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Xavier University Opens Haitian Art Exhibits, Celebrates New President’s Heritage



Xavier University Art History professor Dr. Sarah Clunis with a Boston-based Haitian-American who traveled to see the exhibit.

By Morgan Yates
Data News Weekly Contributor

In honor of Xavier’s new President Dr. C. Reynold Verret, and Haiti’s Culture, Xavier University of Louisiana opened two exhibits: the “Reality and Imagination: Uninhibited Life” and “Revolution!” on Sunday, April

17, 2016. The event brought out the New Orleans Haitian American Community and art lovers in the City to appreciate the work of two Haitian Artists Leslie Jean-Bart and Ulrick Jean-Pierre.
“Both galleries represent the Haitian Culture which has a strong presence in New Orleans, Louisiana,” said Dr. C. Reynold Verret, Xavier University’s President,

who attended the opening. These galleries are significant not only to Xavier but to the City as well, Verret said.
The photography of Leslie Jean-Bart is featured at Xavier’s Library Gallery on the first floor, and the artwork of Ulrick Jean-Pierre can be found at Xavier’s Administrative Building Chapel Gallery. Both galleries

On the Cover: Xavier University President Dr. C Reynold Verret with artist Ulrick Jean-Pierre and members of the New Orleans Haitian American community at the opening of the Haitian art exhibit Revolution!

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DATA NEWS WEEKLY

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Please call 504-309-9913 for subscription information or to obtain a back issue of the paper ONLY.
Dated material two weeks in advance. Not responsible for publishing or return of unsolicited manuscripts or photos.

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Haitian-American artist Ulrick Jean-Pierre pays tribute to Xavier University's new President, Dr. C. Reynold Verret.



Haitian-American Art Photographer Leslie Jean-Bart, explains color composition of the work to Xavier University President, Dr. C. Reynolds Verret on the left.

remain open for public viewing and were sponsored by a collaboration between Xavier's African-American and Diaspora Studies Program and Tulane's Stone Center for Latin-American Studies Partnership, XU-TULAC, thanks to a U.S. Department of Education Title VI Grant.

"The galleries were first introduced to [the student body, faculty, and staff] during Dr. C. Reynold Verret's Inauguration," said Dr. Sarah Clunis, a Xavier University Assistant Professor of Art History, and the Director of the African-American and Diaspora Studies Program. "I thought this period was very befitting since Dr. Verret is of Haitian descent and the Chapel Gallery art strongly portrays Haitian heroes," said Clunis, who organized and manages the exhibits.

At the exhibit opening, Leslie Jean-Bart, a Haitian-American Fine Art Photographer who has been profiled in The New York Times for his work, shared with the public the inspiration for his work. "I began creating these pieces during a very vulnerable time in my life when my mother was ill. These pieces gave me inspiration and allowed me some relief," Jean-Bart said. "When others view my pieces, I want them to see the color in them which represents an aspect of Haitian Culture. If people walk away from my art with a positive feeling, I will have complete satisfaction."

The Chapel Gallery comprises pieces inspired by historical moments of the Haitian Revolution


by Haitian-American Artist Ulrick Jean-Pierre. Jean-Pierre reminded public viewers during the opening that without the Haitian Revolution, there would be no Louisiana Purchase. Jean-Pierre said that the Haitian Revolution was important for reminding people of color about the greatness that could be achieved by people who successfully fought and won their freedom from slavery. He wanted people to understand the true story of Haiti, not the one they see in the media today.

"Since these galleries have opened, many students have commented that this may be the first time they have seen art they can relate to," Clunis said. "I think these galleries empower our students and educate them about their history."

Faculty and staff believe this experience not only educated Xavier students on their history, but also helps them to gain a professional appreciation about the significance of art. "It's a way for our students to talk with a professional artist, to dialogue with them, and to understand how to put a show together," said Dr. Kimberly Vaz, Xavier's Associate Dean for the College of Arts and Sciences. "Jean-Bart talked to us about how his art saved his emotional life when he was struggling with his mother's illness. Art is a way for people to challenge their emotions, without art, Jean-Bart said he may not be here today," Vaz said.

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CeCe Winans to Sing at Gospel Is Alive

Gospel legend CeCe Winans will be the headline attraction at the "27th Annual Johnny Jackson Jr. Gospel Is Alive Celebration", which will be held at its traditional time - the Monday morning following the first weekend of Jazz Fest.

Admission is free. The concert begins at 9:30 a.m. Also appearing will be the New Orleans Council on Aging Choir and the popular New Orleans Gospel Group The Johnson Extension. In addition, the Rev. Dr. Lois Johnson Dejean will receive the "Johnny Jackson Jr. Gospel Is Alive Celebration Lifetime Achievement Award". CeCe Winans is a gospel music legend - with 10 GRAMMY Awards, 11 Dove Awards and seven Stel-

lar Awards to her credit, and more than 12 million albums sold worldwide. A member of the famous Winans family, she had success with her brother Benjamin "BeBe" Winans in a singing duo before launching her solo career in 1995. She has since become one of the best-selling female gospel artists of all time.

The Johnny Jackson Jr. Gospel Is Alive Celebration is the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival's annual educational workshop program for youth and senior citizens in the New Orleans area. The concert is also open to the public, free of charge, depending on seating availability.

The concert has been named in honor of one of its biggest propo-



CeCe Winans

nents, Johnny Jackson, Jr., a longtime member of the board of directors of the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival and Foundation, as well as a former New Orleans City Council member and former Louisiana State Representative.

School groups are encouraged to attend. For group information, please call (504) 558-6100.

The concert will take place at:

Franklin Avenue Baptist Church
2515 Franklin Avenue
New Orleans, Louisiana 70117

At the event, the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival and Foundation will recognize the 2016 Gospel Is Alive Honorees:

Lifetime Achievement:
Rev. Dr. Lois Johnson Dejean

The Zion Harmonizers

McDonogh 35 Gospel Choir
Mrs. Veronica Downs-Dorsey,
Director

Franklin Ave. Baptist Church
Music Ministry
Ellis Lindsey, Minister of Music

Linda Lou Bradley

Randolph M. Thomas, Jr.

The 2016 Johnny Jackson Jr. Gospel Is Alive Celebration is produced and presented by the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival presented by Shell.

Report Shows Range of Schooling Options in New Orleans Under Charter System

By Keith Brannon
Tulane University Contributor

New Orleans, families have a wider range of public school options than in other cities, according to a new report by the Education Research Alliance for New Orleans at Tulane University.

Researchers collected local data on length of school day, extracurricular activities, whether schools had a specific theme and other important school characteristics and programs. They also collected data from school web sites in three other Southern cities that have similar student populations: Atlanta, East Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and Jackson, Mississippi.

Key findings include:

- New Orleans has the widest range of schooling options among the cities considered. More generally, the districts in the study that had more charter schools had a wider range of options.
- Within New Orleans, schooling options vary even within specific charter management organizations and within the two agencies that authorize charter schools: the Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB) schools and the state Recovery School District (RSD).

- OPSB offers a wider variety of schooling options compared with RSD.

"One of main arguments for more charter schools and expanded school choice is that this gives families more options," said lead author Paula Arce-Trigatti. "Our analysis suggests that families do have a variety of options, at least on the factors we could measure." The other authors of the report are Jane Lincove, associate director of ERA-New Orleans, Huriya Jabbar of the University of Texas at Austin, and Douglas Harris, Tulane professor and ERA-New Orleans director.

The researchers suggest that the greater variation with OPSB schools could be related to their higher School Performance Scores, which means OPSB schools may be under less accountability pressure. RSD schools, which serve more disadvantaged students and have lower School Performance Scores, face a real threat of being closed and this may lead them to focus their attention on a common set of strategies for increasing test scores.

The report is available at <http://educationresearchalliance-nola.org/>.

New Orleans City Council President Jason Williams Admitted to The American College Of Trial Lawyers

Data News Staff Edited Report

New Orleans City Council President Jason Williams has become a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers, one of the premier legal associations in North America.

The induction ceremony at which Cm. Williams became a Fellow took place recently before an audience of approximately 1,000 persons during the recent 2016 Spring Meeting of the College in Maui, Hawaii.

Founded in 1950, the College is composed of the best of the trial bar from the United States and Canada. Fellowship in the College is extended by invitation only and only after careful investigation, to those experienced trial lawyers of diverse backgrounds, who have mastered the art of advocacy and whose professional careers have been marked by the highest standards of ethical conduct, professionalism, civility and collegiality.

Lawyers must have a minimum of fifteen years trial ex-



New Orleans City Council President Jason Williams

perience before they can be considered for Fellowship. Membership in the College cannot exceed one percent of the total lawyer population of any state or province. There are currently approximately 5,800 members in the United States and Canada, including active Fellows, Emeritus Fellows, Judicial Fellows

(those who ascended to the bench after their induction) and Honorary Fellows.

The College maintains and seeks to improve the standards of trial practice, professionalism, ethics and the administration of justice through education and public statements on important legal issues relating to its mission. The College strongly supports the independence of the judiciary, trial by jury, respect for the rule of law, access to justice, and fair and just representation of all parties to legal proceedings.

The College is thus able to speak with a balanced voice on important issues affecting the legal profession and the administration of justice.

Williams is lead counsel of Jason Rogers Williams and Associates as well as a partner in the firm of Unglesby & Williams and has been practicing in this city for 18 years. The newly inducted Fellow is an alumnus of Tulane School of Law.

New Orleans Jazz Fest 2016 Set for April 22 through May 1

Data News Staff Edited Report

The New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, a/k/a Jazz Fest, is a 10-day cultural feast in which thousands of musicians, cooks and craftspeople welcome 400,000 visitors each year. The Louisiana Heritage Fair showcases unforgettable music on multiple stages, delicious Louisiana cuisine in two large food areas, and crafts artisans from the region and around the world demonstrating and selling their work. The Louisiana Heritage Fair is held at the Fair Grounds Race Course over the course of 2 weekends. They are April 22, 23, 24 & April 28, 29, 30 & May 1 2016.

The New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival and Foundation, Inc. is the nonprofit organization that owns the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival presented by Shell. The Foundation uses the proceeds from Jazz Fest, and other revenues,



for year-round activities in the areas of education, economic development and cultural enrichment. Education programs include the Don "Moose" Jamison Heritage School of Music, the Tom Dent Congo Square Lecture Series and the Class Got Brass competition.

Economic Development initiatives include the Community Partnership Grants, the Sync Up entertainment industry conference and new programs such as the Catapult Fund and Brass Tacks. Cultural events include the Jazz Journey

concert series and free community festivals: the Crescent City Blues & BBQ Festival, the Congo Square New World Rhythms Festival, the Louisiana Cajun-Zydeco Festival and the Tremé Creole Gumbo Festival. The Foundation also owns radio station WWOZ 90.7-FM and the Jazz & Heritage Archive. In December 2014, the Foundation opened a new building, the George and Joyce Wein Jazz & Heritage Center – an education and community facility named for Jazz Fest founder George Wein and his late wife.

The New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival presented by Shell is a co-production of Festival Productions Louisiana, LLC. (a wholly owned subsidiary of Festival Productions, Inc.-New Orleans) and AEG Louisiana Production, LLC. (a subsidiary of AEG Live).

For the most up-to-date Jazz Fest info and performance schedules, visit www.nojazzfest.com.

120th Anniversary of Plessy vs. Ferguson Incites Petition

By Eric Craig Data News Contributor

Plessy v. Ferguson is a U.S. Supreme Court case in 1896 that upheld the rights of states to pass laws allowing or even requiring racial segregation in public and private institutions such as schools, public transportation, restrooms, and restaurants. The case strengthened the ability of southern states to pass Jim Crow laws discriminating against African Americans and other minorities, and enshrined the doctrine of "separate but equal" as the guiding principle in American race relations and public services. "Separate but equal" remained the law of the land after *Plessy v. Ferguson* until the Supreme Court invalidated that case with the 1954 decision against segregation in *Brown v. Board of Education*.

May 18, 2016 marks the 120-year anniversary of the 7-1 U.S. Supreme Court decision, but one man wants



Members of the Plessy and Ferguson Foundation

to ensure it's an observance to remember.

Keith Plessy, a descendant of Homer Adolph Plessy, is petitioning for a Presidential Medal of Freedom for the Late Homer Plessy. Keith Plessy believes Homer Plessy deserves this medal because it was his civil disobedience act that jump-started the *Plessy vs. Ferguson*

case and ultimate ruling.

According to the Plessy and Ferguson Foundation, co-founded by Keith Plessy, Homer Plessy was a shoemaker who was seven-eighths Caucasian. In 1892 the State of Louisiana passed legislation forcing black and white passengers to sit in separate railway cars. Mr. Plessy, sat in the white railroad section,



Keith Plessy

refusing to leave his seat when directed to do so.

"Plessy's act of civil disobedience and his use of the court system foreshadowed the civil rights struggles of the twentieth century," Keith Plessy wrote in a letter supporting the significance of Plessy receiving a presidential Medal of Freedom.

"His role in the legal and social movement to abolish segregationist laws was obscured when he lost his case in the U.S. Supreme Court," Keith Plessy added.

Keith is currently upholding a petition to urge U.S. President Barack Obama to grant Homer Plessy a Presidential Medal of Freedom. The petition needs at least 100,000 signatures for it to be brought to the Obama's attention.

"I'm not intimidated at all by that number. In my heart, if we get to the people right, at least a million should be agreeing with us," Keith Plessy said.

Keith encourages anyone who is interested in supporting the cause to honor Homer Adolph Plessy to sign the white house petition before May 15, 2016 at <https://petitions.whitehouse.gov/petition/nominate-homer-plessy-recipient-medal-freedom-120-anniversary-case-may-18-2016>.

Bucking the Gardening Rules

By LMG Calla Victoria
Data News Weekly Columnist

As gardeners we hear all of the rules that prevail in the world of horticulture, prune plants when they are dormant (winter time for most plants), dig up your caladium bulbs and replant them in the spring, etc. While rules can be good guidelines sometimes you just have to buck those rules. Remember that God planted the Garden of Eden and there is nothing in the Scriptures about Adam digging up caladium bulbs. Never forget that before humans became involved, plants grew perfectly well on their own, and still do so in the wild. So take some of the rules with a grain of salt. I NEVER dig up my caladiums, and they come back bigger each year because those roots stayed in the ground and got big and strong. What is the point of planting them, digging them up and



planting them again? So far as pruning, it is good to follow the rule about prun-

ing when the plant is dormant, but what about now when some of your shrubs

and trees are so large that they are obstructing the pathway? Do you leave those plants until the winter...certainly not, you prune them now? That is exactly what is happening in my yard right today. My Angel's trumpet (*Brugmansia suaveolens*) branches are reaching way out into the walkway, and the same is the case with my lovely iridescent Purple Shields (*Strobilanthes dyerianus*) and my Gardenia tree (*Gardenia jasminoides* 'August Beauty'). So of course I had to prune them so that I could get down the walkway. Check out my "Gardening Tip of the Week" page to find out what I did with all of the bounty from pruning. <http://thegardeningdiva.com/gardening-tip-of-the-week.html>

Breaking more rules:

When we hear about propagating we are always instructed to just use the soft new growth of the plant, the cut-

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NOLA Turns out for HBO's "Confirmation" Screening

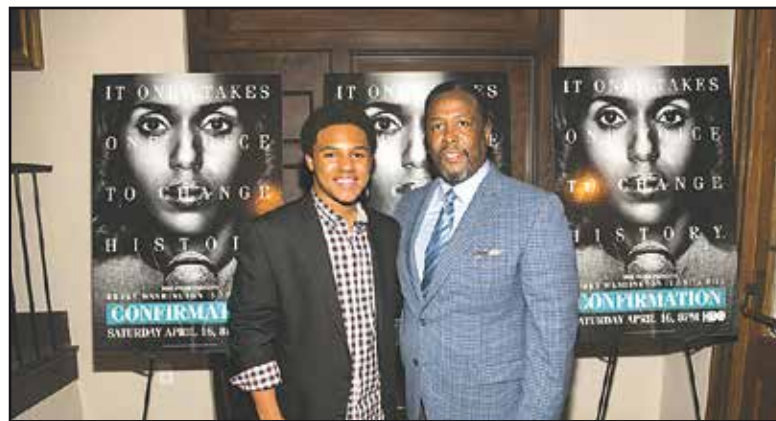
New Docu-Drama stars Wendell Pierce as Justice Clarence Thomas

By Valerie Thibodeaux
Photos by Adrienne Battistella
Photography, LLC

On Tuesday night April 12th, 2016, native son Wendell Pierce hosted an elegant reception at the Tableau Restaurant, located in the French Quarter. This event was to celebrate the premiere of his HBO movie "Confirmation" in which he portrays Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, with Kerry Washington co-starring as Anita Hill.

Congrats to Mr. Pierce on an excellent choice for a first-class reception. The Tableau Restaurant offered everything from fresh carved prime rib to a seafood and okra gumbo to die for, all served with class and sophistication. This delicious menu and an open bar proved to be the perfect prelude to an exciting evening. As Mr. Pierce mingled with his guests he was quite the host, every bit as southern as he was eloquent. Although Ms. Washington was regrettably absent, Mr. Pierce was flanked by the rest of the cast including Ms. Carol Sutton, and his family, as well as members of the press who represented HBO, Data Newsweekly, WBOK and other local media.

The movie was viewed at Le Petit Theatre also located in the French Quarter right next to the Tableau Restaurant. An HBO representative introduced Mr. Pierce, who then thanked HBO, his family and all his supporters in the New Orleans Artistic Community. The movie was riveting and surreal and Wendell's performance was no less than extraordinary. He truly captured the essence of the man as well as the gravity of the situation he faced as a Black man, a judge, in the racist political climate in which he was immersed. Mr. Pierce's depiction of Judge Thomas was both masterful and profound. With his skill and talent there's no doubt that Wendell Pierce, our native son's star will continue to rise.



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

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Black Women Won't Celebrate Equal Pay Day Until August 1st



Julianne Malveaux
NNPA Columnist

The Sewall-Belmont House is located at the National Women's Party in Washington D.C. It is one of the oldest houses near the United States Capitol, and was the house where Alice Paul wrote the 19th Amendment that granted women the right to vote. On April 12, Equal Pay Day, President Obama designated the house the Belmont-Paul Women's Equality National Monument. The National Park System will manage the site, and a philanthropist has donated a million dollars to support the site and to provide some restorations to the house.

According to the American Association of University Women, a group that promotes equity and education for women and girls, "Equal Pay Day is the symbolic day when women's earnings 'catch up' to men's earnings from the previous year."

But African American women earn a scant 63 cents to the average dollar a White man earns. A Black woman would have to work until around August 1 to earn as much as a man did in the previous year! As alarming as that fact is, it is equally alarming that few mention Equal Pay Day in a racial context. Ain't I a woman?

It would have meant a lot to some African American women had President Obama mentioned other inequality in passing. It would not have distracted from the important points he made when he designated the new monument. After all, the press release from the White House talked about "America's diverse history". The disparate treat-

ment of African American women is certainly part of that history.

To be sure, President Obama has done a good job in addressing the issue of equal pay and fair treatment of women in the workplace. His first piece of legislation, the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, gave women a longer time to sue for workplace discrimination. He has also created a National Equal Pay Task Force and, through executive order, prohibited federal contractors from discriminating against workers who discuss their pay. In the non-federal workplace, employees can be disciplined, or even fired, if they discuss their pay. Indeed, the reason there are such gaping pay gaps is because there is so little transparency about pay. From legislation he has supported, and discretionary acts he has taken, President Obama would likely do more to close the gender pay gap were there a more cooperative Congress. Clearly, pay equity is not a priority for this Congress.

President Obama has been an aggressively pro-family President. From his support of an increased minimum wage, to his advocacy for paid sick leave (including an executive order for federal contractors), to his support for better overtime regulations, the President has strongly supported workplace fairness. It takes nothing from his strong commitment to women, though, to acknowledge that African American women earn less, and that Equal Pay Day comes much later for them (and for Latina women, who would have to work until November 1 to earn the same amount a man earned last year) than it does for other women.

Surrounded by three intelligent and beautiful African American women – Michelle, Sasha and Malia – it would be impossible for our President to be unaware of the challenges that African American women face. While I am aware that this President prefers not to deal with race matters, in this last year

of his Presidency, he ought to consider doing so. There are few consequences for this action.

President Obama does not mind using Black women as a throwaway line in a speech. At his University of Chicago Law School conversation, he defended his nomination of Merrick Garland to the Supreme Court. He rather rapidly said that some people expected him to pick a "Black lesbian from Skokie," a comment I found offensive and condescending. If Black women can be fodder for a silly off-the-cuff remark, surely we ought to get enough serious policy consideration for our pay equity issues to be addressed.

August 1 is Equal Pay Day for African American women. We work harder, longer, and for less remuneration than other women do. What are we going to do about it?

Julianne Malveaux is an author and economist based in Washington, DC. Her latest book "Are We Better Off? Race, Obama and Public Policy" is available at www.amazon.com and <http://www.julianne-malveaux.com>.

Protecting the Right to Vote

Democracy Awakening



Cornell William Brooks
President & CEO, NAACP

When we think about the right to vote, it is and should be understood to be a civic sacrament in the temple of democracy. However, this presidential election will be the first in 50 years without the full protection of the Voting Rights Act.

In 1965, the Voting Rights Act was enacted with the blood, sweat and tears of Americans from all across the country. But 50 years later, we're still dealing with a multi-hued, multi-racial, multi-ethnic

form of bias and discrimination at the ballot box.

To combat this assault on the right to vote, the NAACP has come together with more than 260 organizations – representing the labor, peace, environmental, student, racial justice, civil rights and money in politics reform movements – to stage a mass convergence this month on Washington, D.C. and call for democracy reforms.

On April 16-18, thousands of activists will mobilize in the nation's capital for Democracy Awakening, a three-day event featuring a rally, march, teach-ins, lobbying and civil disobedience. Democracy Awakening plans to fight back against business as usual in Washington, D.C., and demand a democracy that works for everyone. This means restoration of full voting rights, breaking the stranglehold corporations and the wealthy have on elec-

tions, and demand Congress hold hearings and vote to fill the U.S. Supreme Court vacancy.

People all across the country, African-Americans, Latinos, students, and senior citizens feel as though the civic sacrament of the right to vote is being threatened. As a result of the U.S. Supreme Court's misguided Shelby County decision in 2013, which invalidated Section 4(b) of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, millions of Americans are now denied the strong protection of their right to vote. Since then, we have seen state legislature after state legislature engage in a Machiavellian frenzy of voter disenfranchisement.

More than 30 states have imposed voter ID laws, which on their face seem innocuous. But, when we keep in mind which American voters don't possess these ID's, we have reason to be alarmed.

Consider the state of Texas. Be-

cause of voter ID laws, it is estimated that between 500,000 to 700,000 eligible citizens do not possess the prerequisite I.D. – disproportionately affecting low-income citizens, African-Americans, and Latinos.

We know that voter ID laws also disproportionately disenfranchise the elderly. For example, 93-year-old Rosanell Eaton is legally challenging North Carolina's voter ID law. She has voted for 70 years – but, because she was born at home, because her name does not match the name on the birth certificate or match the name on the voting roll, her franchise – notwithstanding the fact that she voted for 70 years – is at risk.

Students also are being put at risk. In Texas, a law essentially said, if you have an ID that allows you to carry a concealed weapon, it is deemed sufficient as civic proof of identification to vote. But a li-

brary card – an I.D. that allows you to carry a book of Shakespeare or of chemistry – is deemed an insufficient form of proof to vote.

Consider North Carolina, once the most progressive state in the country with respect to voting rights. But, in a few short years in the wake of Shelby, we saw a massive rollback in terms of that franchise. Among the measures that were curtailed or constrained: "pre-registration," which allowed 17-year-olds who were about to turn 18 in time for a new election to register early; Sunday voting and early voting.

Instead of curtailing and restraining the right to vote, we should be expanding it. It is, once again, the time to stand up and fight for our right to vote.

The NAACP is committed to

Commentary,
Continued on page 9.

Spiritually Speaking

Confidence Plus Discipline Equals Power



James A. Washington
NNPA News Wire
Columnist

I have two words for you today; confidence and discipline. Both of which, when viewed spiritually, exude Godly principles. Put this on the Holy Spirit, but discipline is an amazing thing. When applied to faith, be it natural or supernatural, the result is spiritual confidence. Spiritual confidence and discipline, without ego or arrogance, gives you an attitude of awareness and knowledge and dare I say power? The example I'd like to use is of those saints in the Upper Room, when the Holy Spirit came upon them on the day of Pentecost and instilled everyone there with well, confidence and discipline. These people ultimately came to demonstrate a level of faith that was used via the power and grace of God to spread the Word of God all over the world. If you look at the before and

after of this Pentecostal happening, you'll begin to see my point. Prior to this, the faithful were huddled in secrecy, being faithful to the belief that what Jesus had told them, was indeed true. God would send another. That 'Other' turned out to be the Holy Spirit, who imbued them with more of what they already had. Now their confidence in the truth of Jesus, coupled with their discipline to spread that word, manifested itself in their ability to communicate the gospel to the world. The world has not been the same since.

The question then becomes, in what is your confidence and discipline based? Where do you get the necessary power to have your gifts fortified? Does your faith give you the strength to acquire the discipline necessary to know what you

should be doing in the Lord's name and then do it? I believe the result is the power to know that you can do anything through Christ Jesus, provided you were called to do it. I also believe scripture illustrates to us that without spiritually based discipline, it is practically impossible to stand up to the trials and tribulations of life, but also impossible to withstand the temptations that seek to control our sometimes out of control behavior. The good news here is that wherever the Holy Spirit resides, change will occur, the right kind of change. Of those anointed in the Upper Room, many were faced with the opportunity to make their lives easier, if they would simply maintain the secrecy of their faith. Spiritually based faith and confidence gave each the power to boldly speak the truth.

Remember Peter denied Christ three times without confidence. Some would call that cowardice. After Pentecost, he was buoyed by confidence and discipline. Power is the Word that comes to mind here.

You remember Paul at Ephesus? "When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them and they spoke in tongues and prophesied." Acts 19:6. Here, these twelve men were already baptized but knew nothing of the Holy Spirit. After, we are told, they began to preach the gospel. Can't you see the power gained and their growing confidence? There is nothing restrictive about this kind of discipline. It is in fact quite liberating. They knew that they knew the same way we know that we know. It's that change thing again. It's

called being set apart and not having to apologize or keep it a secret. I believe it lets us stand up as Christians in the face of criticism, adversity and temptation. We may still fall, but we will not fail because our infrastructure has been fortified. Let me be clear. I believe that discipline coupled with confidence invites the Holy Spirit to take up permanent residence in your soul. It's what I'm looking for and what I'm praying for, for me and for you. And look out world when that happens. Like someone once said to me, I'm a different kind of soldier. Believe it or not, so are we.

May God bless and keep you always.

The Dallas Weekly is a member publication of the NNPA. Learn more about becoming a member at NNPA.org.

Home Style, Continued from page 6.

ting should only be a few inches long, then take off all of the leaves except a few at the very top of the cutting, and dip the bottom of the cutting into rooting hormone for the best results. Well...Every now and then I would pass this home that had a beautiful, lush, pink angel's trumpet tree in front of it. One day I saw a lady in front of the home and asked if I could have a cutting off of the tree? I was in the process of snipping off a small 6-inch piece of the tree, when the lady said, "No take a BIG piece so you don't have to wait for the plant to get tall." Then she went all the way down to the bottom of the tree and broke off a long 5-foot piece and gave it to me. Wow, I promptly took the huge stalk home, stuck it in the ground, braced it on both sides to keep it upright, and I did not remove any of the leaves or use rooting hormone and it grew beautifully. That is where I got my first pink trumpet, the one that I used to take a cutting from for my second pink trumpet. So ever since that little escapade, I always make large cuttings if possible, and I never use rooting hormone. You can find a lot of information on propagating on my website at <http://thegardeningdiva.com/can-we-propagate-.html>.

A word on the botanical names for plants:

Scientifically, each plant is named in Latin, and always two (bi-

nomial) names. The first name is the genus of the plant, and always starts with a capital letter. The second name is the plant's species, and always begins in a lower case letter except in the case of a new cultivar. In that case the first letter of the second name is capitalized and in quotations. When I attended Master Gardener training I was annoyed to have to learn the botanical names for all of the plant material. Why was all of this extra drama necessary? But now I do understand why. As there are so many plant varieties within a genus and more coming almost on a daily thanks to all of the hybridizers, both names are required to correctly identify a plant. For example, earlier on in this article, I mentioned pruning my Angel's Trumpet (*Brugmansia suaveolens*). I have several varieties of *Brugmansia*, which is the genus that these plants fall into; including white ones, yellow, orange, and red. However, from the description, had you looked up the names, you would know that I was referring to my pink Angel's Trumpet. Botanical names also show parental crosses that recreate a new hybrid plants. Whenever you see a botanical name with an "X" between two names, you know that plant is a hybrid of the combination of two other plants. For example, the name *Neoregelia 'Blueberry Muffin' smithii* X '*Royal Flush*.' By the way this name is written, it means that

Neoregelia 'Blue Muffin' was created by crossing *Neoregelia smithii* with *Neoregelia 'Royal Flush*.' Also from the way the name is written we know that *smithii* was the seed parent and '*Royal Flush*' was the pollen parent, because the name of the seed parent is always written first in the name of a hybrid. Whenever you see a hybrid plant, please appreciate the process because it is very tedious. Just imagine taking tiny seeds from one plant, then

gathering small specks of pollen from another small plant, and combining the seed with the pollen; essentially becoming a human bee. Then planting the seed and hoping something beautiful happens, that takes patience and passion.

Check out my website at www.thegardeningdiva.com for the full story and images.

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

Commentary, Continued from page 8.

breaking down barriers to the ballot box and maximizing the vote. We don't argue or campaign for any candidate, for any party. But, we do campaign against any threat to make any citizen less of a citizen and less of a member of this democracy.

From April 16-18, activists will call for solutions.

Together, we will demand fundamental reform that makes our democracy work and enables us to tackle our great challenges. Please join us. Learn more at Democracy-Awakening.org.

Cornell William Brooks is the president and CEO of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the nation's oldest, largest, and most widely respected grassroots-based civil rights organization. In 2014, he became the 18th person to serve as chief executive of the Association, whose members in the United States and worldwide are the premier advocates for civil rights in their communities.

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trailblazer

Sonita Singh

Lending a Global Hand in Creating Solutions for those in Need

by: Edwin Buggage

Sonita Singh, is a person who is committed to helping people around the world have a quality life. Through her work in New Orleans and various cities in the U.S., in addition to her work in various African countries and Bangladesh, she is determined to help those in need in creating solutions to the problems of global inequality.

Her journey into serving others began when as an undergraduate student at Tulane University, where today she's working on her PhD in International Development. "I remember early on I wanted to help people around the world have a better quality of life. I worked in Bangladesh and Ghana and planned on getting my Medical Degree and Master's Degree in Public Health at the time. I remember working in Ghana on a project related neo-natal tetanus, in the U.S. this is not a big deal, but when you see it in Ghana and children suffering it was clear everything they were dealing with was poverty related and was something I felt could be solved."

Over the years after receiving her Master's Degree in Public Health from Tulane University, she's worked helping provide valuable resources for people in need creating public awareness campaigns that help empower communities.

"Public Health is a special kind of field, it gives you opportunities to make very impactful and powerful change. For example, if you can purify a water source, you are going to save 2000 lives right away," she remarks on her work that's saved many lives and led to long-term solutions for people in developing countries and disenfranchised people in the U.S.

Making the connection between poverty in America and in developing nations she says, "The work I do I feel is similar regardless of where I am, because it is all connected to people not having access and helping find ways to give them access to things that will improve their standard of living and quality of life." Continuing she says, "When you look at infant mortality in the south, and I've worked in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama and while they have a higher rate in Africa, the disparities between those who have and do not have are grounded in poverty and structural inequality."

This idea of eradicating structural inequality is at the heart of much of Singh's work. Presently, she is working in conjunction with the Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice, The Louisiana Department of Public Safety & Correc-



tions (DPS&C), and the Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine; researching, programming and evaluating recidivism in the highest risk population, related to crimes involving drugs and guns. In addition, she is also working on better understanding the links between repeat offenders, mental health and drug abuse.

Singh is presently working on her dissertation that is focusing on how to eliminate urban insecurity in New Orleans. Speaking of some of the possible solutions she says, "We must begin bringing people back into the formal economy with good legal jobs with living wages, so young people don't have

dustrial complex; and the society as a whole suffers because of a loss of people who could be assets to society, if we invested in helping them reach their full potential."

To assist in this helping people across the globe reaching their full potential she founded a non-profit called, The Institute for the Sustainable of Advanced Renewable Resource Technology I-STARRT, "My non-profit is doing incubator oriented work to enliven social entrepreneurship to help empower people in the communities to help create solutions in their own community." Continuing she says, "I-STARRT is a non-profit where anything can come after the word ISTARRT; whatever the innovation is that awakenings, societies or communities."

Singh says this is at the heart of her work; awakening people in communities and also stakeholders that they have a collective responsibility to create more sustainable communities.

But she believes what must happen is that the stakeholders must begin to have a peer vs. client relationship with the people in the areas they serve. Citing an example from her field work she says, "The way African's are poor is not as we understand it, and what I've discovered in my work is the greatest resource in development is the intelligence of the inhabitants themselves. The usual model in development is others come in and determining what you want then build it, they do not ask the people or is it led by the people themselves." Continuing she says the same thing is happening in New Orleans, "Local people know how to use their intelligence and have solutions but no one is tapping into that." Sonita Singh is on mission to empower those in need and because of commitment to create equity and access to people across the globe, we proudly honor her as a Data News Weekly Trailblazer.

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Race Still Plays a Significant Role in Determining Who Gets Ahead in America, Says Clinton

By Joan H. Allen
NNPA News Wire Contributor

It was a packed house at the National Action Network's 25th Anniversary Convention's Plenary Session for Democratic Presidential Candidate Hillary Clinton's speech. Rev. Al Sharpton addressed the press.

"When we say, 'yes' and 'amen,' that's not a heckler," he quipped. "When the media asks, 'why did Secretary Clinton come to NAN?' It's because [presidential candidates have] been doing that for over a decade."

Although Sharpton said that he had not yet endorsed a candidate, he sang Clinton's praises.

"We've known each other for over 20 years," said Sharpton.

They haven't agreed on everything, Sharpton admitted, citing the President Bill Clinton's 1994 crime bill. However, when they've agreed, "she's not been ashamed or anyway stepping back, as she did when, Amadou Diallo was killed by police. She took a public stand.

"Although I haven't endorsed a candidate, I wish to make this clear: the issues need to be dealt with in a substantive way...Black America must be taken seriously...and not given slogans that can't be explained how they can be achieved. Because nobody can win, unless we vote seriously."

Sharpton then introduced the mothers and widows of victims killed by police: Kadiatou Diallo, Amadou Diallo's mother; Esaw Garner, Eric Garner's widow; Gwen Carr, Eric Garner's mother; Lesley McSpadden, Michael Brown's mother; Sybrina Fulton, Trayvon Martin's mother; Constance Malcolm, Ramarley Graham's mother; Valerie and William Bell, Sean Bell's mother and father.

It was not surprising that there was such a strong presence of these mothers and families of Black victims. They were among the first to have shown their support of Clinton and she has worked with some



Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton gives remarks at the 2016 National Action Network National Conference. (Joe Tuitt/NNPA News Wire)

of them through the years. Clinton who had paid tribute to them in February said, "It was a great honor spending time with them."

As if in response to the sentiments expressed by the earlier panel, "2016: A Transitional Election Year with Much at Stake," Clinton stated, "If we're gonna ask African Americans to vote for us, we cannot take you or your vote for granted. We can't just show up at election time and say the right things and think that's enough. We can't start building relationships a few weeks before a vote."

Her strong position on the issue of gun violence is one of the few key areas that distinguishes her from her Democratic opponent Sen. Bernie Sanders, which she addressed. "My opponent does not see it the same way, but I think this a national emergency. And I'm going to do everything I can to take on the gun lobby and try and do everything I can to save lives."

Clinton continued: "There's something wrong when gun violence is by far the leading cause of

death for young Black men. There's something wrong when Black kids get arrested for petty crimes, but White kids for the same crimes don't...Something's wrong when so many Black parents are burying their children... and it's a time we face up to systemic racism in all its forms. Race still plays a significant role in determining who gets ahead in America and who gets left behind. Race is the single biggest factor determining whether you live near a toxic site, from 'asthma alley' in the Bronx to 'cancer alley' in Louisiana."

It is for this reason Clinton announced she is not only proposing reforming the criminal justice system, she's also proposing a major \$125 billion plan to revitalize communities of color and places where poverty remains stubbornly high. She also announced a new plan for environmental justice to get rid of lead in Flint, Michigan and everywhere else in five years.

However, Clinton was quick to remind attendees of her Republican opponent Trump's divisive campaign and she called the Republican frontrunner out, stating, "when he was asked to disavow David Duke and other White supremacists supporting his campaign, he played coy and the list goes on. And everyone [can] see this bigotry for what it is. It's up to all of us to repudiate it." Coming to the defense of New Yorkers, Clinton said, "our diversity is our strength not our weakness."

Clinton shared how being introduced to Marian Wright Edelman, the first Black woman admitted to the Mississippi bar and the transformative experience working for her at the Children's Defense Fund, straight out of law school. It was there that she saw how her faith in working for social justice and change could become a viable career. "Whether I was investigating Black teens being incarcerated, segregated academies, or running legal clinics for prisoners and poor people. It was all a part of the same mission to fight injustice and even the odds for those who had them stacked against them."

Clinton's closing remarks were met with thunderous applause.

"I have worked on these causes all my adult life," she said. "I am gonna keep going at it no matter what."

Joan H. Allen is the associate publisher of the Daily Challenge and a member of the National Newspaper Publishers Association. Learn more about becoming a member at www.NNPA.org.

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