. For our kids' sake and for the nation's future we need to shake our nostalgic attachment to the schools of our past and demand something new. We must demand choice, innovation and quality in all our schools and for all our students.

Hon. Peter C. Groff is the former President of the Colorado Senate and a Senior Education appointee of President Barack Obama. Groff is a noted policy and political strategist and the Principal of MCG2 Consulting. Follow him on Twitter @petercgroff

# Goodbye Roast of James Perry with Melissa Harris Perry

On Thursday, March 12, 2015, MSNBC's Melissa Harris Perry will moderate a roast in honor of the Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center's outgoing Executive Director, James Perry. The event will be held from 6-8pm at New Orleans' Preservation Resource Center (923 Tchoupitoulas Street). Mr Perry's friends and colleagues, including Women With A Vision's Deon Haywood, Dr. Andre Perry, and Stephanie Bruno, will join together to roast and toast him and his service to GNOFHAC.

The evening will commemorate James Perry's decade of service to the Fair Housing Action Center while raising money to support the Center as it undergoes a major leadership transition. Mr. Perry will be leaving New Orleans to join his family in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. The event will feature hors d'oeuvres by James Beard Award winning chef Allison



James and Melissa Harris Perry will be relocating to North Carolina.

Vines-Rushing, specialty cocktails and wine, and a silent auction featuring original works by local artists including Dr. Bob, Larry Dan-

iel Nevil, and Hank Holland.

Mr. Perry comments "I am immensely proud and grateful to have served as Executive Director

of the Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center for over a decade. During that time, the Center has led the fight in some of the most challenging civil rights problems in recent history. We acted as a catalyst for equitable rebuilding post-Katrina and have recovered more than \$500 million for victims of housing discrimination. The decision to depart has not been easy. In fact, it is the most difficult and challenging professional decision I have ever made. I'd like to thank those who have promoted the success of the Center by offering their help, advice, friendship mentorship and support over these many years, and I look forward to seeing everyone at next week's roast."

Tickets to the roast are \$45 and can be purchased at [www.GNO-FairHousing.org](http://www.GNO-FairHousing.org). All proceeds from the evening will support the Fair Housing Action Center.

## DATA CLASSIFIED

Call 504-821-7421 to  
place your classified ad.

### Mailboxes by Mark



You pay for the bricks or maybe you have bricks already. You provide the mailbox.

I will provide the cement, wood, mortar, nails etc. You choose or create the design. Prices vary according to the design.

Contact: Mark (504) 723-7318

## AVON

The company for women \$\$\$  
\$\$\$\$\$

Can you use some extra cash? Try Avon!!! Avon is easy to sell, no experience necessary. It cost only \$10.00 to start.

Become your own boss or just earn extra money. Whether you are interested in purchasing Avon products or becoming an Avon Representative yourself, I can assist you.

Call June - 504-606-1362  
I will explain everything and help you to get started.

# Spears Group Named Agency Executive of the Year at 2015 NOLA Addy Awards

On Friday, February 27, The Ad Club of New Orleans held its 2015 ADDY Awards. This year, Cleveland Spears III, President and CEO of Spears Group, was recognized as Agency Executive of the Year, one of the organization's highest honors. Ronald Evangelista, Spears Group's Special Project Manager, was recognized in the category of Promotions and Special Events for his work with Spears Group's flagship program the Social Renaissance. Spears and Evangelista were selected by a panel of judges made up of local advertising professionals.

"I am humbled and honored to be selected as Agency Executive of the Year," said Spears. This award is an acknowledgement of the hard work of the entire Spears team over the last several years."

The ADDY's are the most prestigious and competitive awards in the advertising industry and the Ad Persons awards are a way for the American Advertising Federation to honor the best and bright-



Spears Group  
President and CEO,  
Cleveland Spears,  
III

est professionals in the industry. Spears, a New Orleans native, has more than a decade of professional experience in the marketing and communications and opened Spears Group in 2008. In addition to serving on the City Park Board of Directors, the New Orleans Workforce Investment Board, Liberty's Kitchen Board of Directors and the Greater New Orleans Sports Foundation, Spears dedicates his time to mentoring young African American males with the Silverback Society. Spears has been previously recognized by the Urban League of Greater New Orleans and the International Association of Business

Communicators as one of New Orleans brightest stars.

In addition, Spears Group, along with 360i, FSC Interactive, and Countertake, won a Silver

ADDY award for the "Taste of NOLA - Follow Your NOLA Food Truck" campaign, done on behalf of the New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation.



## Dr. Robert J. Spears, DDS General Dentistry



Extractions\*

Tooth Colored Fillings\*

Crowns \* Teeth Whitening \* Veneers\*

Dentures \* Root Canals \* Cleanings \*

Dental Implants \* Gum Re-Contouring

Schedule an  
appointment today!!  
Call 241-8214

9235 Lake Forest Blvd. New Orleans, LA

This space can be

yours for only \$80

Call Now!

504-821-7421



Angiel's got  
stuff to do.

St. Jude patient Angiel:  
*Big Dreamer*

**But at this moment, she's fighting cancer.**

That's why St. Jude Children's Research Hospital® spends every moment changing the way the world treats children - with pioneering research and exceptional care. And no family ever pays St. Jude for anything. Don't wait. Join St. Jude in finding cures and saving children like Angiel. Because at this moment, she shouldn't just be dreaming of trips to the beach and the park. She should be there.

Help them live. Visit [stjude.org](http://stjude.org).

