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New Orleans

Data

News Weekly

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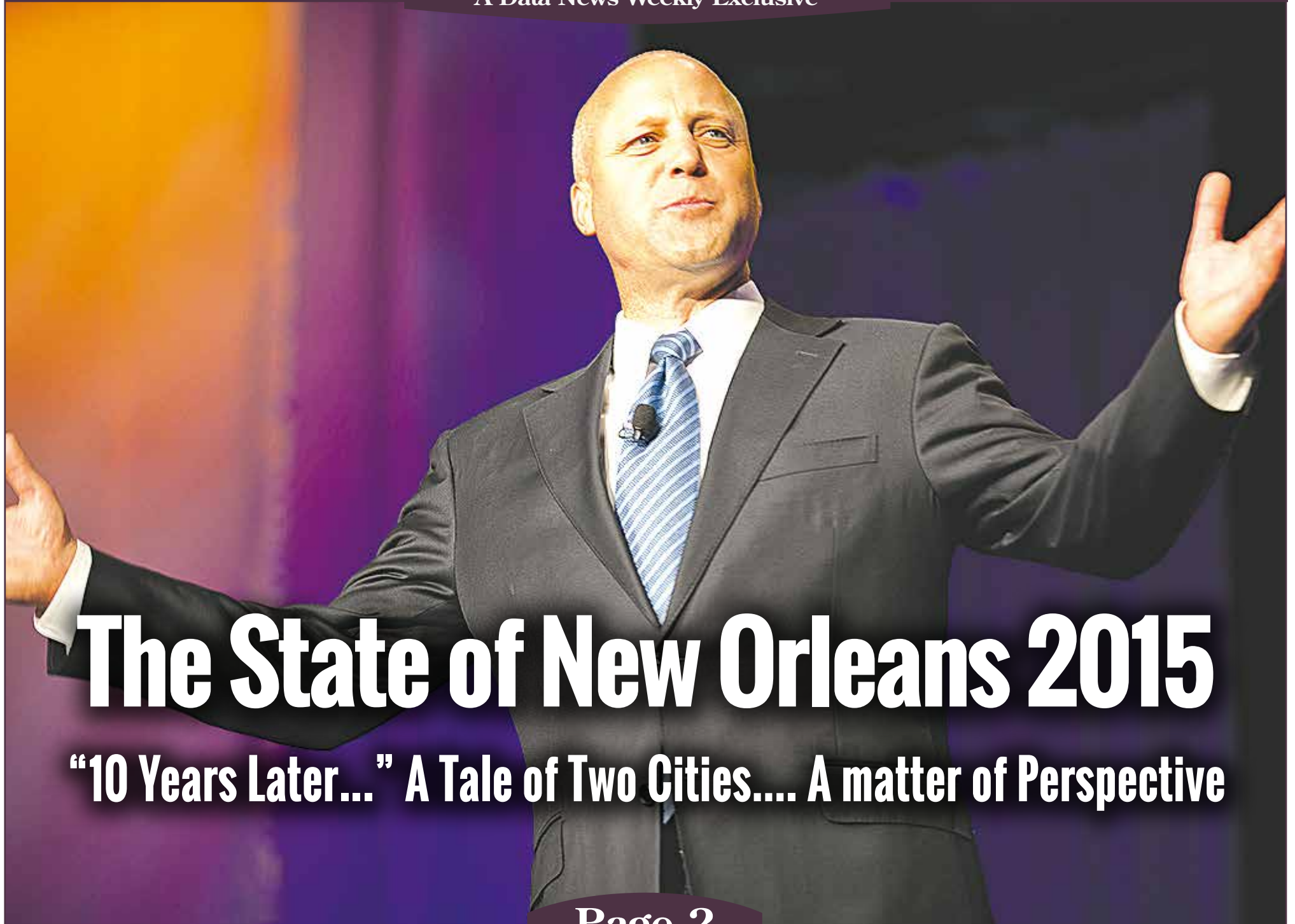
Oyster Festival 2015

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The State of New Orleans 2015

"10 Years Later..." A Tale of Two Cities.... A matter of Perspective

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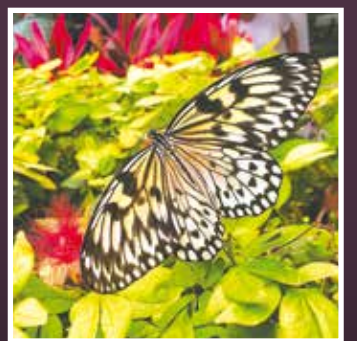
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The State of New Orleans 2015

"10 Years Later..." A Tale of Two Cities.... A matter of Perspective



Mayor Landrieu (above) unveiled K-10 a series of events during his State of the City address, that will commemorate lives lost, to tell the story only as we can, we today, are launching 'Katrina 10' to commemorate lives lost and to honor those who helped us survive."

By Edwin Buggage

Mayor Landrieu Gives State of the City Address

Recently, New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu gave his State of the City Address. In his speech he

spoke of a city that has made great strides but has a long way to go. He spoke of how crime is at a 43 year low. He also mentioned that high school graduation rates are up from pre- Katrina. Regarding blight in New Orleans, he said, that the city has torn down up to 13,000 blighted units, a rate that is faster than any city in America. And he touted New Orleans as one

of the fastest growing cities in America.

As we approach the 10th Anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, Mayor Landrieu unveiled K-10 a series of events that will commemorate lives lost. "To tell the story only as we can, we today, are launching 'Katrina 10' to commemorate lives lost. To honor those who helped us survive. To acknowledge the work that has

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been done and to ensure that we continue our progress into the future," Landrieu said during his address. He continued speaking about the resilience of the people of the city and how the city is getting itself poised for the 300th Anniversary of New Orleans in 2018. His speech was upbeat and optimistic, but as we approach 10 years to the day when many lives changed forever, we must ask ourselves, truly how far have we come and how far must we go to make New Orleans the great city it has the potential to become.



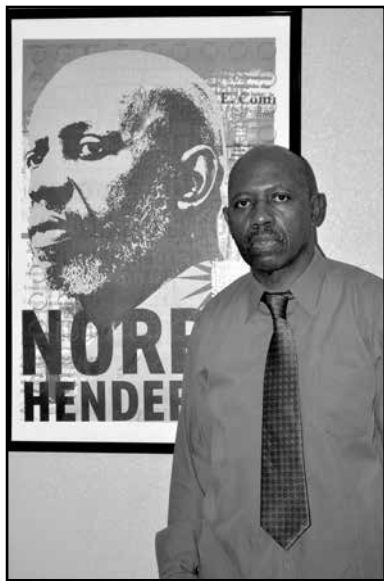
City Council Member Stacy Head

Stacy Head: New Orleans Needs a Government that Works for All Citizens

Councilperson-at-Large Stacy Head has been at the forefront of many reforms in New Orleans and has been on the council since 2006. She has been a voice on the council that has spoken out against the status quo of elitism, nepotism and corruption that in some cases, leaves many of the city's residents without the resources of confidence in government to get things done.

"In general we are going in the right direction. I get disappointed at times that we don't make as much progress, sometimes I feel we're a straight A student that continues to make C's. We have so many possibilities and opportunities but we never seem to do as well as we ought to do. It's the Mayor's job to make the people feel confident in the city and I think he does an amazing job at that nationally. I think we will get great press as we get to 10th year Anniversary, but the realities are that we still have a long way to go for the basic functions that the

taxpayers expect from their government; and we need to be concerned about growing our middle class because that is also major problem in our city."



Norris Henderson

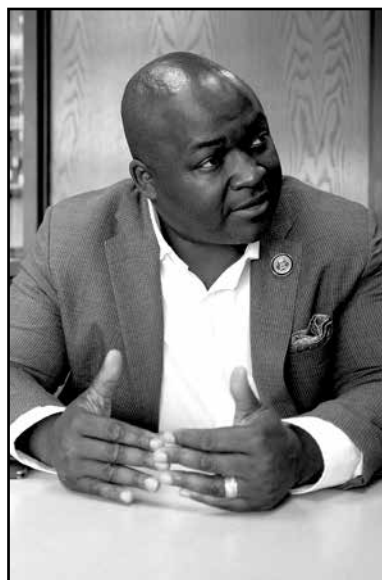
Norris Henderson: The Wide Divide and the Politics of Race and Class

Norris Henderson is known around the globe as a person who was wrongly incarcerated for nearly three decades in Angola State Penitentiary in 2003. He is presently Executive Director of Voice of the Ex-Offender (VOTE). Mr. Henderson has had tremendous success in his work impacting policy and public discourse about police accountability, public defense, and leading efforts to reform Orleans Parish Prison. He is also an advocate for the disenfranchised and sees a very different picture of New Orleans ten years later than Mayor Landrieu painted during his address.

"Unemployment of African American men is at 55 percent in a city where there is an economic boom going on; we're not feeling that because folks I talk to can I help them find a job. With all this prosperity going on it should be spread around" said Henderson who says that there is a disparity in the resources and how they have been prioritized after the storm, and feels that race plays a part in this inequity.

"People don't want to discuss race, if we cannot have this conversation we cannot go anywhere. How race had an impact on the recovery until people are willing to have a conversation. We don't break bread down the same lines we would not have the problems. People have to

stop going along to get along and talk about the things that are going on in our communities. And excuses for not doing anything and the present Mayor's on his second term and what do we have to show for it in our communities. That economic pie has not been sliced in an equitable way."



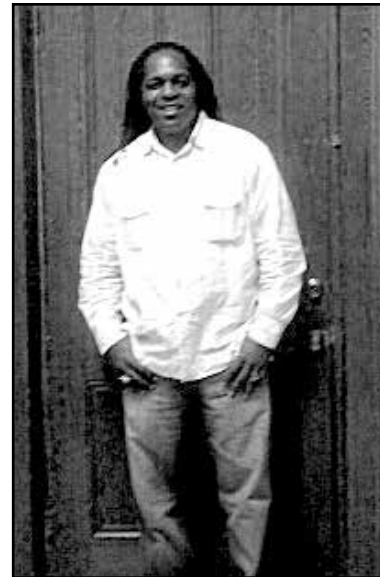
City Council Member Jason Williams

Jason Williams: Healing the Wounds of the Past and having our Eyes on the Future

Jason Williams is a City Councilman-at-Large, he is a new face who pulled a surprisingly landslide victory against longtime Council member Cynthia Hedge Morrell who was endorsed by Mayor Landrieu. Thus far he has been an independent voice who has not been a rubber stamp for the mayor which allows for a system of checks and balances between the branches of government.

"I appreciate and share the idea of New Orleans' resilience. I pray that as we move forward and evolve, that we as a city, can move from resiliency to sustainability. We can no longer be reactive we must be proactive. We must sustain. We will not be defined by what happened ten years ago, we will be defined by the past three hundred years" says Williams.

"And as such we must look far ahead beyond the next five to ten years. We must include lessons from our entire past so that we may build a strong future. It is about being good shepherds of our environment, living with water, mending the racial scars of our past, to ensure a prosperous future to our children and grandchildren."



Robert "Kool Black" Horton

Robert "Kool Black Horton": Stopping the Violence, Fighting the Tide of Gentrification and the Need for a Living Wage

Robert "Kool Black" Horton is the Co-Founder and Director of Black Men United and formerly the New Orleans Campaign and Projects Director of Critical Resistance, founded by Angela Davis in an effort to dismantle the prison industrial complex. Recently he's partnered with Lakiesha Bell, Anita Davis and Shantell Dominique in a movement called "Stop the Violence". Echoing the stark inequality that exists, he also talks about the problems of gentrification and the need for a living wage.

"In the ten years after Katrina the progress has been made for the bankers and the people with the money and historical landmarks and but not the people. The poverty rate is the same, wages are not in line with the cost of living is soaring. We see rents being 1200-1500 dollars a month, yet people are making 8 dollars an hour. We were at 15 dollars when we returned to the city and that was reasonable when trying to match the new cost of living," says Horton.

He also is concerned about what he feels is an education more geared towards statistics and not people. Where schools have become profit centers and a business where the children are secondary.

"Pre-Katrina we had more black teachers and stronger unions. They came from the community so the teachers worked to save lives than rather just saving their jobs. In my opinion these kids are still the same prior to Katrina and I don't see a

great advancements that our kids are making like the children at Benjamin Franklin or Lusher because that should be the goal.

As we enter hurricane season being prepared is very important in the case of a mandatory evacuation. Horton feels with the increased cost of living many people may either not be able to leave or that the little money they have been able to save will not sustain them very long.

"If another Hurricane Katrina was to hit today you would have more people stuck on the highway trying to get the hell out of New Orleans than you had before the storm because their money doesn't stretch as long before the storm. Once upon a time you may have had some money saved, but within six weeks it dwindled down to nothing, but today within two weeks you would be down to zero because it is more expensive to live here and you cannot save any money."



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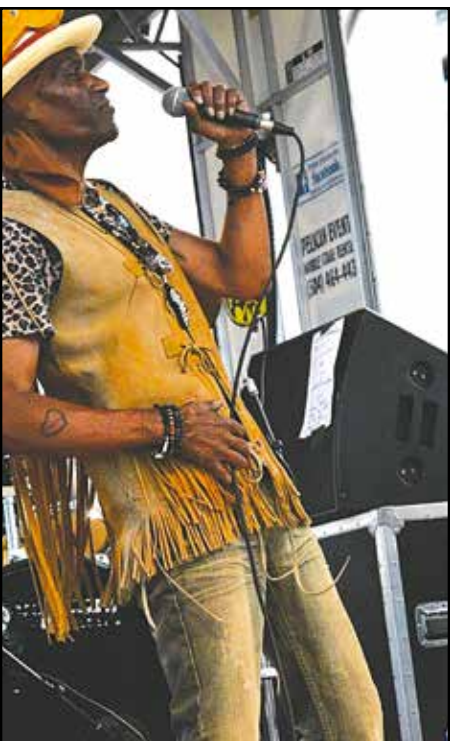
The 2015 Oyster Festival

Photos by Kichea S. Burt

The organizers of the 2015 Oyster Fest held May 30 and 31, put together the best oyster restaurants in the city of New Orleans to deliver some outstanding dishes during

this year's festival. The New Orleans Oyster Festival isn't just an opportunity to indulge in the oysters we all love, but is also a chance to support the industries that makes them

available. The highlight of the Fest was the Oyster Eating Contest who's winner, Sonya "Black Widow" Thomas of Alexandria, Va ate 41 dozen (that is 492) oysters in 8 minutes.



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

Shoot Ya Best Shot!

A Red Hot Jazz Gala to Honor Jazz Musicians

The Preservation Resource Center hosted A Red Hot Jazz Gala to Honor Jazz Musicians

15th Annual Ladies in Red Celebration at the Historic Carver Theater on Friday, May 15th.

The event was a celebration of

the the cultural legacy of jazz musicians – with dancing, cocktails and jazz music. The patron party featured David Torkanowsky's Trio, Big Sam's Funky Nation and the best of New Orleans cuisine and cocktails.

Plaques were awarded to an extensive list of jazz musicians and the institutions that support them to continue the significant impact to preserve New Orleans culture. The honorees were Antoine "Fats" Domino, Deacon John Moore, Do-

reen Ketchens, Tipitina's Foundation, Ellis Marsalis and Joseph Torregano.

Funds raised by Ladies in Red support PRC's African American Heritage Preservation and Heritage Education programs.



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

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Justice is not Blind



Julianne Malveaux
NNPA Columnist

When racist attitudes, either conscious or subconscious, are combined with the discretionary powers that law enforcement officers have, the result is a differential outcome, with African Americans more likely to be the targets of “blind justice.”

Most of our politicians and leaders are exploiting subconscious racism, and pandering to explicit racial fears. Even worse, they are rewarded when they say they are “tough on crime.”

Soledad O’Brien documented some of these attitudes in her most recent “Black In America” series. Included was an interview with a young Black man who was stopped more than 100 times as he stood outside his college. Of course, he’d done nothing wrong, but police officers, “doing their duty,” felt free to harass him.

In a more telling segment, two young men, one Black and one White, staged the “stealing” of a bike to show how members of the public responded to watching the apparent theft. The young men were dressed similarly – T-shirts, casual pants, caps. People walked by as the White guy did everything he could to break the lock on the bike, including using a chain cutter. One even offered to help him take “his” bike, even though he acknowledged it was not his.

Within moments of the Black

man approaching the bike, White people, one or two of whom called 911, surrounded him. As opposed to the benign response the White guy got, the Black guy was simply assumed to be a criminal.

How does this play out on the streets and with officers of the law? Police officers use their discretion selectively. A Black man (Eric Garner) selling loose cigarettes is manhandled, arrested, and dies when he is choked and cannot breathe. Most have seen the video by now, and wonder why Daniel Pantaleo was not charged with any crime, even though he used an illegal chokehold on Garner.

Pantaleo could have told Garner to move on, or he would risk arrest. Instead, Pantaleo and his posse of lawless cowboys chose to kill the man. Would a White man be similarly treated, or did unconscious racism play into the callous way

Eric Garner was treated?

During the late 1990s, Mayor Rudy Giuliani’s “stop and frisk” policies resulted in African American men being stopped more than five times as frequently as Caucasians, even though these frisks led to nothing more than the humiliation of Black men, some simply coming off the subway or walking down the street. Hispanic men were stopped about three times as often as Caucasians. White men were stopped and frisked less frequently than others. Unconscious racism? Discretion? The law sanctions both.

Stop and frisk incidents increased dramatically with no concomitant increase in crime. However, since New York Mayor Bill Blasio took office, the number of stop and frisk incidents has dropped by almost three quarters, again with no increase in crime. It appears that whether stop and frisk

occurrences are aggressive or gentle; the incidence of crime does not increase.

There are many occurrences where police can make discretionary decisions. First, they can decide whom to stop. Then, when they stop they don’t have to arrest or frisk. A simple conversation that explains the reason for the stop will yield a more favorable outcome than wrestling someone to the ground, knee in his or her back, or handcuffing someone without explaining why.

Police resistance to the use of body cameras suggests these officers know that they are out of order in dealing with the public. Once someone is arrested, the police have the right to charge him or her with a minor crime or let them go. Finally, prosecutors can decline to bring charges. All of these deci-

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To Be Equal

The Educational Equity and Excellence Project



Marc Morial
President and CEO
National Urban League

All across the country, people are gathering to observe an annual academic rite of passage: graduation. In a scene that will be played out countless times during this season of celebration, family and friends will dutifully take their seats in auditoriums and open fields around the nation and proudly look on as their loved ones walk across stages to receive their diplomas or degrees and, finally, turn the tassel on their graduation caps.

This tradition holds much more significance than its primary function as the formal recognition of a student’s academic achievement. It is also firmly rooted in our American belief that education, particu-

larly higher education, is the key to greater opportunity and the chance to live the American dream.

The era when a high school diploma was enough to climb the ladder into America’s middle class is long gone. In today’s increasingly high-tech society, it is a college education, or degree, that has become the minimum requirement for that climb up our nation’s social and economic opportunity ladders. Access to college, therefore, cannot remain a privilege afforded to a few when it has become a prerequisite to achieve greater success by the many.

In recognition of this enduring state of academic affairs, the National Urban League is spearheading the “Equity and Excellence Project.” The project—which has six areas of academic focus tightly related to our organization’s mission, including common core standards and improved access to high-quality curricula and effective teachers—has also made college attainment, and most importantly, completion one of its priorities.

“An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest.”
– Benjamin Franklin

The higher education initiative of the “Equity and Excellence” project is currently being run at three National Urban League affiliates: The Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh, The Urban League of Springfield and the Urban League of Lexington-Fayette County. In those communities, communities that mirror so many Black and Brown communities in our country, national and local advocacy and engagement efforts are underway to ensure that more of our young people go to college.

Right now, there is much to celebrate in our country when it comes to academic achievement in African-American and Latino communities. Today, we enjoy the high-

est high school graduation rates in history. More students of color are in college and dropout rates are at historic lows. But more work lies ahead.

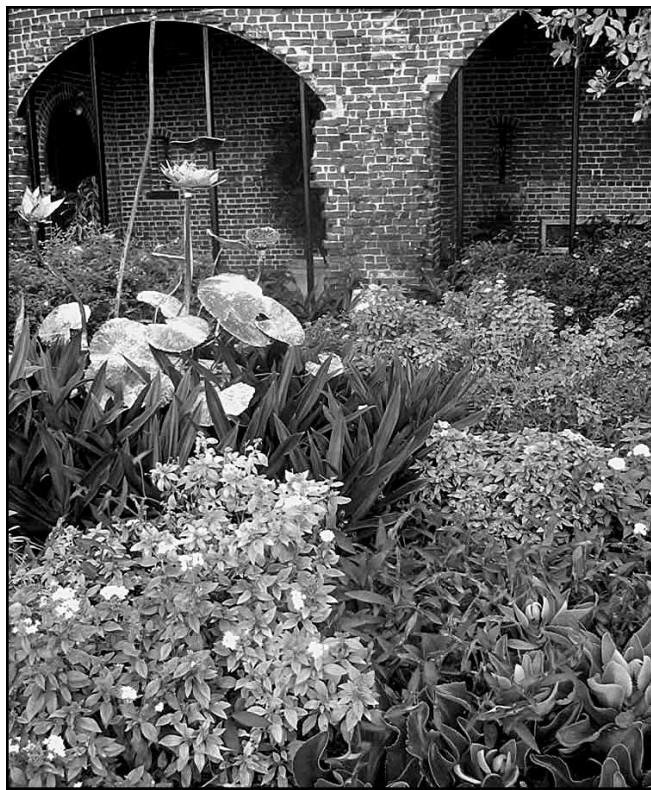
Despite the fact that more Blacks and Hispanics are getting a college education than ever before, there is a gap in postsecondary attainment. In 2013, about 15 percent of Hispanics had a bachelor’s degree or higher, degree attainment was at 20 percent for African Americans and 40 percent for Whites, according to recent Pew Research Center analysis.

When a young man or woman is denied access to opportunity through education, we all lose. That potential graduate loses a

well-known and well-worn path to individual success. College Board research demonstrated that people with bachelor degrees earned over \$21,000 more than high school graduates. People with some college and no postsecondary degree earned 14 percent more than high school graduates who worked full time. When young people are not obtaining postsecondary degrees, our nation suffers from the loss of their talent, their increased tax revenues, their civic engagement and more.

As was often quoted by President John F. Kennedy, “a rising tide lifts all boats.” We need to rethink our funding of grants, we need to take a serious look at our student loan system, we—as a nation—need to confront head on all the obstacles to equity in access to quality postsecondary education. The return on our investment of the time, effort and money necessary to increase college attainment and completion, would be a competitive American workforce, a stronger economy and thriving communities.

What is Enough?



By LMG Calla Victoria

How much Soil is Enough?

We hear so many different suggestions when it comes to planting, but what really is the bottom line? We are told that we should increase the pot size as our plant grows, however I have a friend who has a large Dieffenbachia seguine which has grown to over seven feet in height. It is so tall he has to stake it and tie it to keep it upright. One would assume this plant is in a very large pot; but oh contraire it is in

a 12 inch diameter, 6 inches deep terracotta pot that is only half filled with soil, yet this is the largest dieffenbachia that I have ever seen.

While watching Garden Smart, one of my favorite gardening shows, the host visited the amazing Key West Tropical Forest and Botanical Garden. This garden is thick with lush healthy foliage as you can see from the images. Everything is flourishing, tall trees, dense shrubs, etc. I was in shock when the horticulturist there stated that everything was growing in only 6 inches of soil because the entire is-

land sits on coral rock. So in spite of what we have heard, read, or been told, only six inches of soil seems to be more than enough soil for plants to flourish.

How much care do plants require?

We try to create perfect environments for our plant material hoping that they will flourish and do well. Not remembering that before there were any of us, unless you were back in the garden with Adam and Eve, plants flourished happily on their own. Take a long road trip and

you will notice wild flowing plants, and lush tall trees lining every highway; and no one is tending to them but the heavens. So stop coddling your plants, give them what they need according to the care tag instructions, add some time released fertilizer, mulch, make sure they get a good weekly drink of water, and let them be.

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

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

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sions can be minimized or maximized, based on discretion.

Justice is not blind when police officers use discretion to stop one segment of the population to harshly mistreat and let the other population slide. If police officers wonder why there is antipathy and distrust toward them in the African American community, somebody needs to tell them that their use of discretion suggests that justice is hardly blind.

Julianne Malveaux is author and economist. She can be reached at www.juliannemalveaux.com.

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Compensation is competitive and great story ideas will be appreciated.

If you are interested, please email your resume and 3 writing samples to: terrybjones@bellsouth.net and datanewseditor@bellsouth.net.

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