Does Women’s Liberation Stop at the Church?

Commentary

Blackonomics

Hillary and Bernie Discover and Re-Discover Black People
Cover Story

Dillard University Theatre Department Presents “The Rosa Parks Story”

By Audie Jones
Data News Weekly Contributor

As part of its Black History Month Celebration, Dillard University’s Theatre Department performed “The Rosa Parks Story.” The production ran from Feb. 26th through Feb. 28th and chronicled her life as a child to her crusade against segregation and racial intolerance. With only three weeks and 19 rehearsals it came together very quickly,” said Jerry L. Johnson, the Play’s Director who teaches theatre at Dillard. Johnson said he was moved seeing his work come to life. It was the first time the play was performed he said, and it provided a fresh and unique spin on a well-told history.

The Dillard University’s Theatre Department in honor of Black History Month, performed “The Rosa Parks Story,” which chronicled her life as a child to her crusade against segregation and racial intolerance.
"Well considering that we are celebrating her Sixtieth Anniversary this past December, that's reason enough," said Johnson on why he dedicated an entire play to Parks. She's still relevant and current to what is going on today. She took a stand and we see the young people today taking a stand for Black Lives Matter," Johnson said.

Parks was responsible for changing the course of the Civil Rights Movement up to that point, Johnson said. "The pinnacle moment in her life was when she was arrested for refusing to give up her bus seat for a White passenger," he said. "Rosa inspired the 1955 Montgomery Bus Boycott, a catalyst for the Civil Rights Movement, this is why she is known as the 'Mother of the Civil Rights movement,'" he said.

With an image filled backdrop to accompany the monologue, this take on the story of Rosa Parks was filled was a mixed of protest spoken word and dance.

Dillard student Darleny Del-Rosario, a Theater-Performance Major from Houston, Texas, who worked as both costume designer and actress for the play said that remembering pioneers like Rosa Parks is important for a new generation of African-Americans.

"They only give us one month to celebrate our history when it shouldn't be that way," Del-Rosario said. "They give us the leap year month that only has 28 days and we should be celebrating our history throughout the year," she added.

Janae' Bridges, a Dallas, Texas native and an Accounting Major at Dillard said she was elated to see her peers tell such a powerful story. "This shows me that what our ancestors dealt with is still continuous and still affects us today," Bridges said. "It also shows our progression as a whole and how much more work we still have left to do."

The crowd inside the Samuel Dubois Cook Theatre, cheered as the story concluded with an element of surprise, which was an intricate dance routine to the Oscar-Winning Song "Glory" from the motion picture "Selma." The performance placed the historical into the present as the song tied the racial injustice of the past to the issues of discrimination and police abuses in the headlines today. "It tied it all together. I saw the song as a way to draw the youth in because it has John Legend, Common, and a hip-hop element," Johnson said. "We are basically telling the same story that we just told and then bringing it current," he added.
Wholesomeness and the Hollywood Christian Female Celebrity, Does Women’s Liberation Stop at the Church?

By Prinsey Walker
Data News Weekly Columnist

The entertainment industry thrives off of mantra that “sex sells.” And female entertainers this award season showed more than a little skin in their fashion statements, and gyrated in national performances from Beyoncé at the Superbowl to Rihanna’s rendition of new single “Work” at the 2016 BRIT Awards. At the same time, Hollywood has seen a new crop of female celebrities espousing Christian virtues, and fans have been calling for these bearers of the faith to set themselves apart and cover-up or tone it down.

Women’s History Month in March is a time when women celebrate the achievements of the Feminist Movement. Christian celebrities who may decide to burn their proverbial bras and dress as they choose are facing a backlash.

Both Good and Ciara have had to feel questions about what is too sexy for a Christian woman in Hollywood. One audience member at Good’s book launch told the actress: “You are beautiful. I’m going to say something to you. This is not offensive, but I was at the grocery store and I looked at a newstand and I saw you and you had your breasts showing. So I wasn’t going to come here... And the Lord let me come and push past the judgment. And this is real, you have to make sure that what you say and what you do match up, you understand? So, we gon’ cover up right?”

Immediately, Good’s husband Franklin stopped the audience member and said, “That is not what we’re here for. She’s not going to cover up. She gon’ wear what she wants to wear in the name of Jesus. Amen?” Franklin continued to speak as Good was moved to tears by her husband’s support.

Despite the support of their significant others, Christian women say they sympathize with Good and Harris, adding that it’s difficult to say they sympathize with Good and Harris, adding that it’s difficult to be a celebrity Christian woman and express one’s sense of style, even if it doesn’t fit the church definition of modest.

Good and Harris should not be judged as being bad Christians solely on their wardrobe, said Casey Garnet, a recent University of New Orleans graduate and New Orleans native. The red carpet has a unique fashion statement context that is different from Sunday morning service. Either way, both celebrities should not be disrespected because of provocative fashion choices.

“Society says that if you’re a pastor’s wife, then you should dress a certain way,” said Loreal Ivery, a Xavier University student. “But aside from social norms, she should dress how she wants and still get respect.”

Some young Christians say they understand the uproar. As role models, they hope that Good and Harris could be a bit more modest. “I think that the lady was right. If [Good] is supposed to be a certain [Christian] figure, she should follow it by all means,” said Angelique Rhome, a 27-year-old New Orleans native agreed.

Christian men like Southeastern University Sophomore, Jarvis Reynolds, a New Orleans native said he too disapproved of Good’s styles. “She should not live two different lives, she should dress the same way all the time,” Reynolds said. “I would not want my wife to dress like that looking good for the members. You save that for when you get home.”

Good defended herself, asking her fellow believers not to cast judgment. “But I just want to say to that young lady, however you feel, if that’s how you feel pray for me and I love you and God bless you. And thank you,” Good said at the book launch.

Prinsey Walker

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Prinsey Walker
New Youth Services Committee Examines How to Tackle Effects of Poverty on Children

By Tiauni Julien
Data News Weekly Contributor

A recent report on child poverty showed that 39 percent of New Orleans youth were in poverty, an increase of about 17 percent in the last decade. The findings of the 2015 data collected by Dr. Vicki Mack, a Senior Research Fellow with the Southeast Louisiana Data Center prompted the City to establish a special Committee for Youth Services and Empowerment, which held its first meeting on Feb. 24th.

The goal of the committee is to determine what other areas outside of criminal justice issues are impacting youth in the City, and what services would be needed to correct it.

"[The committee] felt that it was necessary and appropriate to form a committee that just focused on youth," said Aylin Maklansky, the Legislative Director for New Orleans City Councilmember Nadin Ramsey.

"There needed to be a committee that focused specifically on the youth in ways that will further their growth," Maklansky said of Ramsey’s interest in the data.

Ramsey serves as chair for this new City committee, which also comprises of Councilmembers James A. Gray and Jared Brossett, and Jason Williams, a Council Member-at-Large.

Ramsey hopes the committee will introduce the public to various organizations that can assist in youth services. “Every opportunity we get, we try to expand these programs,” Maklansky said. The first few meetings will be to gather and assess what resources are currently available for youth and how effective these services are, Maklansky added.

The Data Center’s 2015 Child Poverty Brief and the New Orleans Youth Index found that one in three New Orleans children live in poverty. Mack presented the data to the committee at its first meeting and offered some potential solutions that would require leaders create more opportunities for the poor, beginning with employment assistance. The report, which came out at the end of 2015, led to the formation of the committee in January, 2016.

“The committee seemed to be particularly interested in the potential negative effects of poverty on brain development,” Mack said. Mack added that the solution to child poverty is a multi-generational approach and that leaders will need to create more quality jobs. With many households being headed by single mothers in the area, Mack said these women don’t make enough money to meet the needs of the household.

“Innovation is needed to break the cycle of poverty that grips poor families,” Mack told the committee.

Services like EMPLOY, the Employment and Mobility Pathways Linked for Opportunity Youth, were job training options for youth that Mack presented to the committee to change the outcomes for young people. EMPLOY Senior Program Manager Nicole Jolly shared with the committee how the Efforts to Outcome (ETO) System could help young people recognize their potential in employment and education.

The committee will set its next meeting for March or April, Maklansky said. The Special Committee plans to implement changes after gathering and assessing information over the course of several meetings, and after hearing from experts.

Check out Data’s “Calendar of Events” at ladatanews.com

Stay up on all of the happenings in the Big Easy
Glen David Andrews Headlines Soul Fest at Audubon Zoo

African-American Cultural Celebration Returns for 13th year

Celebrated New Orleans trombonist, band leader and vocalist Glen David Andrews heads a lineup of talented local performers who will keep the music flowing throughout the annual two-day Soul Fest at Audubon Zoo.

On Sunday, March 6, Andrews will close out the festive weekend at the Capital One Pavilion with one of his trademark performances of gospel, jazz, blues and brass band music.

Andrews, who introduced himself to national and international audiences with the release of the acclaimed album “Redemption” in 2014, is part of a musical family rooted in the culturally-rich Treme neighborhood. His cousins include trumpeter James Andrews and Troy “Trombone Shorty” Andrews.

The 13th annual Soul Fest opens on Saturday, March 5 with performances by HiLyfe, the Gospel Soul Children, Anjelika Joseph, Mike “Soulman” Baptiste, LACEE and other jazz, rhythm & blues and gospel artists who are expected to attract thousands to Audubon Zoo for one of New Orleans’ biggest celebrations of African-American culture.

Guests of all ages will get to purchase soul food prepared by local restaurants and caterers and enjoy the Zoo’s collection of exotic animals, including the new orangutan exhibit.

Kids can visit the Children’s Global Playground and create a special Soul Fest souvenir. Festival-goers also can stop in at the Soul Fest Community Partner Tent and receive valuable wellness and lifestyle information.

On Sunday at 2 p.m., Soul Fest will host its annual African American Firsts tribute, recognizing locals who have made their mark on the community. Honorees are: Former Tulane University head football coach Curtis Johnson; the Rev. Isaiah Franklin, maintenance foreman for Monsanto Chemicals; Pvt. Journae King, trainee for Artillery Tactical Data Systems in the Louisiana National Guard; Toni Mobley, Audubon Nature Institute senior vice president; and McDonogh 35 High School.

Soul Fest is included with Audubon Zoo admission or membership. No outside food or beverages are permitted. Soul Fest is presented by AARP and sponsored in part by the Bardell Company. For more information, visit audubonnatureinstitute.org

2016 Soul Fest Performance Schedule:

**Saturday, March 5**
- 11:00 a.m. - Roots of Music
- 11:45 a.m. - HiLyfe
- 12:45 p.m. - The Gospel Soul Children
- 1:45 p.m. - Anjelika Joseph/The Speakerbox Experiment
- 2:45 p.m. - Mike “Soulman” Baptiste
- 3:45 p.m. - LACEE

**Sunday, March 6**
- 11:00 a.m. - Kevin Stylez
- 11:45 a.m. - 4x4 Connection
- 12:45 p.m. - Tara Alexander
- 2:00 p.m. - African American Firsts Program
- 2:45 p.m. - Gina Brown
- 3:45 p.m. - Glen David Andrews

Visit www.ladatanews.com for more photos from these events
Honoring History, the Movie
“Race” Lifts Spirits

By Dwight Brown
NNPA News Wire

Jesse Owens’ story still inspires

“On the track, there is no Black and White, just fast and slow. For those 10 seconds you are free,” says Jesse Owens (Stephan James) in this very moving and inspiring bio/sports movie that captures the essence of this legendary athlete’s life, challenges and achievements. Race is a history lesson, personal profile and a crowd pleaser.

Before you see this movie, you might wonder why they didn’t just call it “Jesse,” or “Jesse Owens.” Ten minutes into the footage, you completely understand why. Owens feat of winning four Olympic Gold Medals did not happen in a bubble. He endured the indignities of racism and segregation in the U.S., and saw prejudice firsthand in Berlin in the 1930s. To the credit of this movie’s perceptive team, they didn’t shy away from the inequalities and degradation of the period as they retold his story.

Producer Luc Dayan, who developed and produced an award-winning short film tribute to Jesse Owens and Carl Lewis, nurtured this project and was joined by producer Jean-Charles Lévy, director Stephen Hopkins (Predator 2, Lost in Space) and screenwriters Joe Shrapnel and Anna Waterhouse (Halle Berry’s Frankie & Alice). Their production has a surprising sensitivity and honest response to racism that carries through for two hours and 14 minutes.

James Cleveland “Jesse” Owens, who was born in Oakville, Alabama, grew up in Cleveland, Ohio demonstrating a passion for running in Junior high, which is where he met his sweetheart, Minnie. Owens made headlines when he tied the world record for the 100-yard dash, running it in 9.4 seconds, while he was in high school. He had his choice of colleges, but because his coach recommended head track coach Lawrence “Larry” Snyder (SNL’s Jason Sudeikis) at Ohio State University, he went to Ohio State.

On May 25, 1935, Owens participated in the Big Ten meet at Ferry Field in Ann Arbor, Michigan, where he set three world records (long jump, 220-yard dash and 220-yard hurdles) and tied a fourth (100-yard dash), in just 45 minutes. It was an incredible achievement, one that set him up for the Olympic Trials and put him on the road to the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games.

Behind the scenes, as Nazism spreads in Germany, Jews were being persecuted and killed and Hitler’s propaganda machines lauded the Aryan race, and call all others inferior, particularly blacks. Some Olympic officials, like Jeremiah Mahoney (William Hurt), called for a boycott. Others, like Avery Brundage (Jeremy Irons), insisted that athletes go and show the world that an integrated American team could beat the Germans.

The rest is history. Owens won four gold medals and shamed Adolph Hitler in front of the world. Documentary director Leni Riefenstahl (Carice van Houten), who was hired by Hitler’s crew to capture the Germans in all their glory, recorded all of Owens triumphs, which proved Hitler’s theories on race to be absolute bunk.

Stephan James, who played civil rights leader John Lewis in Selma, brings a duality to his measured interpretation of Jesse Owens: He’s confident, without being self-centered; vulnerable without being weak. It’s an attractive quality for a protagonist, one that makes you like Owens even more. Jason Sudeikis is also successful at building the Snyder character who is a know-it-all at first, then willing to learn from his student. For a comedian attempting a dramatic role, he’s okay. The two actors feed off each other, making the transition, from “coach teaching student” to “student teaching coach” life lessons, believable. Owens to Snyder: “You stick with me and I’ll make a great coach out of you.” Irons and Hurt make the officials look stiff and calculating. Shanice Banton as Owens sweetheart/wife displays a sweetness that’s infectious.

Though the direction, script and acting are steady, they are out-shined by two elements: The first is the spirit of Jesse Owens, which makes watching him win races against tremendous odds a joy, even though you already know he will lead the pack. Secondly, the attention to social issues and civil rights problems, which were prevalent back in the day and remain so today, is admirable.

Race deserves a lot of credit for not white-washing history.

Read more movie reviews by Dwight Brown at DwightBrownInk.com.
One thing is for sure; Black folks are enjoying this latest political mait- dance with Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton. Sanders is discov- ering Black people in South Carolina and Georgia, and Clinton has reopened the “leading Blacks” vault to rediscover their loyalty and will- ingness to present her to the Black electorate one more time, y’all.

Sanders, after years without do- ing anything specific for the 1 per- cent Black population of his state, much less for Black people in general, has now discovered, and some would say rediscovered his love and concern for us. In the vast majority of cases it is really a case of Black people discovering Sanders, be- cause most Blacks knew absolutely nothing about him prior to a few months ago, but for Ed Schultz and Black folks’ penchant for watching MSNBC. Sanders started out by taiqing up to Harlem, cameras in tow of course, to sip tea with Sharp- ton at a Black restaurant. I am sure that boosted his “street cred” bona fides with Black voters.

Uncle Bernie then goes to MLK’s alma mater, Morehouse, and tells thousands of Black folks how much he loves them now and how much he will do for them—now. It’s al- most like he is waking up from his five-decade “I marched with MLK” respite and discovering that Black people exist and, yes, they are im- portant to court because he cannot win without them. He is pulling out all the censoscopic platitudes to get the Black vote, and Black folks are lovin’ it.

Hillary, far more knowledgeable and adept at getting Black voters, reached into her bag of politician and pulled out an old, tried-and- true, sleight of hand tactic. She met with the Great Triumphate of Black “civil rights” leaders, folks who will hurl you if you get between them and a new camera, to sub- linarily suggest she is “down with the bruthas.” Sitting at a table with Morial, Sharpton, and a guy Black people have yet to discover, Cornell Brooks, was her springboard to vie for the Black vote.

Mama Hillary called on old stand-by, John Lewis, to tell Black folks that Sanders has no street cred, because Lewis “never met him” back in the days of fire-hos- es, dogs, and Billy clubs. Maybe Lewis had a concession back then and simply forgot.) Hillary then got members of the Black Caucus to endorse her, a monumental vic- tory that will surely bring home the ultimate victory. After all, we cast from 93 percent - 95 percent of our precious votes for Barack in both elections, and he won; why not the same thing this year for Clinton?

Black folks are discovering and being discovered by Bernie; we are also being rediscovered by Hillary. And while we are making political campaign ads, going to rallies and cheering for the Democratic candi- dates, as Gil Scott-Heron said in reference to Richard Nixon and the

Democrats and Republicans Continue to Ignore Black Voters

I have a few questions for these groups that have blindly sold out the very Black community that they claim to represent. Can anyone name me something specific that Hillary has done for the Black community in her more than quarter of a century in public life? Why has Hillary, the self-appointed feminist who is married to the “first Black president,” not publically demand- ed Obama nominate or even just consider nominating a Black female to the vacant Supreme Court seat? Why is it that the media-appointed Black leaders are just happy Hillary shows up to meet with them and take photographs?

Isn’t it amazing that she never addresses the high unemployment rate in the Black community? Isn’t it amazing that she never discusses Black-on-Black crime?

All the Blacks she meets with make their living off the negative pathologies prevalent in the Black community. If the Black community actually started solving problems like unemployment, teenage preg- nancy, poor schools, etc.; how and where would the NAACP, the Na- tional Urban League, and the CBC get their funding or justify their continued service in the United States Congress?

Observing Hillary’s interaction with the Black community, one would conclude that all Blacks are involved in some aspect of the crim- inal justice system. As shocking as it might seem to liberal Democrats, most Blacks have nothing to do with the criminal justice system; but yet that seems to be all that she talks about relative to Blacks.

Will she ever address how under Obama, the continued existence of historically Black Colleges & Uni- versities (HBCUs) is in doubt?

The average Black voter has no allegiance to Hillary and the Demo- cratic Party; this is why I am so frus- trated with the Republican Party.

The average Black voter is open to Republican solutions to Black unemployment, stronger enforce- ment of housing discrimination laws, school choice, civil and voting rights legislation, etc.

The Republican Congress must begin to engage with Blacks on substantive policy issues. Re- publican presidential candidates must begin to discuss Black entre- preneurship, school choice, and racial disparities with an eye towards proffering solutions.

We already know that Hillary and the Democrats will use fear to try to get Black voter turnout up. They know they have nothing of substance to say to motivate Blacks to vote Democrat, but they also know that Republicans are totally

By James Clingman
NNPA News Wire
Columnist

Another election cycle, another year of Blacks being sold out by their media-appointed leadership.

Why am I the only one who seems amazed at how Hillary Clinton is so ostentatiously pining Black folks for her own personal gain? Clinton has spent more time in the Black community in the past three weeks than she has in her en- tire adult life and has invoked the name of “Obama” more than the sum total of all Blacks collectively.

The Congressional Black Cau- cus (CBC) members, like the lap- dogs that they are, have almost uniformly endorsed her candidacy. All the media-appointed civil rights groups and individuals have either outrightly or tacitly endorsed her.

Groups like the National Coal-ition on Black Civic Participation (NCBCP), the NAACP, the National Urban League are nothing more than sycophantic supporters of all things Democratic.

Commentary, Continued on page 11.

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Blackonomics
Hillary and Bernie Discover and Re-Discover Black People

Raynard Jackson
NNPA News Wire Columnist

I am amazed at how much of the interactions Republicans have with the Black community is out of fear of being labeled a racist, as opposed to engaging with the Black commu- nity based on a set of shared values and interests.

Between both political parties, there have been close to twenty presidential debates; and no sub- stantive discussion on the Black unemployment rate, the decline of HBCUs, or Black entrepreneur- ship. Why?

Black media, especially Black newspapers, are totally invisible in the presidential debates in both parties. Both parties are tripping over themselves with Hispanic me- dia and addressing issues specific to that community; but with Blacks, not so much.

This despite the fact that Blacks vote at a much higher percentage than Hispanics and Blacks have a much larger vot- ing age population (VAP).

Both parties fear Black people.
The Democrats fear that Blacks won’t turn out without Obama be- ing on the ballot; Republicans fear Blacks won’t vote for a Republican. Both are equally wrong.

Raynard Jackson & Associates, LLC is an internationally recog- nized political consulting, govern- ment affairs, and PR firm based in Washington, DC. Jackson is an internationally recognized radio talk show host and TV commen- tor. He has coined the phrase “straticist.” As a straticist, he has merged strategic planning with public relations. Visit his website at: www.raynardjackson.com.
Diversity Among Doctors Drives Trust in Health Care

By Patricia Maryland
NNPA News Wire
Contributing Writer

Black History Month gives us the opportunity to reflect on the countless examples of the contributions that African-Americans have made to build our country. By celebrating these pioneers who helped shape America, we are inspired to overcome adversity and realize the positive change we, too, are capable of enacting in areas where inequity still persists. Black health is one such example where much has been achieved, but much more can be done to secure positive health outcomes in the Black community.

We know that on virtually every measure of health, African-Americans fare far worse than their White counterparts – from diabetes to heart disease to infant mortality. These disparities can be explained by myriad and co-influencing factors, including a lack of access to affordable healthcare, nutritional education and safe spaces to exercise.

A less apparent, but equally troubling reason for unequal outcomes in Black health is a strong sense of distrust, skepticism, fear — beliefs that are intensely embedded in the history of Black health care, but they are ones we must overcome if we are to truly improve the health of our families and communities. Today, too often, a lack of trust can become a huge liability, even a death sentence, for Black patients.

I became a healthcare professional, because I saw my family members, friends and neighbors plagued by diseases that could have been prevented, if they had taken a proactive approach to their care. While it’s important to acknowledge that African-Americans’ relationship with the healthcare system is complex, our community cannot afford to remain disengaged in these matters.

That’s why all of us must take a hard look at the barriers that prevent African-Americans from achieving health equity and commit to an effort to reclaim Black health and well-being.

On the part of individual members of the Black community, that means not only taking advantage of the coverage opportunities provided by the Affordable Care Act, but also taking a hands-on approach to health – one that seeks out care in a timely and accountable fashion and works to nurture a positive culture of health in our families, churches, neighborhoods and cities.

On the part of healthcare providers, this work will require a new standard of care that recognizes the unique needs of minority populations and designs a care strategy around what works for each individual patient. Working with physicians at our facilities, we are learning that when we actively engage the patient in his or her care, we’re better able to build meaningful, long-term relationships that lead to better health outcomes. This personalized care approach is proving vital in earning trust and improving the health of the African American community.

Representation also matters when it comes to building confidence in healthcare among minority communities. Black Americans make up 13 percent of the population, yet they account for barely 4 percent of practicing physicians nationwide. What’s more, studies show relationships between patients and physicians of the same race or ethnic background also are characterized by higher levels of trust, respect and patient satisfaction. It’s clear that more needs to be done to encourage African-Americans to pursue medical professions – and ensure the proper supports are in place to nurture diversity in the field.

As we remember and reflect on Black history – the bad and the good, the darkness and the light – there is no better time than now to commit to actions that will make our community healthier and stronger. And it begins by working together to break down barriers, real and perceived, to the care we need and deserve.

Patricia A. Maryland, Dr.PH, is the President of Healthcare Operations and Chief Operating Officer of Ascension Health.

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Sales Manager/Retail Ad Manager

About the Job

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Hillary Clinton Meets with Civil Right Groups, Black Millennials

By Freddie Allen
NNPA News Wire Senior Washington Correspondent

A few days before presidential hopeful Hillary Clinton racked up a huge win in Nevada’s Democratic primary, largely thanks to the overwhelming support that she received from Black voters, the former Secretary of State met with civil rights leaders for a frank discussion about the 21st Century Agenda for Jobs and Freedom.

According to exit polls from the Democratic primary in Nevada conducted by CBS News, Senator Bernie Sanders (D-VT) won 53 percent of the Hispanic vote while Clinton garnered 45 percent of the Hispanic vote. Sanders narrowly won among White voters, earning 49 percent of their vote compared to 47 percent who went with Clinton. But 76 percent of African Americans that turned out for the primary voted for Clinton compared to just 22 percent who supported Sanders.

As presidential candidates court Black voters, civil rights leaders want to make sure that the needs of the Black community are also addressed.

“For the first time in American history, we will watch a Black family leave the White House and we do not want to see the concerns of Blacks leave with them,” said Reverend Al Sharpton, the founder and president of the National Action Network.

The coalition of civil rights leaders for a frank discussion about the 21st Century Agenda for Jobs and Freedom, crafted about three years ago around the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington, outlines a number of challenges affecting the Black community and identifies five main domestic goals to address those challenges.

The goals of the agenda include: achieving economic parity for African Americans, promoting equality in educational opportunities, protecting and defending the voting rights, eliminating healthcare disparities and achieving comprehensive criminal justice reform.

Last Tuesday, Clinton met with leaders from nine different civil rights groups including the National Urban League, the NAACP, the National Council of Negro Women, the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, the National Bar Association, the National Action and Television Network, the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, the National Council of Negro Women and the National Action and Television Network.

The coalition of civil rights groups hosted a similar meeting held by the National Urban League. Seated with Secretary Clinton are Marc H. Morial, President & CEO of the National Urban League (left) and Rev. Sharpton, President of the National Action and TV Network.

“The coalition of civil rights groups hosted a similar meeting held by the National Urban League. Seated with Secretary Clinton are Marc H. Morial, President & CEO of the National Urban League (left) and Rev. Al Sharpton, President of the National Action and TV Network.”

Secretary of State and Presidential candidate Hillary Clinton (center) addresses audience during a town hall held by the National Urban League. Seated with Secretary Clinton are Marc H. Morial, President & CEO of the National Urban League (left) and Rev. Al Sharpton, President of the National Action and TV host of Politics Nation on MSNBC.

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Marc Morial, the president and CEO of the National Urban League said that the nine historic civil rights organizations represented tens of millions of Americans and that all of their organizations were multicultural and multi-ethnic.

Morial also made it clear that the meeting was not an endorsement of Hillary Clinton’s run for the White House.

“Each of us is either a 501(c)(3) or a 501(c)(4) organization. Our organizations do not endorse or recommend candidates for public office,” said Morial. “This is a meeting that we have convened and we have organized in an effort to provide to every candidate who is running for president of the United States, be they Republican or Democrat, with the opportunity to hear from us on issues of civil rights, social justice and economic justice in America, today.”

Clinton said that her staff has “always found an open door and a responsive ear to help us forge the kind of policies that we think can directly address many of the issues” that the leaders raised during the meeting.

“My campaign is really about breaking every barrier. I believe that America can not live up to its potential unless every single person has the chance to live up to theirs,” said Clinton.

The former Secretary of State also met with more than a dozen “emerging leaders” that represent the next generation in the leadership of the civil rights groups that attended.

“We are proud to be historic organizations, with legacies from the NAACP and the National Urban League being over 100 years old, others being 50 to 25 years old, we are also proud that, in every case, every one of our organizations is standing up and emphasizing the leadership role that the new generation can, will and must play in the future of this country,” said Morial.

Leigh Chapman, the president of the National Bar Association’s young lawyer division that represents lawyers under 40 and lawyers who have practiced less than 10 years, said that access to education without the burden of lifetime debt, ensuring full participation in the political process, eliminating barriers to voting, and ending mass incarceration were a few of the issues that they wanted the next president to address.

Christopher Wilks, a legal fellow at the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund (LDF), said that for 75 years LDF has been engaged in protecting the rights of African Americans and other minorities in the areas of political participation, education, criminal justice and economic justice.

“Although young people of color are often disproportionately impacted by legislative judicial and policy decisions, we rarely have or hold the position to directly control those positions, said Wilks. “Growing use of discriminatory voter ID laws, the current attacks on affirmative action, the disinvestment in African American communities, the continued targeting of youth of color by police and the criminal justice system all too often work together to turn the American Dream into a nightmare.”

Clinton said that it was absolutely critical for the next president to work on a full array of issues that stand in the way of every American living up to their full potential.

“I am not a single issue candidate, we don’t live in a single-issue country and we have work to do,” said Clinton. “And that work can only be done in partnership with one another to advance the cause of civil and human rights and to live up to the ideals of our country.”

Clinton continued: “Whether it’s student debt or it’s a judiciary that is not as diverse as it needs to be, or whether it is criminal justice issues or voters’ rights issues we have work to do.”

Clinton added that her campaña, her presidency, if she was so fortunate, must reflect the thinking, the planning and the proposals of the young leaders who attended the meeting.

Morial said that the former Secretary of State “demonstrated an ease and a familiarity with many of the issues that were discussed” and that the group found “great support” for many of the issues contained in the 21st Century Agenda.

“Our aim is not partisan politics, our aim is not to decide on a candidate to endorse,” said Morial. “Our aim is to impress upon these candidates the challenges of these times and the important creative and thoughtful ideas that we have to solve the problems that this nation faces, with particular emphasis on the challenges faced by communities of color and urban communities, those who have been locked out and left out of the economic system in the 21st century.”
Xavier Students Join in With Other Universities to Call On State to Preserve TOPS Program.

By Nigel Palmer
Photo by Tatyana Aubert
Data News Contributors

Xavier University students and officials are petitioning State Government’s request that legislatures stop proposed cuts to the popular TOPS Scholarship Program, and to preserve the program for future students. On Feb. 24th roughly 800 students signed a petition at Xavier’s University Center that was organized by the University’s Office of Financial Aid. The petition requested that budget cuts towards TOPS cease as the State of Louisiana debate how to balance its budget given a $149 million deficit.

“Students who are currently receiving TOPS, the state has agreed to pay 90 percent of their current award and as far as future awards, we’re not sure what the status of those are,” said Janikah Miles, Xavier university’s Scholarship and TOPS Coordinator.

TOPS is a Louisiana Scholarship Program that pays the average tuition of public universities and partial tuition for private universities. TOPS, which stands for, Taylor Opportunity Program for Students started in 1998. Roughly 56 percent of Xavier students could be impacted if the State Government were to cut funding or eliminate TOPS payments. On Wednesday, February 24th, students along with Xavier’s Financial Aid Office Staff passed around petitions for students to sign. Miles said the university hopes to send over a thousand signatures on the petition to the State Legislature and Governor in advance of March meetings that could determine the fate of TOPS.

On February 11, 2016, college students across the state took to social media to protest the news of the TOPS Scholarship program being suspended. Above, Xavier students sign a petition for reinstatement of the popular program.

Commentary, Continued from page 8.

Republican, “All is calm and quiet along the white sands of San Clemente.”

In today’s political world that simply points to the Republicans continued strategy of ignoring Black people by saying absolutely nothing on our behalf or in support of issues that specifically pertain to Black voters. But why should they? We are “all in” for the Democrats.

Hype is meaningless unless it is accompanied by real accountability and substantive results. If the Black vote is so important and so precious, as we like to say, then why is it literally given away for a song and a dance without substantive results. If they do as the current POTUS did, papers, radio?” That’s just one of many acts of reciprocity and the bare minimum of what we should demand. If they do as the current POTUS did in 2012, spend one-tenth of 1 percent with Black media, don’t support them until they increase that amount, and then move on to the next demand. Stop allowing them to use and insult you, and stop slobbering over this place your classified ad.

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Lisa Leslie