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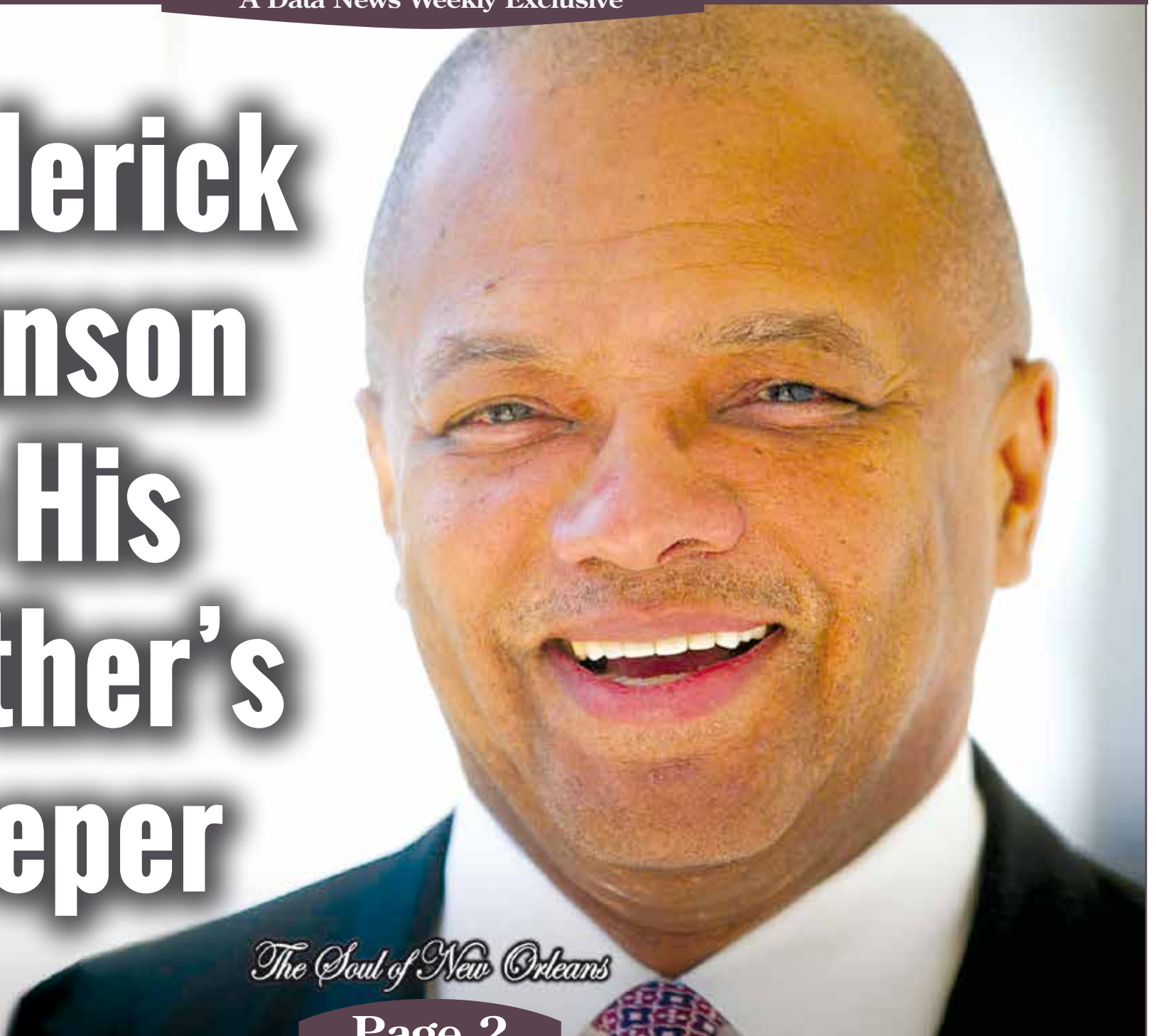
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A Data News Weekly Exclusive

# Broderick Johnson is His Brother's Keeper



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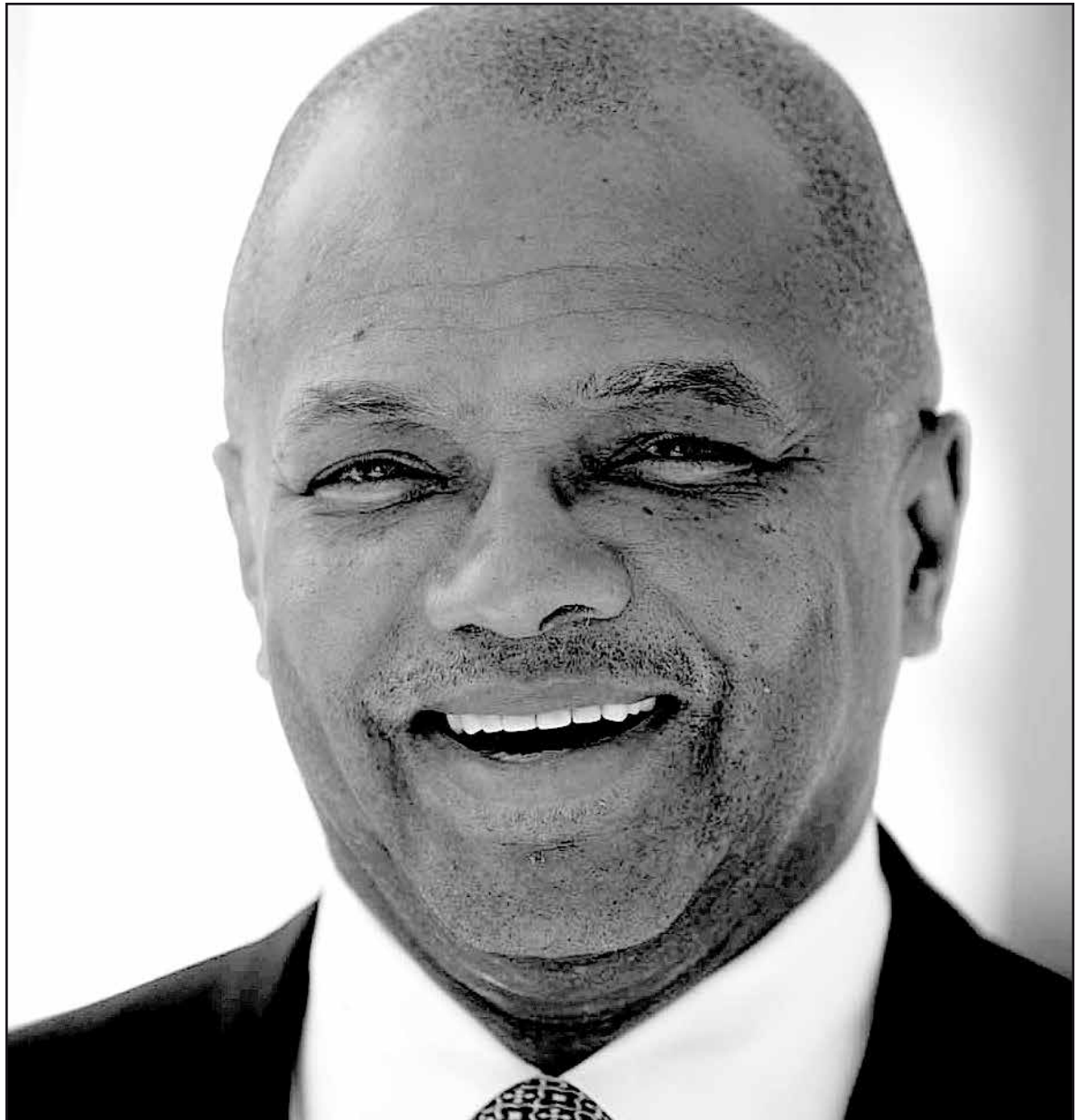
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# Broderick Johnson is His Brother's Keeper

By Michael H. Cottman  
Urban News Service

Broderick Johnson sees young Black men on America's streets taking long drags off short smokes. "It's the idleness," said Johnson, a Baltimore native and Advisor to President Barack Obama. "No jobs — or summer jobs — for Black men. Kids are going to hang in the streets. We have to break this cycle. We have to create jobs and mentorships." As Chair of Obama's My Brother's Keeper Task Force, Johnson manages several socio-economic programs that aim to improve the lives of unemployed young Black men. Chief among them is My Brother's Keeper, which Obama launched in February 2014 "to address persistent opportunity gaps faced by boys and young men of color," according to a White House statement. So far, this initiative has prompted private organizations to commit "more than \$500 million in grants and in-kind resources and \$1 billion in financing through community banks, including investments in safe and effective schools, mentoring programs, juvenile justice reforms, and school redesign." As Obama's second term winds down, Johnson is working to ensure that empowering young men of color is central to Obama's legacy. Johnson's early years influence his duties. "Knowing how young Black men make mistakes and get into circumstances," Johnson says, "we're trying to give these young men opportunities at a time when Barack Obama is president." Young men like Malachi Hernandez. The 17-year-old Boston high



As Chair of President Obama's My Brother's Keeper Task Force, Broderick Johnson (above) manages several socioeconomic programs that aim to improve the lives of unemployed young Black men.

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Cover Story, Continued from previous page.

school student says My Brother's Keeper changed his life. Hernandez said he grew up in a poor neighborhood where he often heard the crackle of gunfire. He said he also saw his parents physically fight each other before his father left Hernandez, his mother and four brothers home alone. "Growing up with domestic violence and then a single parent was very difficult," Hernandez said. "We were low-income. We had a lot of challenges. It wasn't easy." But today, Hernandez said, My Brother's Keeper helped him intern in the Mayor's Office for Economic Development. He expects to graduate high school and has applied to Northeastern University and American University. He hopes to major in political science or education.

"This is about investing in our young people and empowering them to achieve their dreams," said Mayor Martin Walsh (D - Boston). "It is truly powerful when you can see the results of mentorship and internship opportunities — young boys and men becoming major contributors to society." But not everyone supports My Brother's Keeper. More than 1,600 women of color released a June 2014 letter asking why Obama's program left women behind. "We are profoundly troubled about the exclusion of women and girls of color from this critical undertaking," reads the letter, which was signed by, among



Broderick Johnson meets Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake at the Center for Urban Families in Baltimore. Broderick Johnson is Chair of the My Brother's Keeper Task Force. MBK is President Obama's initiative to expand opportunity for young men of color (photo credit by André Chung)

others, Mary Francis Berry, Angela Davis, Anita Hill, Rosie Perez, and Alice Walker. Others believe My Brother's Keeper is flawed because the program "should be open to all at-risk individuals, without regard to skin color or what country someone's ancestor's came from," said Roger Clegg, President of the Center for Equal Opportunity, a think tank dedicated to ethnicity- and sex-neutral public policy. "A racially exclusive program would be unconstitutional, and it would be unfair and divisive." For his part, Johnson said

he doesn't waste time listening to critics. He also knows that skeptics question whether this project ultimately will succeed —especially after Obama leaves office. Johnson

recently told Obama about a positive editorial in The Washington Post about My Brother's Keeper. "That's good, Broderick," Johnson said Obama replied, "but what are

young people telling you?" Johnson tried to answer Obama's question by talking to young Black men in Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and other major cities. Those conversations left Johnson unsettled. "In Chicago, I met a young man whose nickname was Trigger," Johnson said. "He was part of a gang family. He knows he could be shot to death at 20 years old. He is 17, and I worry that he may make other mistakes." From the White House's West Wing, Johnson directs My Brother's Keeper during challenging times. In Chicago alone, police recorded 468 homicides and 2,939 shootings last year. For Johnson, his full title — "Assistant to the President, Cabinet Secretary, and Chair of the My Brother's Keeper Task Force" —is more than a job, it's a long-term crusade.

"As the President stated at the launch of the My Brother's Keeper Alliance in May 2015, he is going to keep doing this work while he's in the White House," Johnson said. "This will remain a mission for him and the First Lady for the rest of their lives."

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# Three Local Residents Honored with National Service Award

Data News Staff Edited Report

As part of the annual Mayors Day of Recognition for National Service, Mayor Mitch Landrieu highlighted the value of national service and the positive impact of local AmeriCorps and Senior Corps members in the New Orleans community.

Mayor Mitch Landrieu specifically recognized three national service participants for their dedication and sacrifice as members of local AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs. Each recipient was presented with the third-annual Joseph Massenburg Memorial Award for Excellence in National Service. The award is for participants of AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps VISTA and Senior Corps who demonstrate an exemplary commitment to service in the New Orleans community. The memorial award is in honor of Joseph Massenburg, the 18-year old AmeriCorps NCCC member who was slain while serving in New Orleans in 2013.

"Today, we recognize three distinguished people in his honor and the thousands of other AmeriCorps



Three local residents were recognized by Mayor Mitch Landrieu for their outstanding national service. Pictured left to right are Peter Davis an AmeriCorps Vista member, Mara Abramson is an AmeriCorps Member, Mayor Mitch Landrieu and Bobbi Bridges, who serves in the Senior Corps member.

and Senior Corps members who have volunteered their time and energy to help make New Orleans stronger, safer and healthier," said Mayor Landrieu. "Together, they have all shown the world what is possible through service."

Joseph Massenburg Memorial

Award for Excellence in National Service recipients:

Mara Abramson is an AmeriCorps member serving with the Promise of Justice Initiative where she works as the Client Welfare Coordinator and operates the initiative's Client and Family Assistance Program. She works closely with prisoners and their families to cre-

ate and maintain meaningful family relationships, and provide prisoners with basic hygiene materials, educational materials and medical needs. Mara also spends her evenings and weekends coordinating and executing trips for many New Orleans-based families to the Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola to visit their loved ones.

Bobbie Bridges has been serving as a Senior Corps member with Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans for 11 years. Currently, she is a volunteer at Kingsley House Head Start where she works with young children to assist with developmental activities, language development, social and emotional issues, and Kindergarten readiness. Bobbie also serves on the Foster Grandparent Program Advisory Council and is the president of the Foster Grandparent Club.

Peter Davis is an AmeriCorps Vista member serving with Jericho Episcopal Housing Initiative as the Program Development Coordinator. Peter also contributes to projects focused on environmental justice, affordable housing, blight and food justice.

Mayor Landrieu is among more than 3,500 mayors and local leaders across the country participating in this bipartisan day of recognition, an initiative led by the National League of Cities, National Association of Counties, Cities of Service and the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS).

"I am proud to be working with New Orleans as we continue to strengthen communities through national service," said Wendy Spencer, CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service. "Mayors are leaders who get things done. They know first-hand the value of national service in tackling local problems. I commend Mayor Landrieu for working with us to improve lives and strengthen communities through national service."

CNCS is a federal agency that engages millions of Americans in service through AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, the Social Innovation Fund, and the Volunteer Generation Fund, and leads the President's national call to service initiative, United We Serve. There are currently more than 1,200 AmeriCorps members serving in New Orleans.

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## Entergy New Orleans Named 2016 ENERGY STAR® Partner of the Year

*Company Applauded For Energy-Efficiency Initiatives*

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency named Entergy New Orleans a 2016 ENERGY STAR® Partner of the Year for its outstanding contributions in implementing energy-efficiency measures. The company, which also was recognized in 2014, is among only 149 out of 16,000 partners nationwide to be selected for this year's award. Ceremonies will be held on April 13 in Washington, D.C.

Entergy New Orleans and the New Orleans City Council, ENERGY STAR® partners since 2011 through the Energy Smart program, work together to promote energy efficiency through comprehensive outreach, education and marketing programs. Energy Smart was developed by the New Orleans City Council,

is administered by Entergy New Orleans and is implemented by CLEAResult.

Energy Smart's Assisted Home-Performance with ENERGY STAR® program played a large role in securing this year's award, helping hundreds of low-income New Orleans residents save energy and live more comfortably. Entergy New Orleans provided more than \$560,000 worth of incentives to low-income households in 2015 and, combined with other energy-efficiency solutions, the company provided nearly \$1.6 million worth of incentives to New Orleans residents last year.

Overall, the company's efficiency programs contributed \$2.38 million to the local economy while eliminating more than 3,800 metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions.

"Providing customers with the knowledge and tools to make their homes and businesses more energy-efficient not only saves them money through lowering energy usage, but helps the environment as well," said Charles Rice, president and CEO of Entergy New Orleans, Inc. "We're dedicated to our partnerships with the Council and ENERGY STAR® and are committed to continuing the program in years to come."

Since its inception, more than 35,000 New Orleanians have participated in Energy Smart. To learn about the program's solutions and incentives, visit [www.energysmart-nola.com](http://www.energysmart-nola.com) or call 1-866-721-0249. More energy-saving tips, as well as clear, do-it-yourself videos, can be found at [entergyneworleans.com/savemoney](http://entergyneworleans.com/savemoney).

# trailblazer

## Toya Barnes-Teamer, PhD

### *Inspiration for Future Generations*

by: Edwin Buggage

Toya Barnes-Teamer PhD is committed to giving back to her City. Coming from humble beginnings in the Lower 9th Ward, she says this is where the seeds were planted for her lifelong commitment to serving others. "My parents Emanuel Barnes Sr. and Dolores Barnes instilled in us to help those in need, in addition there were so many people who supported and helped me to get where I am, I feel it is my duty to give back," says Barnes-Teamer, who holds bachelor's and master's degrees from Loyola University and received her PhD in Higher Education Administration from the University of New Orleans. She has worked for over two-decades in higher education at both the university and technical college level. Barnes-Teamer feels that her experiences working with young people from different backgrounds has been fulfilling in seeing young people reach their goals. "I am always proud to see kids walking across the stage during graduation time. To see them work through whatever obstacles they face and to see them realize that hard work pays off, is a great feeling for me as they begin down the road to success."

She is committed to and on the frontlines in helping to solve many of the problems that faces the City of New Orleans. While she understands that much needs to be done to fix the City on the education and economic front, something she believes create situations where young people make bad choices; she feels solutions must start at home and the community level. "We have to stop pointing the finger at the schools because k-12 can only do so much, it is up to parents and the community to take up the issue of raising our young and again become a village in raising our children," says Teamer. "We need to have a more holistic approach to repair what I feel is a multigenerational problem in our community, we must not only engage our children but we must get better at helping families improve their quality of life."

For her service of helping others throughout her career she's received several awards including; being a two-time recipient of the Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS) President's



Awards, one for exemplary leadership during the Hurricane Katrina crisis, and another for workforce development in the region. She was also selected by New Orleans City Business as one of its "40 under 40" individuals to watch in the community. Barnes-Teamer is appreciative of the recognition, but feels that giving back is her duty to her City helping in its rebuilding effort, "I remember after the storm, there were people who said with your credentials you can go and work somewhere other than New Orleans, and I told them I have to

go back and help rebuild my City that's created the foundation for my life and shaped who I am," says Teamer.

Toya says she could not do all she's done in her life without what she calls her partner and best friend; her husband of over two-decades Roderic Teamer Sr. and the love of her three children

Tai, Tia and Roderic Jr. "My family and my faith means a lot to me, from my immediate to my extended family, it's been important to me since I was a child and still is today as I raise my own children. I can remember walking through the 9th Ward as a little girl to St. David Church and our community being one where everybody was encouraged to succeed. And many of the people I grew up with are doing great things in the City." Today she is planting those same seeds in her children; her oldest daughter Tai, is a student at Loyola

University and is part of the New Orleans Ballet Association (NOBA) and is involved with youth in the City teaching dance at NORD Centers across the City including Pete Sanchez Community Center in the Lower Ninth Ward. Her other daughter Tia is also a student at Loyola and is active in student media and her son Roderic Jr.

is a student/athlete playing on the football team at Tulane University.

Toya Barnes-Teamer is a woman who is committed to empowering all the people of New Orleans, but she feels that African-Americans and their institutions and history is important in maintaining given the monumental changes taking place in New Orleans post-Hurricane Katrina. "Newspapers like Data News Weekly must continue because we need someone who can tell the story of African-American people of New Orleans. We need Dillard, SUNO and Xavier to continue to help educate the future leaders of our City and be part of the rich legacy of our City." Continuing she says, "But if we are to be the great City we can be it is about all people working together regardless of their backgrounds or race, and that is what my life is dedicated to trying to do my part in making our City great and inspire future generations."

**JMJ**  
Joseph M. Jones  
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# The Louisiana Rainbow Festival



By LMG Calla Victoria  
Data News Weekly Columnist

The Louisiana irises are once again in bloom, and public gardens all over New Orleans will be hosting iris walks so that we can enjoy the whimsical beauty of these delicate flowers in all of their splendid hues. I think that one of the best features of growing irises is that you cannot over-water them. These little cuties just love wet feet, so you find them in the swamps, and happily growing on the sides of ponds. Many growers place them in deep plastic troughs that are filled with water and have no drain holes, and the

irises simply grow and multiply. Patrick O'Connor, the Former President of Greater New Orleans Iris Society, spearheads the Louisiana Iris Propagation Operation for the society growing troughs of irises on Scout Island in City Park. Those Louisiana Irises are grown and maintained for donations to public gardens. Patrick and Eileen Hollander donated many Louisiana Irises to my project, the Open-Air Levee Exhibition and Rain Garden. Not only did they donate the plant material but they also installed the plant material.

Another attribute of irises is they multiply all by themselves; a few irises will become a field of irises in a few years.

Periodically you will need to divide them, and yay...more irises.

This weekend the Greater New Orleans Iris Society will be hosting the Louisiana Rainbow Festival in City Park from Noon until 5:00 p.m. The two-part festival starts with an iris walk through the iris garden at the Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden in City Park. This lovely garden is maintained by members of Master Gardeners of New Orleans (MGGNO), under the supervision of my sister Master Gardener and President of the Greater New Orleans Iris Society, Eileen Hollander. She works tirelessly year around promoting and educating the general public on Louisiana

irises. After the iris walk, there will be an iris show and sale at the New Orleans Museum of Art Courtyard (on the Sculpture Garden side).

If you love irises or have questions about the growth and care of these cuties, make it a point to be in that number, because a team of Louisiana Iris experts will be on hand to give you valuable information and to answer all of your questions.

<https://www.facebook.com/Greater-NewOrleansIrisSociety>

Check out my "Gardening Tip of the Week" at [www.thegardeningdiva.com](http://www.thegardeningdiva.com)

Remember, never get too busy to wake up and smell the beautiful flowers!

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# trailblazer

## Gail Glapion

### *A Beacon of Light for the City of New Orleans*

by: Edwin Buggage

Gail Moore Glapion is a beacon of light in the City of New Orleans and a shining example of service. Throughout the years she's worked in many capacities in the fields of education and public service. Beginning in the classroom as a teacher she began a lifelong love of fueling the next generation for success. Later serving in numerous posts; Executive Director of the YWCA; Vice President of the New Orleans Branch of the National Urban League, in addition to Director of the Urban League Street Academy and later as an elected official, serving on the New Orleans School Board for two decades and for a time was its President. "When I look back on my life I didn't think of being of service to others as anything extra, I just thought it was what you were supposed to do. Serving is an expression of being grateful and I am grateful to my parents who came from humble beginnings who were my examples of service, so throughout my life I show my gratitude by helping serve my community in any way I can."

Gail Glapion proudly states she was educated in the City; from her early years in High School at Joseph S. Clark to her BA and MA Degrees in Education from Dillard University and LSUNO (now UNO) respectively. She's an advocate of quality education and over the years worked

with countless youth, giving them the tools to be successful in life, "I am always surprised and grateful when I see people I have taught or encouraged doing well; that is the best pay-back of giving back for me. Young people who attended the Urban League Street Academy, they would say to me that they went on and are doing great things. I believe encouraging people is important, we sometimes don't know the impact it can have on someone."

Mrs. Glapion has served on many boards and organizations dedicated to a variety of causes. Some of them include: Chairperson Emeritus of the African-American Leadership Project, Founder and Former President of the Scholarship Foundation of New Orleans (formerly known as Dollars for Scholars) and currently serves as Managing Director and President of Anthony Bean Community Theater Board of Directors; speaking of her work with ABCT where she has occasionally performed. "I saw in working to help ABCT as a great cause, it rekindled a passion in me, I saw in that enterprise to work with young people and that helped me get enthusiastic about working with him. I admired the tremendous work he was able to do with the NORD/ABCT



Summer Program and put on major productions. I do believe we have an obligation if we are to get involved with organizations to do the hard work and what it takes to maintain an institution. This is the most fulfilling aspect of doing volunteer work, for me it is about service and building institutions; I've been blessed that most of the organizations I've given focus to have become institutions."

While on the Orleans Parish School Board, Glapion spearheaded educational programs designed to address issues related to dropout prevention, parental empowerment, and post-secondary education. She feels a more holistic approach to educating young people is necessary

work hard, study hard they can achieve and do well."

While President of OPSB, Glapion set out to empower African-Americans and give voice to those who were disenfranchised. "It is not just important to hold elected offices if they do not lead to empowering our people" she remarks. Under her leadership on the board, Dr. Everett Williams, was appointed the first African-American Superintendent of Schools. Also established were the first Minority Set-Aside Policy, and the Anti-Apartheid Policy. She credits much of

her inspiration to fight for equality and access for African-Americans to New Orleans Civil Rights Leader Oretha Castle Haley, "She was a great woman, we met in the early 1970's, when I was involved in educational issues, I had not met anyone like her, she was so compassionate and so committed to empowering Black people. Her

whole life was dedicated to fighting for equality and I looked up to and admired her and learned a lot about mobilizing people and building institutions."

Mrs. Glapion's life is a reflection of service, commitment and dedication to build, maintain and sustain institutions whose missions address human needs. Something she attributes to her faith as a lifelong member of the Pleasant Zion Missionary Baptist Church. "I have tried to live what it means to be a Christian and lived by the golden rule and good things have happened. I had the blessing of a lifelong mate John Glapion and we were departed only through death and I have three wonderful children Todd, Donna and Randy and two grandchildren. I have a great attitude about life and despite its problems I see the glass half full. I am grateful, I have a positive attitude and am optimistic about the future and see the world in its great possibilities."

**JMJ**  
Joseph M. Jones  
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at&t

# What If Donald Trump's Campaign Manager Was Black?



**Julianne Malveaux**  
NNPA Columnist

It is probably not especially politically correct to bring more race matters into the debacle that is also known as the Donald Trump quest for the Presidency. He has called out and targeted racial and ethnic groups, as well as targeted

individual women because of their appearance (or more, but we won't go there). He has supported basic thuggery, offering to pay the legal fees for a man who sucker-punched an African American protester, and egging on others who beat up a protester. The latest goes from the amusing to the amazing. Although there is a video showing his campaign manager, Corey Lewandowski putting his hands on former Breitbart reporter Michelle Fields, he and Trump have said that eyes can lie. Even in the face of video evidence, he denied touching Fields. He and Trump tried to dismiss her as "delusional," essentially "blaming the victim."

Imagine that Corey Lewandowski was an African American man. Imagine that he nearly knocked down a White woman reporter. Can you hear the outrage? Can you hear the demands? Were Lewandowski African American, would he have been caricatured as a hoodlum or thug, pandering to the stereotypes? Or would Mr. Trump have had Black Lewandowski's back as firmly?

I am not surprised that Mr. Trump has condoned Lewandowski's violence, nor am I surprised that he's taken the "wuss" role by suggesting the reporter, who was attempting to get his attention, had "touched" him (and that maybe he

should press charges). It is entirely consistent with his other campaign behavior. He has suggested that his supporters might "riot" if he does not get the Republican nomination. His amazing incivility adds to the vaudevillian atmosphere of this bizarre campaign. How different would it be if Corey Lewandowski were Black?

A black man could not have put his hand on a white woman with impunity. If he did, he probably would not have had to wait more than a week to be charged for his transgression. He might have apologized, whether he were asked to do so or not, both from civility and from cultural conditioning. Trump

and Lewandowski assumed that Michelle Fields, a White woman, could be thrown under the bus by two powerful, White men who called her a liar, delusional, and any other slur they could get away with. A Black man would not have had the luxury – he would have had to rush into rapid CYA (cover your hind parts) mode.

Those women who are supporting Trump need to be well aware of his propensity to disregard and disrespect women. Loyalty notwithstanding, Lewandowski's untoward behavior deserves some reaction – maybe not a firing, but some form

**Commentary,**  
**Continued on page 9.**

# Republicans Continue to Pay Lip Service to Blacks



**Raynard Jackson**  
NNPA News Wire Columnist

As I continue my swing through Eastern Europe, I had every intention of writing about my conversations with the all the political and business leaders that I was spending time with. I wanted to write about how the U.S. is viewed by those in Eastern Europe and the relevance of this part of the world to the U.S.

But, I have received so many phone calls and emails asking me about the continued firings of the few Black staffers at the Republican National Committee (RNC) that I have decided to share my thoughts on this issue and deal with Eastern Europe at a later time.

First of all, these staffers deserved to be fired; it should have happened a long time ago. They were in way over their heads and their level of arrogance was just astonishing.

But in fairness to them, they were set up for failure by the party from the very beginning. Many in the party felt the need to hire Blacks, not because they really wanted to diversify the party; but in some of the party's thinking, they can't be called "racist" because they hired a few Blacks. I am not joking; this really is the thinking of many in the party.

Let me be perfectly clear, you can't have engagement with the Black community without the active participation of our congressional leadership.

The RNC is not, let me repeat, is not a policy making body in regards to legislation. But it is political malpractice to claim to want more Blacks in our party without equipping staff to go into the Black community with specific legislation that deal with issues relevant to our community.

You can't go into the Black community and not address the issue of section 5 of the Voting Rights Act. The U.S. Supreme Court told congress that they needed to update the formula used to determine how section 5 is enforced.

Republicans have controlled both houses of congress since the court's decision but have done

absolutely nothing to address this issue. Republican congressman from Wisconsin, Jim Sensenbrenner has tried to work on a bipartisan solution to this issue and the house leadership has refused to let his proposed legislation come to the floor.

The Black unemployment rate is still teetering near 10% and yet the Republican controlled congress has made no targeted policy proposals that would address this issue. Some in leadership have made stupid statements like, "a rising tide lifts all boats." Message to leadership, "everyone does not have a boat," therefore a rising tide would drown them.

These fired staffers had absolutely no engagement with our congressional leaders, rank and file members, or their staffers. So, to this extent they were set up for failure.

So, you have staffers going into the Black community with no specific solutions to the problems that are important to them—voting rights, access to capital, education reform, etc. Blacks are being told that the Republican Party is the party of Abraham Lincoln, the party of lower taxes, the party of more individual freedom—yada, yada, yada.

This is where the rising tide theory becomes insulting to Blacks. Don't tell me that your solutions for other people's problems will "trickle" down to me and my community as a byproduct of your legislative priorities.

They go into the Hispanic community offering amnesty; they go into the homosexual community offering protective class status; but they come to the Black community with trickle down legislation.

The other issue is the party has no understanding of political optics when it comes to the Black community. You have no Blacks on radio, TV, or in newspapers that represent the Republican Party; be they staffers or surrogates.

Typically, Republicans are only interested in hiring folks they are comfortable with; not Blacks who know what the hell they are doing. They hire Blacks who are afraid to go up against groups like the NAACP or The National Urban League; they feel like "they [RNC] need them [Black groups] more than they need us." This is a direct quote by a staffer to me.

You have people inside the RNC who actually think they know more about the Black community than

Blacks. I am speaking from personal experience.

The party needs to hire Blacks like Allegra McCullough, Shannon Reeves, or Jennifer Carroll to have total control over engagement with the Black community; then empower them to hire millennials to work under their leadership.

These three people are adults who cannot be bullied by RNC staff into being timid and subservient; they have relationships with the Black business community throughout the country; and they have personal relationships with various members of congress and know how to get them to move on specific legislation relevant to the Black community.

So, you can hire all the Blacks that you want, but if the hiring is not paired with specific policy initiatives; the party will once again show that they are not serious about engagement with the Black community.

Raynard Jackson is founder and chairman of Black Americans for a Better Future (BAFBF), a federally registered 527 Super PAC established to get more Blacks involved in the Republican Party. BAFBF focuses on the Black entrepreneur. For more information about BAFBF, visit [www.bafbf.org](http://www.bafbf.org).



# The Flint Water Crisis Can Still Bring Out the Best in People



**Patricia Maryland, Dr. PHD**  
NNPA News Wire Columnist

Our nation continues to marshal support for the people of Flint, Michigan, as the city rebuilds after its water supply was found to be contaminated with extremely dangerous amounts of lead. The long-term exposure of Flint residents to lead, which even in small amounts can cause grave health problems, has raised the public's awareness of this health crisis and prompted the call for immediate and enduring action — now and for years to come.

Perhaps the most devastating consequence of the Flint water crisis is the uncertain impact that prolonged lead exposure will have on the city's children. We know that

infants and children under the age of 6 are exceptionally vulnerable to lead poisoning, which can severely hinder mental and physical development and produce a host of health complications, including learning and behavioral disabilities, slowed growth, poor muscle coordination, hyperactivity, and lower IQ.

More than 200 of the city's children have already shown signs of elevated blood-lead levels, and the symptoms of poisoning can set in long after the child is no longer exposed — meaning that a child who appears well now can still face daunting health complications later in life.

We do not yet know the gravity of what has transpired in Flint. But we do know this: Flint's children deserve every opportunity to be healthy, and we must come together to develop a comprehensive strategy that guarantees the compassionate care they need to overcome short- and long-term challenges to health.

Flint has already seen an out-

pouring of support from community members, nonprofits, social service agencies and healthcare providers. Organizations including the Greater Flint Health Coalition, the United Way of Genesee County and Genesys Health System — an Ascension hospital serving Flint and its mid-Michigan neighbors — are working together to maximize the benefits of their support services and develop a long-term healthcare strategy for the generation of Flint kids who might be adversely affected.

But there is still much more work to be done, and it will take all clinical resources available to address Flint's long-term health concerns for impacted children.

Underlying the crisis in Flint are the many socioeconomic barriers that Flint's low-income children and families faced long before the tragedy, including a lack of access to quality healthcare and affordable housing. In a city of more than 100,000 Americans — where 57 percent of residents are black

and more than 40 percent live at or below the federal poverty level — there are virtually no grocery stores to be found. Together, we're working to change that and ensure that Flint's children are not left wanting — for nutritious food, early education and access to integrated social services — ever again.

The road ahead is long, and we cannot do it alone. It will take a national effort from healthcare providers, policymakers, civic leaders and individuals to equip Flint's children with the compassionate care they deserve.

Even the smallest act of service can help address the short- and long-term costs of this crisis. The Flint Child Health and Development Fund — created by a united committee of residents, healthcare providers and community organizations — will be used to provide social services, early childhood education, behavioral health services and more to children in Flint. The Flint Child Health and Development Fund is so important

to the local community that Ascension Michigan (Borgess Health — Kalamazoo, Crittenton Hospital Medical Center — Rochester, Genesys Health System — Grand Blanc, St. John Providence — Detroit, St. Mary's of Michigan — Saginaw, and St. Joseph Hospital — Tawas City) has supported the initiative by donating to this effort.

Giving what you can is the single most effective action you can take to contribute to the ongoing care and interventions in Flint. You can contribute today by visiting [www.flintkids.org](http://www.flintkids.org).

Even after the water runs clean in Flint once again, its children — and our community — may bear these scars for years to come. And so we must confront the health ramifications of the crisis and support positive health outcomes for Flint's children. It will require our foresight and collaboration to guarantee their long-term care.

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

Commentary, Continued from page 8.

of suspension, or something that suggests that a "hands on" campaign need not be literally hands on, or that the "ground game" that Lewandowski is often praised for does not mean that he should knock reporters down to the ground.

Those African Americans (and there are a few), who are supporting Donald Trump need to ask themselves what the reaction would be if Corey Lewandowski were Black. Would Trump be as supportive? Would others? And just for the record, who are the senior African Americans on the Trump team? Just asking. Not complaining, if there aren't any.

I am of the generation that used to play "what if" all the time. Knowing, but determined to imagine and speculate, what would happen if you flip the script. What if the White McKinney, Texas police corporal Eric Casebolt had pulled a blonde White girl by the hair instead of pulling the braids of the Black Dajerra Becton? Or, what if a Black officer, not Casebolt, had pulled a White girl by her blonde locks? The very muted outrage that we heard when Becton was assaulted would have turned into a crescendo had a Black police officer had the temerity to assault a White teen.

Similarly, if a car full of Black plainclothes NYPD police officers had chosen to hassle a White mailman because he hollered at them, would there have been the same arrest and cover-up that has taken place in the White police officers in Crown Heights arrested Glen Grays and forced him to abandon his mail truck?

I am not sure why I play "what if" or "just imagine." We know that race still matters, and that matters still aren't fair. Still, as I watch Mr. Trump circle the wagon around Corey Lewandowski, I just have to wonder how different his reaction (and the public reaction) might be if Lewandowski were Black. Just wondering.

Julianne Malveaux is an author and economist based in Washington, DC. Her latest is offering "Are We Better Off? Race, Obama and Public Policy" is available at [www.juliannemalveaux.com](http://www.juliannemalveaux.com) or via Amazon.



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# Criminal Justice Reform Snagged in Campaign Politics

By Dee Hunter  
Urban News Service

Planned reforms to federal drug and sentencing laws that imprisoned many African-Americans have become locked up by election-year politics.

"The cost of incarceration and a growing awareness of the problems with mandatory minimum sentences have created a diverse coalition calling for reforms," said Kevin Ring, of Families Against Mandatory Minimums.

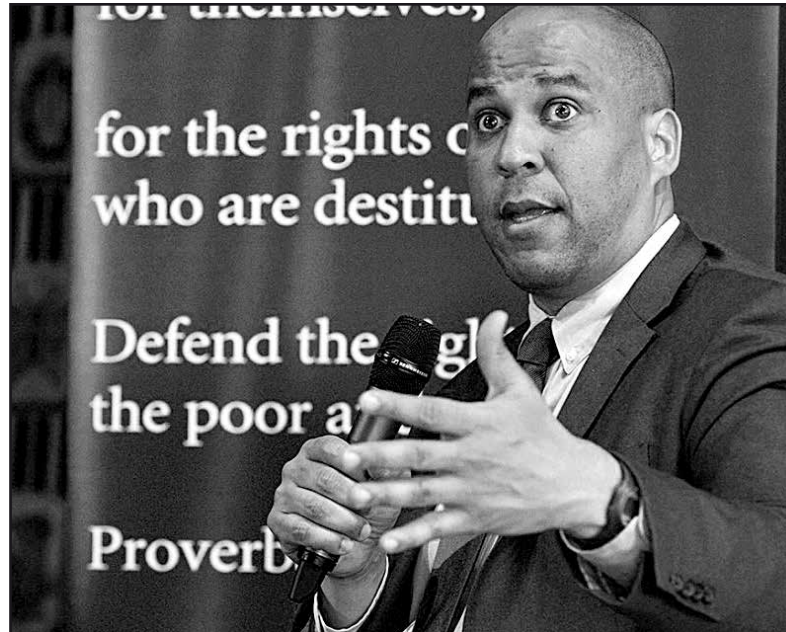
Reform supporters span civil rights advocates, law enforcement organizations, numerous federal judges, conservative groups and even Republican stalwarts, the Koch Brothers. Eighty percent of American voters support ending mandatory minimum sentences for

drug offenses, according to a February Pew Charitable Trust's poll.

President Obama has made this issue a priority. He issued an executive order in January to prohibit solitary confinement of juveniles. He discussed criminal justice reform in his latest State of the Union address, and pardoned 95 federal inmates in December 2015. He also became the first president to visit a federal prison.

Several relevant bills enjoy broad bipartisan support in Congress. The Senate Judiciary Committee approved the Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act of 2015 by a 15-5 vote last October.

Judiciary Chairman Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) introduced this legislation, which enjoys 28 Senate co-sponsors. "Our sentencing bill is a compromise that shows that sena-



U.S. Senator Cory Booker (D-N.J.) says that some of his colleagues in Congress have misrepresented the crime bill that he's working on. In this photo, Booker talks about criminal justice reform during an event hosted by the Justice Fellowship Program at the Lutheran Church of the Reformation in Northeast, Washington, D.C., in July 2015. (Freddie Allen/AMG)

stead, the bill creates a mandatory 25-year sentence.

This legislation retroactively applies a 2010 sentencing-reform provision that reduced the disparity between crack and powder cocaine penalties. This change alone would let about 6,500 prisoners petition the courts for release or reduced sentences. Grassley's bill also includes juvenile-justice reforms and language to help former prisoners transition back into society.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Kentucky), facing pressure from tough-on-crime Republicans, has not said whether he will allow a vote on Grassley's proposal. "Our system of justice is not broken," former U.S. attorney general John Ashcroft wrote last month in a letter to McConnell, signed by 40 high-ranking former law-enforcement officials. "Mandatory minimums have caused a dramatic reduction in crime."

Reform advocates do not consider Grassley's legislation the major overhaul of mandatory-minimum sentences for which they long have fought, saying his bill does not go far enough.

"It's a Goldilocks reform bill. It's not too much. It's not too little. But it's better than nothing," said Nkechi Taifa of the Open Society Policy Center. "There was a time when this looked like a slam dunk...It was the right issue at the right time. Now it is not so clear."

This bill only applies to the federal justice system, where about 200,000 inmates are held. This is just 8 percent of the 2.5 million Americans confined to state prisons and local jails.

While the Senate's path remains clouded, the measure has a brighter future in the House. Legislators and reform advocates consider Speaker Paul Ryan (R-Wisconsin) an ally in overhauling sentencing and drug laws. Ryan said he supports all the measures that have cleared the House Judiciary Committee. "We will schedule floor time for them," Ryan told journalists at a recent Capitol press briefing.

Until then, reformers sound as impatient as ever.

"All there has been is talk, and more talk," said civil rights leader Barbara Arwine. "Action is long overdue. Mass incarceration threatens many of the gains we fought for in the Civil Rights Movement. It's time for a vote."

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tors from both sides of the aisle can come together to address a serious problem in a reasonable and responsible way," Grassley said.

Traditional crime fighters and criminal-justice reformers debate whether drug offenders are violent. Thirty-five percent of drug offenders in federal prison had minimal criminal histories and no previous imprisonment, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS). However, BJS also reports that 25 percent of drug offenders also used weapons in their most recent offenses.

Senator Ted Cruz (R - Texas) voted against the bill. As amended, it provides "leniency for violent criminals who use guns and gives lighter sentences to criminals al-

ready serving time," he said before the Judiciary Committee.

"That claim is false and does not factually line up with the reality of who is behind bars in our federal prisons," said Senator Cory Booker (D-New Jersey) in response to critics who say the bill would free violent criminals. "Each case must also go before a federal judge, with the prosecutor present for an independent judicial review."

Grassley's measure addresses several stringent sentencing provisions that have helped swell the federal prison population over the past 30 years. It would repeal the "three strikes" law that requires a mandatory life sentence without parole for anyone with a third conviction on drug or violent-felony charges. In-

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# Volunteers Needed in Louisiana for Disaster Recovery

## Data News Staff Edited Report

In the wake of a disaster, the people of Louisiana have always come together with compassion and courage to ask how they can help survivors.

Soon after a disaster people come forward to assist those in need. However, people often don't realize there is still a great need a few weeks after the disaster. Currently, there is a shortage of volunteers, particularly in northern Louisiana.

If anyone would like to volunteer to help Louisiana disaster survivors, the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) suggest working through a local voluntary organization. Debris removal and rebuilding are two ways that volunteers can help.

Those interested in volunteering



A car sits in flooded water in Hammond, La., Friday, March 11, 2016. Photo Credit Scott Threlkeld / AP

can contact Volunteer Louisiana online at [www.volunteerlouisiana.gov](http://www.volunteerlouisiana.gov) or email [nauck@crt.la.gov](mailto:nauck@crt.la.gov) and be put in touch with a voluntary group in need. Volunteer Louisiana is a state-run organization.

Residents can learn more about

volunteering and its benefits by viewing a video at <http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/video/112533>.

If you are unable to volunteer your time or skills, recovery officials suggest making a donation to

an organization involved in disaster recovery as an effective and efficient way of contributing.

Cash contributions to voluntary organizations make good sense for a number of reasons:

Financial contributions help ensure a steady flow of important services to survivors.

Local organizations spend the money in the local affected community, accelerating its economic recovery.

Cash donations, rather than unsolicited donated goods, avoid the complicated, costly and time-consuming process of collecting, transporting and distributing these goods.

Cash donations to recognized relief organizations are tax-deductible.

Volunteering and donating through existing channels, and making responsible decisions that do not hinder the recovery, is the best way to be of service.

# New Orleans Entrepreneurs

*Pitch Your Made in the USA Products to Walmart,  
Deals Can be Made on the Spot*

## U.S. Manufacturing Summit and Open Call for U.S. Products at Company's Headquarters

Walmart, the world's largest retailer, is looking for entrepreneurs to pitch their made in the USA products to the company's buyers in a daylong event at Walmart's global headquarters in Bentonville, Arkansas on June 28, 2016. Registration has begun.

"We are opening our doors and making our buyers available to meet with suppliers with one goal in mind: buy more American products," said Cindi Marsiglio, Walmart's vice president of U.S. Sourcing and Manufacturing. "From food to toys to apparel, and companies large and small from coast to coast, we want to make a deal with you for

your U.S. made products."

At the 2015 Open Call, KettlePizza of Groveland, Massachusetts, a twelve-person company, signed a deal for their pizza oven conversion kit to be on the shelves of 500 Walmart stores, while Myndology, Inc. of Appleton, Wisconsin, a three-person company, landed a deal for their ring-bound flashcards to be sold in over 3,000 Walmart stores. Deals are possible for just a few to thousands of Walmart stores, including Walmart.com and Sam's Club locations across the country.

"Landing a deal with Walmart was huge for us," said KettlePizza co-founder, George Peters. "Our deal at Open Call gave our small company the chance at a national audience, which is what we needed to take our company to the next level. There is no faster path to a national retail presence than Walmart.

Our deal was a game changer."

"Filling out the application was exciting in itself and a chance that I couldn't pass on. It's not every day that you get the chance to sit down in front of a Walmart buyer and pitch the products you have put your life into, then land a deal for over 3,000 Walmart stores," said Nick Miller, President and Owner of Myndology, Inc. "Since our deal for flash cards, we've sold two more products to Walmart. I recommend to anyone manufacturing in the U.S. to submit to Open Call if they want to bring their items to retail."

Open Call is about more than entrepreneurs pitching products to Walmart. The U.S. Manufacturing Summit and Open Call bring together industry experts, government officials, suppliers, and innovators. Attendees will explore the infrastructure and economic

development opportunities available to new and expanding manufacturing facilities throughout the United States.

In January 2013, Walmart committed to American renewal by announcing it intends to help boost job creation and U.S. manufacturing through buying an additional \$250 billion in products that support American jobs over 10 years. Walmart is going to meet its commitment in a variety of ways, including buying more from existing domestic suppliers, doing business with new domestic suppliers and helping current suppliers reshore their overseas production.

The deadline for entrepreneurs to register for Open Call is May 27. For more details about Walmart's 2016 U.S. Manufacturing Summit and Open Call, entrepreneurs may visit [walmart-jump.com](http://walmart-jump.com).

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