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# Confederate Monuments and a Lesson in History

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# Confederate Monuments and a Lesson in History

*Mayor Landrieu Calls for Removal of Confederate Monuments How Will this Reshape Telling the Story of the History of New Orleans*



With the recent debate surrounding the Confederate Flag in South Carolina, New Orleans is now at the center of a debate about what to do with four public monuments attached to the Confederacy. Above, groups gather to protest the statue erected in Lee Circle, memorial to Confederate General Robert E. Lee.

By Edwin Buggage

### History of a City: A Matter of Perspective

As New Orleans gets ready to celebrate its 300th Anniversary in 2018, where it will look back on its storied and colorful history; questions have arisen about what aspects of the City should we observe, recognize and celebrate. When you look back at nearly three centuries you see a City that's dealt with the challenges of rebuilding a City after fire, war, and disasters, both natural and man-made. It is a City that many different

people has come through leaving their mark; becoming one of the many ingredients in the gumbo that is called New Orleans.

Today in an age that we see history being revisited and revised to reflect a larger reality and hearing the voices and perspectives of those who were once voice-

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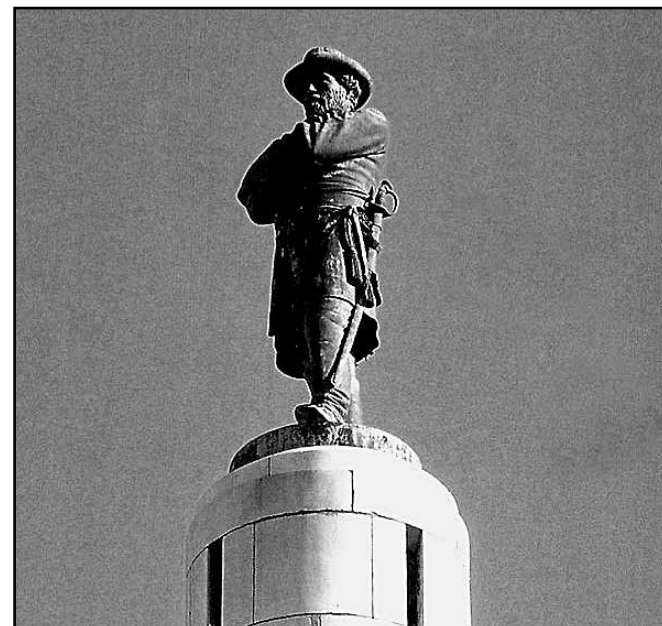
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L to r : Pierre Gustave Toutant-Beauregard was a Southern military officer, politician, inventor, writer, civil servant, and the first prominent general of the Confederate States Army during the American Civil War. Jefferson Finis Davis was an American politician who was the President of the Confederate States of America during the American Civil War. General Robert E. Lee was an American soldier best known for commanding the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia in the American Civil War from 1862 until his surrender in 1865.

less a controversy has arisen from those who feel these voices are not valid and is an example of political correctness gone too far. With the recent debate surrounding the Confederate Flag in South Carolina, New Orleans is now at the center of a debate about what to do with four public monuments attached to the confederacy. Should they be removed and what will that mean moving forward?

### Landrieu Proposes Removing City Monuments that Celebrates Confederates, but Does Removing a Monument Erase a History of Oppression and Exclusion?

Recently, New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu has called for the removal of four of the City's most well-known monuments that's connected to the Confederacy: Statues of Confederate Generals Robert E. Lee and P.G.T. Beauregard; a statue of Jefferson Davis, the President of the Confederacy; and an obelisk commemorating the Battle of Liberty Place, a bloody confrontation instigated by ex-Confederates looking to overthrow the State's Reconstruction government; a battle that led to the end of Federal Reconstruction in New Orleans and the beginning of Jim Crow Laws that made racial segregation the law of the land.

The latter re-emerged as a symbol of controversy in 1993 when a rededication ceremony led by former Ku Klux Klan Leader, David Duke, prompted a counter protest by local Civil Rights Icon and Civic Leader Rev. Avery Alexander, who is well known for attempting to integrate the cafeteria at City Hall in the

1960's at which time he was arrested and dragged by his heels down a flight of stairs. In the 1993 incident he was arrested and was placed in a chokehold by members of the NOPD. Today he stands as a hero of widening the lanes of democracy in New Orleans with an expressway, school, Charity Hospital was renamed and a statue was erected in his honor of his contribution to the history of New Orleans.

In regards to the issue of Confederacy and it's symbols there are advocates on both sides of this issue who have strong opinions, but the question we must ask ourselves is how do we write our history and who determines what is important? And does the removing of monuments erase the memories or redress things in a way that leads to any resolutions? Ultimately, the larger question as it relates to history is how do you paint a complete picture of times past with everyone at the table determining how it will be presented?

In the age of expanded and instant access to information it is vital that educating people is a valuable tool in assessing and redressing a past to move towards a better future. So as opposed to a caricaturing of the Confederates and those who served as just a bunch of racist and the Union Army and northerners as believing in social equality for Blacks is both shortsighted and historically inaccurate; history is not simply as Black and White as that and we must mature as a nation and accept this fact.

### A Brief History of Confederate New Orleans during Reconstruction

### and the Rise of White Supremacy

To put this story in context one must understand what was going on at the time. Below is an excerpt from Chris Cook's Blog, "Lagniappe and Other Perspectives," also while reading you may see historical parallels.

The "Battle" of Liberty Place was essentially a coup in which the White League of New Orleans deposed the State's Republican Governor by force. The 1872 election cycle, like many during the period, was one fraught with accounts and allegations of voter fraud and intimidation at the polls. In the gubernatorial contest, both the Republicans and Democrats declared their side the victor (though it is hard to imagine a legitimate Democratic victory at a time when a significant percentage of the Black vote was needed to win office), creating a stalemate that drug on for two years. In rural Louisiana, branches of the White League perpetrated the Colfax and Coushatta Massacres to ensure the recognition of Democratic Candidate John McEnery. Rather than pursuing such outright violence, assassination, and mayhem to claim the election, the White League in New Orleans organized an impromptu army on the morning of September 14, 1874 to seize the government of Louisiana itself. The battle was reminiscent of the Civil War, with units of the White League engaging a defensive, racially integrated State Militia and Metropolitan Police Force. Hours into the fighting, the White League was able to flank their opponents and seize the Cabildo (still the seat of government at the time) and Arsenal. The Republican Governor Elect,

William Pitt Kellogg, and General James Longstreet, Commander of the militia and police force in the battle, took refuge in the federal customhouse, a building that the White League was rightfully wary of taking by force. Three days later, federal troops arrived in New Orleans and the White League capitulated. As with the Lost Cause movement's later reinterpretation of General Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox, the White League found a way to interpret their surrender to federal forces as a moral victory.

The 1880s and 1890s were a period of celebration for Confederate heroes and ideals, as their 1865 defeat became a distant memory after the end of Federal Reconstruction. The cultural and political movement referred to as the Lost Cause of the Confederacy redefined the Civil War experience, and in doing so erased from the public consciousness the defeat of the Confederacy and emphasized victory over Black politicians and the federal imposition of civil rights protections. In 1889, the United Confederate Veterans Organization was founded in New Orleans, growing steadily into a large, national organization by the turn of the Twentieth Century and becoming a strong force for redefining the South's relationship with the Civil War. Monuments were also constructed on a grand scale. Tivoli Circle became Lee Circle; Jefferson Davis (who was temporarily interred in Metairie Cemetery after his death in New Orleans) and P.G.T. Beauregard were commemorated with statues as well. But the 1891 monument to Liberty Place is different: it does not honor a gallant warrior or statesman who served

a lost cause, instead it commemorates a victory that was seen by many White New Orleanians as the de facto, if not official, end of Reconstruction. To those on the losing side of the Democratic takeover of government after Reconstruction, the Black citizens who saw their civil rights disappear in successive redrafts of the state constitution; the monument memorializes the beginning of Jim Crow.

### Confederacy, Racism, History, Healing and Accepting Change

New Orleans is a City filled with reminders of the Confederacy one can just look at the Confederate Memorial Hall that opened its doors in New Orleans on January 8, 1891, and since that time has been commemorating the military history and heritage of the South. The museum is the oldest in Louisiana and houses one of the largest collections of Confederate memorabilia in the United States.

Also of note when one think of history and historical figures one must not trap them in a static mode of judging them and their views for these things are dynamic and evolutionary in nature and shaped by many forces both external and internal. So when we look, view them through the lens of history we see a more complete picture of their evolution and their contributions to history.

One can just look at George Wallace, the former Governor of Alabama who became a symbol of segregation in the south during the Civil Rights Movement who

Cover Story, Continued on page 10.



# 7/25: New Orleans Peace Keepers Launched Peace Campaign

*RushCard Initiative Supports Six Nonprofit Community Organizations Nationally*

The Peace Keepers launched their "Peacekeepers Ground Zero for Peace Program" in New Orleans on Saturday, July 25 at the Saint Roch Community Playground, 1800 St. Roch Avenue. The program featured remarks from members of the Peace Keepers and concluded with hundreds of community members walking into the designated "ground zero" neighborhood and engaging young people to create a more peaceful community. Their peacekeeping work will continue throughout the summer. The event is part of RushCard's "Keep the Peace" initiative, an annual program that supports nonprofit, community-based organizations and coalitions across the country that have developed unique and successful models for reducing violence in their neighborhoods, especially among young people. Six "Keep the Peace" grant recipients have been chosen this year in the cities of New Orleans, Chicago, Baltimore, Cincinnati, Los Angeles and New York. Each organization will receive \$25,000 to help support and expand peacekeeping efforts and create opportunities to empower young people in their communities. "Keep the Peace" is a program under Rise to Thrive, RushCard's community outreach initiative.



Pictured Above is Russell Simmons, founder of the Rush Card sponsor of the New Orleans Peace Keepers Peace Program. The event is part of RushCard's "Keep the Peace" initiative, an annual program that supports nonprofit, community-based organizations and coalitions across the country.

# Big Dreams



Miami's Mayor Carlos Jimenez & Brandon Okpalobi, C.E.O. of Dibia Athletic Development and Dibia DREAM

New Orleans native and St. Augustine alumnus, Brandon Okpalobi, was recently honored by the City of Miami for his community outreach through his non-profit organization Dibia D.R.E.A.M. (Development through Recreational Education for Athletic Minds). The organization hosts sports camps throughout the country, and in Bermuda. Okpalobi brings his Essence of Sports Camp to New Orleans annually to coincide with the Essence Festival. His successful 2015 Essence of Sports Camp hosted over 80 kids exposing young minds to athletic prowess, life skills, science

and engineering via a partnership STEM NOLA.

Brandon Okpalobi was awarded the Youth Sports Ambassador Award by Miami's Mayor Jimenez, for leadership and service to children in the community. This is an amazing accomplishment for Okpalobi whose two organizations are still in their infancy. The parent company Dibia Athletic Development is only four years old, while Dibia D.R.E.A.M. is not even one-year old yet. Expect greater things from Mr. Brandon Okpalobi who's company motto is "Dream Big and Conquer!"

## Data News Weekly is Hiring

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

### 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](http://ladatanews.com) is the most read Black website in the region.

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- Recruit talent

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# Legacy of 'First Lady of the Black Press' Still Relevant Today



"First Lady" of the Black Press Ethel Payne

By Jazelle Hunt  
NNPA National  
Correspondent

WASHINGTON (NNPA) — When James McGrath Morris set out to write his latest book, he didn't know how timely it would be. When *Eye on the Struggle: Ethel Payne, The First Lady of the Black Press* hit shelves, *Essence* magazine had just released its Black Lives Matter issue. The Justice Department had closed its investigation into Trayvon Martin's murder, with no charges. Mainstream media was scrambling to report on police violence and systemic racial ills, and Black Americans took much of this coverage to task for its racist, shallow, or negligent portrayals.

"We get these events filtered through the mainstream media. The mainstream media is still very White. I don't mean they don't hire people of color...it's a perspective issue. The fact the media had a debate over the use of the word 'terrorist' [for Dylann Roof] in South Carolina is an indication," said Morris.

"So what I found is that Ethel Payne's story, her perspective, her form of journalism 50 years ago, still has relevance today. Because while we may have made leaps in terms of segregation...the domi-

nant filter today remains a White-controlled media."

Ethel Payne was poking holes in that filter at a time when the White majority fought against the tide of sustained agitation to secure civil and human rights for all. At the *Chicago Defender*, Payne was the eyes and ears of the Civil Rights Movement, reporting from its front lines in the Deep South, press conferences at the White House, and iconic rulings at the Supreme Court. In 1953, she became the third Black person to join the White House Press Corps, and was known for persistently prodding President Dwight D. Eisenhower on Jim Crow laws and desegregation efforts.

In the '50s and '60s, she jetted around the globe for international stories such as Black soldiers in Vietnam and the Nigerian Civil War, becoming the first Black woman to be a fulltime foreign correspondent. Yet, she always returned for on-the-ground coverage of moments that would become history, such the start of the Montgomery bus boycott and the desegregation of Little Rock, Ark.'s Central High School.

In 1972, Payne joined CBS and became the first Black woman commentator at a major network. In 2002, she was memorialized on a postage stamp.

With 40 years of tireless journalism and a legacy honed at a Black-owned newspaper, Payne earned her reputation as the "First Lady of the Black Press."

"When *The New York Times* or *The Washington Post* would report on the passage of the Civil Rights Act of '64 or the Voting Rights Act of '65, the tone of the articles was that these were munificent gifts being given to a disenfranchised people," Morris said.

"Whereas, if you opened up the *Afro American* or the *Pittsburgh Courier* or *Chicago Defender*, what you were seeing was coverage of the fact that these were victories, hard-won victories by people who laid their lives on the line. Nothing was being given. In fact, [Payne's] coverage often highlighted the inadequacies of these pieces of legislation."

In the early '70s, Ernest Green, a member of the Little Rock Nine, made a quip to Payne about what desegregation would do to such coverage.

"He said to her that the successes she and others made with the Civil Rights Movement were going to put the Black Press out of business. Obviously, that was too strong of a determination, because there's still a viable Black press, but his bigger point was right in that



Ethel Payne with President Lyndon B. Johnson



President Richard M. Nixon and Ethel Payne

the White media was going to raid the Black press for the best reporters, offer them jobs at much higher pay. And if you're raising a family, what are you going to do?" Morris recounted.

"Many of the best reporters were lured away. But also, importantly, the economic basis of the Black press was undercut. Because when the White press refused to cover Black communities — high school tournaments, weddings, graduations, obituaries — there was an economic reason for [Black papers]."

Further, another side effect of integration and the Civil Rights Movement is that subsequent generations do not get a thorough and true education on Black history, or how the Movement happened. Payne said as much at a speaking engagement at her childhood church, [Greater] St. John A.M.E. Church.

"She told her audience that, ours was a generation who laid their lives on the line to send our kids to college, but in doing so forgot to

tell them our story. I like to expand that...we tend to teach the Civil Rights Movement focused on its leadership," he said.

"Ethel Payne was part of the lesser-known group, she's in the second, third tier of the Civil Rights Movement. I see younger people...waiting for somebody else to come and lead them. But these movements come from everyday people."

Morris, a former journalist who also taught high school history for a decade, has been writing biographies and narrative nonfiction for many years. In searching for a new subject, he stumbled upon Payne's name, which was unknown to him at the time. With a little more research, he was startled to find that few historians had taken a deep look at her contributions to journalism and the Civil Rights Movement.

"For me, [this book] has been the greatest experience of my life. It's been really an honor, for me as

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# Shoot Ya Best Shot!

## Happy Birthday to Elliott Gray!

Photos by Terry B. Jones

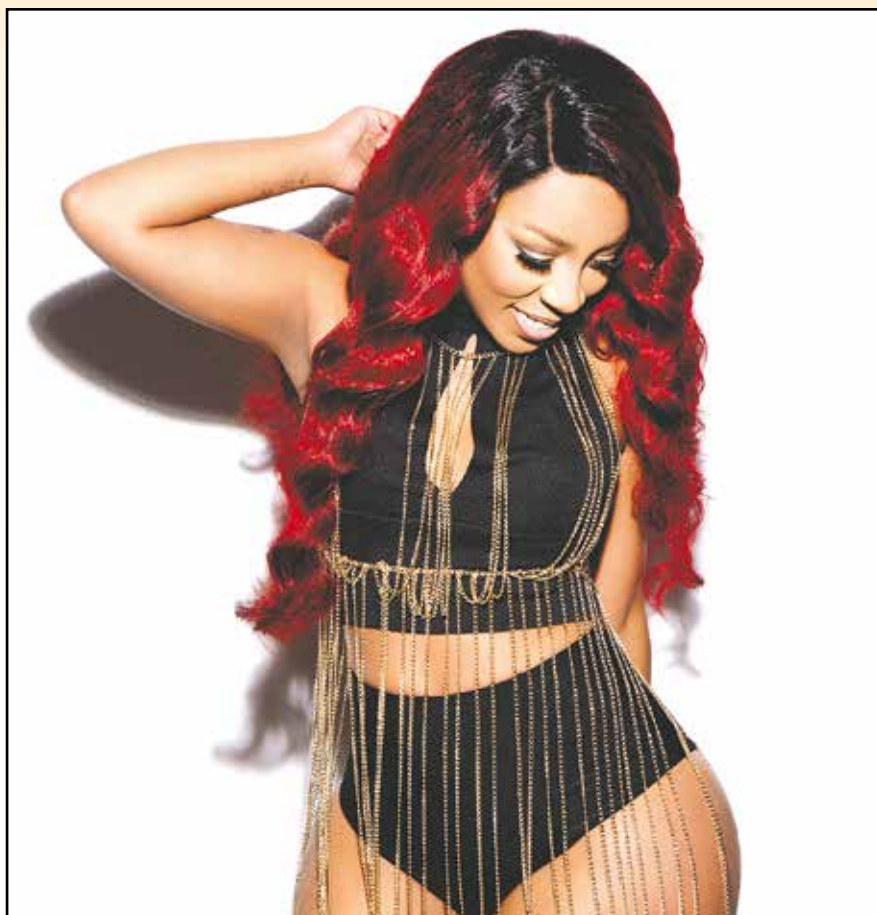
Elliott Gray celebrated his 64th birthday with his girlfriend Vickie Williams and lots of friends and family. It was held at his home in New Orleans East on Saturday, July 18th. This is an annual event. It was a huge success with a large crowd in attendance and Data was also there!!!



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



# Up Close with K. Michelle



Singer and reality TV star K. Michelle

**By Melanie Mainor**  
Data News Weekly Contributor

BET and Jack Daniel's Tennessee Honey teamed up to bring Honey Jam to the Big Easy and Data News Weekly had the chance to sit down with the concert's headliner, R&B singer and reality TV star K. Michelle.

The Memphis singer was attending a meet and greet with BET's Honey Jam contest winners and was gracious

enough to give us the scoop before getting ready for her concert that evening at the House of Blues. K made it a point to express her love for her New Orleans fan-base, recalling that all of her Nola shows are completely sold out. When asked what was it she loved about performing in New Orleans, she answered "the fans" without hesitation.

For K. Michelle, it's the realness of the fans here that she likes the most stating that her New Orleans fans

"make you understand why you do this [job], because it really gets to be a lot." It's no wonder K can't get enough of Nola, mentioning that with the musical culture, loving vibes, and genuine people, it was the city that she was most excited about performing in besides her hometown of Memphis, TN.

In her Reality TV life, K. Michelle is known as a big voice in a petite package who isn't afraid to speak up and keep it real. She has starred in hit Reality TV series Love and Hip Hop Atlanta and later was given her own show on VH1, K. Michelle: My Life.

The reality TV star and R&B artist even ventured out and took on a scripted roll in a musical based on her album and directed by ex-boyfriend Idris Elba. In addition to starring and executive producing her own reality TV show, K. Michelle let us in on a secret that she has another TV project coming up that she's also executive producing called Player's Court. In this upcoming reality TV series, K. Michelle will team up with viewers who are looking for help hunting down and busting their cheating partners in the act. She also gave us the scoop about an hour-long scripted "dramadey" in the works with Kevin Hart and Jesse Collins.

Even with all of her TV projects underway, K is still focusing on her music and getting ready for her upcoming tour with artist Azealia Banks. The tour will take off September 15th and hit 20 cities across the U.S. Similar to K. Michelle, Azealia Banks is an artist known for being outspoken and often considered controversial and K seemed very excited about going on

tour with Ms. Banks and being with another female artist who speaks up about music and feminism, and isn't afraid to have an unpopular opinion.

It wouldn't be jumping the gun to expect a collaboration between these two artists in the future, as they'll be spending a lot of time on the road together while K. Michelle is "currently working on getting her third album underway", she told Data. It's also possible that fans of K. Michelle's TV musical "Rebellious Soul", will be getting a part two, as K shared with Data that she was considering putting another musical in the works.

Interestingly enough, K. Michelle has thrown her hat into the ring as a business owner as well, as she expected to open a new bar and lounge in Atlanta in the next three months. Puff Bar and Lounge will be the new hottest venue on Edgewood, right next to Harold's Chicken. According to K, she designed the bar to resemble her perfect world and her idea of a "girlcave". You can expect this new Atlanta nightlife hotspot to feature a Motown feel, accompanied by K. Michelle's signature Jack Daniel's Honey cocktails and menu items cooked with the sweet and succulent whiskey as a part of her sponsorship with the company. Needless to say, this Memphis sweetheart has a lot of projects in the works, but even with such a hectic schedule carves out time to take it easy in the Big Easy.

Before wrapping up, K mentioned how much she was looking forward to the intimate setting at the House of Blues and getting some quality time with some of her favorite fans.

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## To Be Equal

## The 2015 National Urban League Conference



**Marc Morial**  
President and CEO  
National Urban League

"You can holler, protest, march, picket and demonstrate, but somebody must be able to sit in on the strategy conferences and plot a course. There must be strategies."

– Whitney M. Young, National Urban League President, 1961-1971

America faces tremendous challenges today and tomorrow. As a nation, we are experiencing what may be the most intense focus in decades on economic inequality, educational equity, racial justice – and injustice.

In a moment of perhaps the greatest social and economic upheaval in a generation, thousands of people from all walks of life and manner of profession will convene in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. to do more than recite our country's familiar litany of challenges; more than march and raise our voices in rightful and outraged unison; and more than debate within the narrow confines of our individual communities. For four power-packed days, we will discuss and debate the state of our cities. We will become the architects of new solutions to old, entrenched problems and well thought out strategies to save our embattled cities.

This year's National Urban League Conference theme, "Save Our Cities: Education, Jobs + Justice," is a unique opportunity for mission-oriented conversation and action on policies and issues affecting African Americans and urban

communities. As in years past, our nation's most influential community leaders, top policy makers, political and business leaders, and so many more, will join in our continuing efforts to make a real difference for our cities.

Following a long-standing tradition of major-party presidential candidates addressing the conference, the National Urban League counts several 2016 presidential hopefuls – Republicans and Democrats alike – as invited guests. The candidates, including former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, former Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley and retired neurosurgeon Dr. Ben Carson, will share their respective visions for a more equitable and inclusive America in the candidates' session, "Off to the Races: The 2016 Presidential Candidates' Plenary."

It is vital that those contending

for the highest office in the land not only listen to our concerns, but be a part of its discussion and offer up their unique strategies and solutions for consideration to the very people who may one day move them into that coveted White House at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

The chance to engage in thoughtful dialogue and interact with national leaders and luminaries is one of many unique opportunities being offered at the conference. The National Urban League has also developed quality programs, events and forums to inform and inspire attendees and motivate them to continue empowering themselves, and by extension, their communities and the nation.

The Expo Hall will feature hundreds of exhibitors; a career and networking fair; a Health Zone where attendees can enjoy workshops and get free health screenings for the entire family; an Empowerment

Stage with celebrity-filled sessions and local entertainment; a college fair with colleges, universities, and scholarship organizations; and a marketplace of local small businesses.

In a nod to these modern times and this generation's methods of mobilizing around issues of social justice in the digital era, the National Urban League, in partnership with Digital Grass, is hosting "Tech-Connect: Hack-A-Thon for Social Justice," presented by Comcast NBCUniversal. The two-day hack-athon is a call to action for tech-savvy innovators to design original applications to alleviate the most pressing social issues of our day, particularly in the areas of education, jobs and justice.

There are many reasons to register and become a part of this sin-

**Commentary,**  
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## For Centuries, Black Lives Did Not Matter



**Julianne Malveaux**  
NNPA Columnist

It ought to be unnecessary for an activist movement to hinge on the principle of the equivalency of life. In the worlds of Democratic presidential candidates (don't get me started on the Republicans), there is a compelling need to point out that Black Lives Matter and White lives matter. The problem with stating the obvious is that White lives have always mattered, and institutional racism has structured a lesser value for Black lives.

Asserting that Black Lives Matter is to rebut the inherent supposition that Black lives do not matter. Black lives have been devalued since the development of our Constitution when it counted enslaved people as three-fifths of a person. To proclaim that Black Lives Matter is to rebut this constitutional

flaw. We still live with the legacy of enslavement, when Black folks were other people's property. Black folks aren't property now (unless they are the much-exploited convict laborers), but unequal treatment is not just historical – it still happens. That's why the Black Lives Matter movement is so important.

The Black Lives Matter Movement was a constructive outgrowth of the Trayvon Martin murder, furthered by the protests that happened in the wake of a Missouri grand jury's failure to bring charges against Darren Wilson, the murderer of 18-year-old Michael Brown. As multiracial crowds proclaimed, "Black Lives Matter," it seemed that, across the board, people were acknowledging the existence of institutional racism. Too bad Democratic presidential contenders can't do the same.

Martin O'Malley and Bernie Sanders, the two candidates whose entries into the race may have pushed Hillary Clinton to the left, faced protestors at the progressive Netroots Nation conference earlier this month. Instead of acknowledging the legitimacy of the Black Lives Matter movement, both candidates were prickly. Sanders threatened to

leave the stage because the protester's chants drowned him out. Candidate Hillary Clinton was not present, and some objected to that, but she either missed the opportunity to engage, or was spared embarrassment if she emulated O'Malley and Sanders stance.

Both O'Malley and Sanders have scrambled to clean up their acts, backtracking and owning the "mistakes" they've made in dealing with the young activists that have taken the lead in protesting police brutality and asserting the importance of Black lives. To clean up their acts, all of the candidates need to listen to leaders of the Black Lives Matter Movement instead of talking at people the way politicians are most likely to do.

If they listen they might hear the frustration that young folks feel when the police stop them for simply walking while Black. They might hear the despair some will share when, even while fully prepared, they find few opportunities for employment, and too many doors slammed in their faces. They might understand that Blacks have a different reality than Whites do, and it shows up in terms of economic, educational, and social indi-

cators.

In the wake of Michael Brown's massacre, Ferguson elected two new Black members for the city council. Now, Andre Anderson, an African American man from Glendale, Arizona, has been appointed interim police chief. Ferguson is under pressure to do better. What about the rest of our country?

If Michael Brown's killing was the impetus for Ferguson voters to go to the polls, that's a good thing, though it shouldn't take that. If the Black Lives Matter Movement does the same thing nationally, the Democratic nominee has a better chance of winning in November 2016. If the Black Lives Matter movement is not treated respectfully, it is likely that many voters will stay home. Young voters rushed to the polls in 2008, riveted by candidate Obama's optimistic "Yes we can" mantra. Will they come out for White Democrats, no matter how progressive, who don't respect their movements and their ideas?

The video showing the brutality involved in the vicious arrest of Sandra Bland, the Prairie View A&M University alumnae who died in jail earlier this month, makes it clear that the Black Lives Matter

movement is much needed. Their pressure to stop police brutality has pushed police departments to use video cameras, and made it possible for us to see the repugnant behavior of State Trooper Brian T. Encinia, who roughed up Sandra Bland because she would not put out her cigarette after being pulled over or failure to signal a lane change.

Don't tell me that White lives matter. That's not new information. Whose faces are on our money? Whose statues grace legislative buildings? Who leads the overwhelming majority of Fortune 500 companies? Who dominates our legislative bodies? Our African American president, supposedly the most powerful person in the world, is ill treated by Congress, often for racial reasons. We live in a racist and patriarchal society where the value of Black life is too-often diminished. That's why, Martin O'Malley, there is a special need to assert that Black Lives Matter. Those who would be president ought to embrace that concept, instead of denying it.

Julianne Malveaux is author and economist based in Washington, DC. She can be reached at [www.juliannealveaux.com](http://www.juliannealveaux.com)



# Untested Faith is Untrusted Faith



**James Washington**  
Guest Columnist

The old saying is when the going gets tough, the tough get going. The operative word here is tough. My question for you is what happens when you insert the dynamics of faith into any given situation? The reason for the question is that I must have been taking notes in church one Sunday and I came across them in my bible recently. I wrote 'faith that is not tested is faith

that cannot be trusted.' It's written in Deuteronomy 8 and I don't remember what point the minister was trying to make at that time, but my notes froze me and wouldn't let me continue. I have since been moved to think this is not only a spiritual lesson but also one of life's more poignant ones. I remember going to the doctor after receiving one of many treatments for prostate cancer and the attending physician was somewhat surprised that not only was my wife still with me, but we were and continue to be fabulously happy. So from my point of view, I guess you could say at many levels that test has given me a testimony about my relationship with my wife. Perhaps God has provided you with a test or two to see if you understand that testimony is a con-

sequence of faith fortification and not a collapse of your belief that God has it handled.

In Deuteronomy, Moses is trying to tell otherwise ignorant Israel that even though this group was not around for his miracles and wonders, God is insistent that you still trust Him. Your faith will determine your actions and your actions will tell God if you really believe He has your back. Moses cautions not to be seduced into thinking that what you have and what you achieve is because of your own efforts. Not true! "You may say to yourself 'My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.' But remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so

confirms His covenant, which He swore to your forefathers, as it is today." Deuteronomy 8: 17-18.

Maybe we should all review that covenant thing. That's what I'm talking about here. God expects when the going gets tough, our expectancy should be that God will provide. He will. And even if He doesn't, He can. That test, whatever you're going through, becomes a testimony to God's glory. He demands it of us just as He demanded it of the Israelites. Plus, we got a new covenant. Jesus sealed the breach and the war is won. All we got to do is fight the good fight, endure the battles of life from the perspective Moses wanted Israel to take with it into the Promised Land. "If you ever forget the Lord your God and

follow other gods and worship and bow down to them, I testify against you today that you will surely be destroyed." Deuteronomy 8:19.

Faith that is not tested cannot be trusted. Yeah. I said it. Can God trust you? That's a question for you and God. So when the going gets tough for you, please do not rely on your belief that you can figure it all out. If the truth be told, you probably got yourself into that mess. At least allow God to get you out of it. But first you have to know and believe He can. Then you can ask Him for anything and expect He will provide it for you.

**May God bless and  
keep you always,**

James, jaws@dallasweekly.com

Special, Continued from page 3.



an author, to do a book that matters," Morris said. "I've had the privilege of learning that race really matters, but I didn't know it because I was able to stay removed from it. That, to my mind, is Ethel Payne's gift to me."

Payne's personal papers and journals are housed in Washington, D.C. with the Library of Congress' Manuscript Division and the Moorland-Spingarn Research Center at Howard University, and in New York at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture.

Eye on the Struggle: Ethel Payne, The First Lady of the Black Press is available at major book retailers. Signed copies can be purchased via [www.jamesmcgrathmorris.com/eyeonstruggle.html](http://www.jamesmcgrathmorris.com/eyeonstruggle.html).

"She went as a reporter to the front lines of the Civil Rights Movement...to report back to African Americans...to activate them," Morris said. "The more people learn about Ethel Payne, I think they too will feel a sense of power."

Commentary,  
Continued from  
page 8.

gular, unprecedented opportunity. Besides the unmatched professional and civic engagement, business development and networking opportunities, this conference is stronger, more inclusive and more reflective of the diversity of thought around the areas of economic and social justice as the number of voices and opinions added to the discussion grows. The benefit of your presence is another noteworthy addition to this conference that only you can decide to include in what promises to be an enriching and inspiring experience.

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Marc H. Morial, former mayor of New Orleans, is president and CEO of the National Urban League.



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# Minority Banks Shut Out of New Tax Credit Awards

By Shantella Y. Sherman

Members of the National Bankers Association, including heads of several Black-owned banking institutions, recently alleged charges of racial discrimination against the Department of Treasury's Community Development Financial Institutions Fund (CDFI Fund). The banks were overlooked for up to \$3.5 billion in allocations in New Markets Tax Credits (NMTC) provided by the fund.

The NMTC program, designed to spur economic development in distressed communities across the U.S., recently awarded 76 community development institutions, but did not do the same for any of the nation's minority banks, despite their reputations of deploying capital in the most underserved com-

munities in the U.S.

"The absence of a single minority bank raises much concern," said Michael Grant, president of the National Bankers Association stated in a press release on July 10. "In 2009, the General Accounting Office issued a report detailing the disparity in NMTC awards to minority entities. The numbers have actually gotten worse, not better."

A 2009 study by the Government Accountability Office indicated that only about 9 percent of minority entities were successful when applying for NMTCs, while non-minority entities had three times the success rate, winning 27 percent of the time. According to the GAO, although the program is highly competitive, minority entities have less than a one in three chance of any other type of entity to receive an award.

"By our estimates, less than two



percent of the \$450 billion NMTCs issued over the past 12 years has gone to minority banks," Doyle Mitchell, CEO of Industrial Bank of Washington, D.C. said.

According to the CDFI Fund records, only six awards (less than 8 percent) have gone to minority controlled entities of any kind, and those groups received only \$165 million, under 5 percent of the total dollar amount of allocation.

Some of our banks have been deploying capital in the poorest

neighborhoods in America for over 100 years, and we think the CDFI Fund should review the program to ensure that applications by minority and other small CDFI banks are evaluated on criteria that reflects their position as regulated institutions operating in distressed areas," he said.

Minority banks have had even lower success rates than minority entities overall. Of particular concern, as the nation continues to grapple with the after effects of

the 2008 economic downturn, is the ability of Black communities to recover without the critical support of Black banks. Black-owned financial institutions have historically undergirded those businesses denied funding through traditional sources because of the neighborhoods in which they provide services.

"The NMTC Program has great potential to be part of a comprehensive economic solution in America's inner-cities, most of which still have not recovered from the Great Recession," said Preston Pinkett, CEO of City National Bank and chairman of the NBA. "But the groups best equipped to make those investments, minority banks, have largely been shut out of the NMTC program."

The National Bankers Association was founded in 1927 and is a trade association for the nation's 177 minority and women-owned banks (MWOBs). Its members include banks owned by African-Americans, Native-Americans, American-Indians, East-Indians, Hispanic-Americans, Asian-Americans and women.

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later apologized in the late 1970's announcing he was a born again Christian. He said that he once sought power and glory; he realized he needed to seek love and forgiveness. In 1979, Wallace said of his stand at the schoolhouse door: "I was wrong. Those days are over, and they ought to be over."

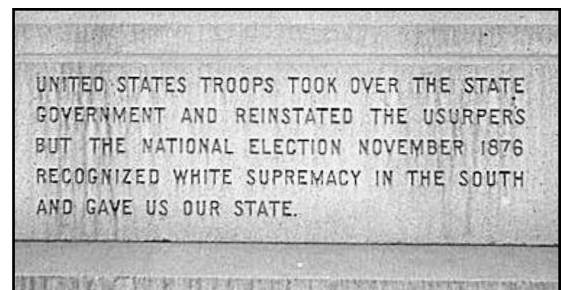
This was also the case with General P.G.T. Beauregard who after the war was involved in politics that was sympathetic to the Civil Rights of African-Americans. He became an advocate of Blacks to exercise their right to vote and was also critical of Jefferson Davis and other Confederates.

### The Puzzle of History and Putting All the Pieces Together to Create an Entire Picture

History is something that is not fixed in time. It is a record of things that's happened over time. And yes there was a time when people opposed full enfranchisement of African-Americans. In addition to laws and customs that showed this country at its worse. Those things that represent the Confederates and what they did are a horrible



New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu, calling for the Confederate monuments to come down.



reminder of America at its worse. But let's not forget that under the American flag things have not always been fair and we have amended and legislated our way to opening the doors of democracy to all.

Sometimes it is easier to forget the things that are less than favorable or that is upsetting, contro-

versial or could be divisive. And we as a progressive, pluralistic society can face our collective past and heal and rebuild together. But to simply remove these things that we deem as uncomfortable reminders do not erase the past. While some of what it represents may be reprehensible, some can be used as a tool for remembering history and not repeating it, so as opposed to removing them maybe with so much rebuilding going on new monuments may be a better alternative. Something that will build on the history of a City and all of its people and their contributions, to continue to put new pieces into the puzzle to create a full and complete picture of the City and where it's been and where it is going as we prepare for the 300th Anniversary of New Orleans.



# On 50th Anniversary, Medicare and Medicaid Still Vital

By Jazelle Hunt  
NNPA National  
Correspondent

As Medicare and Medicaid turn 50 this week, the nation takes a look at the impact of two of the most significant government programs ever launched.

Medicare serves roughly 52 million Americans as of 2013, about 10 percent of whom are Black. The program is part of the Social Security Act and was created to provide health insurance for seniors regardless of income or health status. Today, Medicare covers seniors, permanently disabled people of all ages, and people with Lou Gehrig's disease (ALS) or end-stage kidney disease.

"Medicare in the African American community [has] been a lifesaver," said Karyne Jones, president and CEO of the National Caucus and Center on Black Aging. "Without it, a very large majority of Black seniors wouldn't have any health care. As a result of ... all of those institutional things that occurred, we didn't have jobs in the '40s and '50s and even '60s that provided [retirement] health care programs or insurance programs. So it's a blessing."

The wealth gap is one of the primary reasons Medicare is so instrumental for Black seniors. While most beneficiaries are White, and most have modest fixed incomes, Black beneficiaries often have little to no retirement funds compared to White people. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, 95 percent of White beneficiaries had retirement savings, close to \$90,000 on average. Meanwhile, the average amount saved by the 81 percent of Black beneficiaries who had personal retirement funds was more than \$10,000.

Further, pensions have weakened over the last decade through state deficits and penny-pinching corporate policies.

"There was a time when, if you worked for a place for a long, long time, after you retired you could still have some insurance with that company. Those days are gone," Jones said. "You can imagine what it's like to work all your life without coverage – as you get older, those chronic diseases start kicking in. And if you've not caught them early or been able to maintain them, they're worse as you get older. And



just think, you have no medical coverage, you have no health care? So your life expectancy and the dignity of your life is zero. This is a program that is crucial."

While policy analysts and politicians agree that Medicare has been one of the nation's most effective public programs, the logistics of the program are very confusing for both beneficiaries and health care providers.

There's also the prevalent belief that the program is slowly spiraling out of control.

The Kaiser Family Foundation reports that the program's \$505 billion allotment was 14 percent of the last year's federal budget. The program regularly overspends its limit, and will only get more expensive; the cost of health care rises each year, millions of Baby Boomers are retiring, and the smaller number of younger workers and payroll taxes from dwindling wages will not be enough to support the Boomers.

Medicaid – Medicare's equivalent program for low-income Americans – is even more contested in its 50th year.

According to Samantha Artiga, policy analyst for the Kaiser Family Foundation, the racial disparities that make Black seniors reliant on Medicare are the same ones that make Medicaid so vital for Black families and individuals. She points out that Medicaid covers more than half of all Black children and Latino

children, and that Black families are much less likely than Whites to have high wages or insurance through their employer.

"Medicaid has really played a pivotal role in helping to fill this gap in coverage," Artiga said. "And then also, when we've done focus groups or interviews with families, we really hear over and over about the raw impact Medicaid has on their lives, in terms of providing a sense of financial security, feeling protected from high medical costs...and ability to focus on other areas of life."

Originally intended for children, pregnant women, parents on public assistance, the disabled, and impoverished seniors, the Affordable Care Act (ACA) has further expanded the program to cover low-income people regardless of whether they have children.

The ACA tried to require all states to cover these citizens and offered to fully fund the expansion with federal dollars, as states continued to administer the program. Instead, the Supreme Court ruled the expansion mandate unconstitutional, and made it optional for states. As it stands, 19 states have rejected the idea, including almost the entire South (except Arkansas, Kentucky, and West Virginia) the region with the highest concentration of Black Americans in the nation. More than half of all non-elderly Black people still without insurance as of March are Medicaid eligible under the

new guidelines, but many live in non-expansion states and will likely remain uninsured because of it.

"There still remains some significant gaps in coverage for low-income adults and these disproportionately impacted Black Americans," Artiga said. "We're seeing now, with recent data, declines in uninsured rates since implementation of the ACA, and those declines have been larger for Blacks and Hispanics relative to Whites, suggesting already a beginning of some narrowing of these coverage gaps. But they still remain more likely to be uninsured than Whites."

Lawmakers and experts assert that Medicaid and Medicare are becoming too inclusive and expensive to sustain. Fraud, abuse, and waste have also become a real problem. These widespread scams charge for services that aren't actually provided and pocket the federal funds; authorize unnecessary services, or bill necessary ones incorrectly; or administer services to someone other than the beneficiary – sometimes even after the person is deceased. The misuse consumes additional billions in taxpayer money each year.

There are also concerns about insufficient access to specialty care through the program, and the already-strained availability of care providers particularly in rural areas.

Both sides of the political aisle believe the systems need to change – progressives favor tighter security accountability on the current systems, while conservatives advocate a complete overhaul.

Although the programs have both done a great deal to address health care access gaps, Artiga said that government-sponsored health coverage is not a cure-all for ending disparities. Still, the programs have achieved measurable positive outcomes over the past 50 years.

"You don't want to live in a country where you continue to see an increase of poor, unhealthy people. That drags on the entire system," Jones said. "I can't believe that this country still believes that your health should be only as much as you can afford. Medicare and Medicaid stand at the beginning of us at least acknowledging our own humanity. I'm hoping that not only do they expand the benefits, but that they recognize that a healthy America is a prosperous America."

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