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New Orleans

# Data

News Weekly

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# Beyoncé in the Dome

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September 24 - September 30, 2016 51st Year Volume 22 [www.ladatanews.com](http://www.ladatanews.com)

A Data News Weekly Exclusive

# NOLA Gets First Fried Chicken Festival



## 25 Vendors, Free to the Public

*The Soul of New Orleans*

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# NOLA Gets First Annual Fried Chicken Festival on Sept. 26



The Fried Chicken Festival is presented by Raising Cane's Chicken Fingers



**Eric Craig  
Multimedia Editor**

New Orleans has several festivals year round, and there is always room for more. On Sunday, Sept. 25, 2016, The Spears Group is hosting New Orleans' First Annual Fried Chicken Festival. The festival, which is presented by Raising Cane's Chicken Fingers, will take place on Sunday, Sept. 25, 2016, from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. at Lafayette Square. The event is free and open to the public.

According to prepared statements by The Spears Group, the Fried Chicken Festival will feature 25

local vendors, two chicken eating contests, and a best-of-show competition between the vendors. The event will have live entertainment, showcasing Tank and the Bangas, DJ Mannie Fresh, John Boutte' and more.

**The Start of the Festival**

The Spears Group CEO and President Cleveland Spears, III, looks forward to hosting the event in New Orleans.

"New events and festivals will continuously become New Orleans tradition, just like many local

events and festivals are existing tradition," Spears said.

"As a City, we love experiential events and bringing people together. Event planning allows us to do this while sharing new and old traditions with tourists and locals alike," he added.

Spears originally developed the idea for the festival a year ago at an organizational retreat. He said he looks for innovative ways to demonstrate how New Orleans is unique.

"One of my friends said facetiously that we should organize a Fried Chicken Festival. But my eyes lit

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## DATA NEWS WEEKLY

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Cover Story, Continued from previous page.

up, and I said to her that it's a great idea," Spears said. "Bringing new experiences to the people of this great City is something that I am passionate about."

While there are several other festivals in New Orleans, Spears believes the festival will take on its own unique identity.

"From the entertainment line-up to the food vendors to additional festival activities, Fried Chicken Festival includes a new variety of highlights for a diverse audience," Spears said.

### The Festival

According to tSpears Group's prepared statements, the Fried Chicken Festival will be presented during a busy weekend for New Orleans.

"The weekend will begin with Beyonce's Formation Tour on Saturday, September 24th, and it will end with Monday Night Football in the Mercedes-Benz Superdome on September 26th when the New Orleans Saints take on the Atlanta Falcons," The Spears Group wrote in an official press release. "This weekend will be another great op-



The Fried Chicken Festival will feature free live entertainment.

portunity for tourists and locals alike to enjoy New Orleans."

The first annual festival is presented by Raising Canes. Additional sponsors include First NBC Bank, NOLA Brewing Company, New Orleans Multicultural Tourism Network, AT&T and more.

With over 20 local vendors, Spears has high expectations for the Fried Chicken Festival.

"This event will bring a unique twist to a very popular Southern dish, and it will become a new experience that is uniquely New Orleans," Spears said.



Cleveland Spears, III, CEO and President of the Spears Group.

Spears is not the only person that is looking forward to the festival. Diva Dawg, a participating local vendor, is happy to attend the Fried Chicken Festival.

"Diva Dawg is known for its red bean chili dawg topped with fried chicken. We would like to

take this opportunity to share this fried chicken with the attendees," Ericka Lassair, Founder of Diva Dawg, said.

"New Orleans has a lot of places that are known for fried chicken. This festival is one of the things that we need to do and it's about time we do it," she added.

Presenting sponsor Raising Cane's is proud to present the First Annual Fried Chicken Festival.

"When we first learned about the Fried Chicken Festival, we knew we had to be a part of it," Todd Graves, Founder and CEO of Raising Cane's Chicken Fingers, said in a Spears Group press release.

"We believe this is the next big thing for New Orleans, the south and potentially the country, and that is why Raising Cane's has committed to serving as the Presenting Sponsor. We know that this festival will attract people from across the region to enjoy and celebrate everyone's favorite Southern dish," he added.

Cover Story, Continued on page 9.



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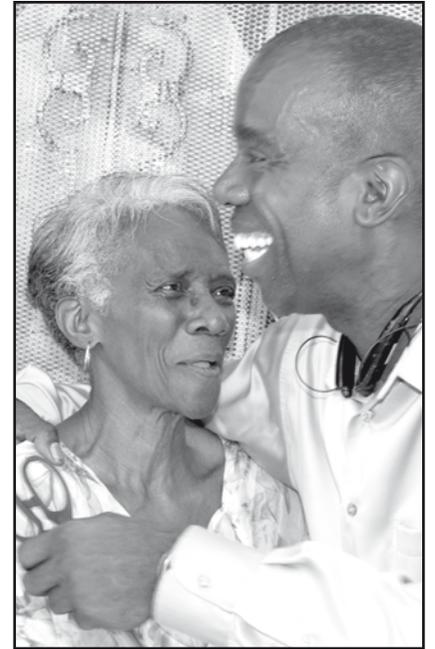
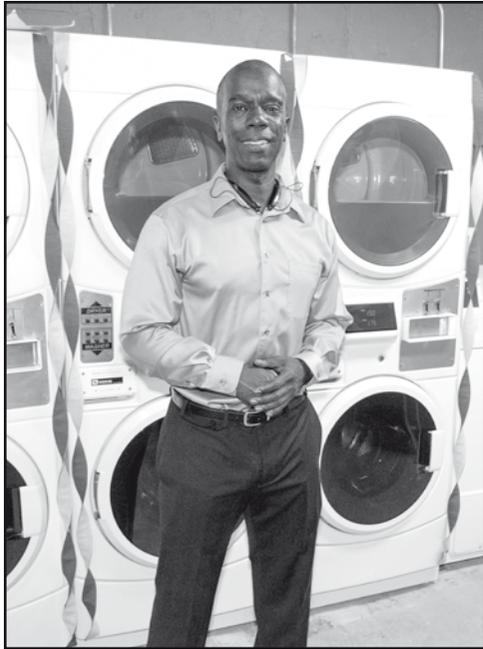


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# First Laundry Facility Opens in Lower 9th Ward



Burnell Cotlon opened the first laundry facility in the Lower 9th Ward since Hurricane Katrina.

Cotlon celebrated the grand opening of the new laundry facility nearly a year after he opened his storefront. Pictured: Judy Averette, Cotlon's business partner; Lillie Cotlon, mother of Burnell Cotlon; Burnell Cotlon, store owner; Councilman James Gray, III; and Keasha Cotlon, Burnell Cotlon's wife.

Cotlon held the grand opening on his mother's birthday.

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**Eric Craig  
Multimedia Editor**

In August of 2015, Burnell Cotlon opened the first grocery store in the Lower 9th Ward since Hurricane Katrina. Over a year later, he opened the first laundry facility in the area. Burnell held the grand opening of the facility at his storefront grocery store, located on 2036 Caffin Avenue.

Cotlon's grand opening date of Sept. 15, 2016, is his one-year anniversary of his debut on the Ellen DeGeneres Show; and it is his mother's birthday.

Over the last year, Cotlon amassed support to help fund his initiative to fill gaps in Lower 9th Ward businesses. Last September, television personality Ellen DeGeneres funded the equipment for Cotlon's new laundry facility.

The new laundry facility has four washers and two dryers for public use.

**The New Laundry Facility**

The operation to expand Cotlon's business into a laundry facility started over a year ago.

"One guy came into my store one day and had a big garbage bag. And he always bought two things. He bought some soap powder and a Coca Cola," Cotlon said.

"He opened up the garbage bag and it was filled with his clothes and his daughter's dirty clothes. He said he was going to ride across the Industrial Canal to find a laundry

room," he added.

At that moment Cotlon decided he would open a laundry room, the store owner said.

The store owner wrote television personality Ellen DeGeneres about his current mission and plans to open a laundry facility. On Sept. 15, 2015, DeGeneres flew Cotlon to Hollywood, CA, to share the story of his business. At the end of his segment, DeGeneres said she would underwrite the cost of Cotlon's laundry machines, Cotlon said.

As of Sept. 15, 2016, Cotlon operates the only laundry facility in the Lower 9th Ward.

Robert Green, a Lower 9th Ward resident since 1967, was the first customer to use Cotlon's Laundry Facility.

"What this new laundry room does is tell people how resilient Burnell is and his ideas. It also shows the need that we have down here," Green said.

The new customer said that the nearest laundry room was too far to walk, and many times he depended on friends to help wash his clothes.

"We need more businesses like this, and we need more people to invest in the Lower 9th Ward," Green added.

**The Grocery Store Operation**

Cotlon's story started shortly after Hurricane Katrina. The busi-

**Newsmaker, Continued on page 8.**

# trailblazer

## Shedrick Roy

### *Inspiring the Drum Major Instinct*

by: Edwin Buggage

Shedrick Roy is a man whose commitment to serving others runs deep through his veins and is part of a tradition started by his grandfather Carlton Roy Sr., “My grandfather owned multiple businesses and was a Civil Rights Activist with the late Rev. Avery Alexander, A.L. Davis, Oretha Castle Haley and Dorothy Mae Taylor,” states Roy of why he is civically active. “Just growing up around those people I had no choice but to be conscientious of the issues going on around me as it relates to poor people, but Black people in particular.”

Speaking of his work to empower his community he says he is only a vessel that is being used to deliver the message that his community so desperately needs, “I’m interested in finding a way to spark Black people to vote, to start sticking together; because it seems in 2016 we are regressing instead of progressing.”

Roy’s approach to activism is one that marries traditional forms of civic engagement with social media to create public awareness and mobilize people around issues that impact the community. “A lot of people tell me you are too serious on social media and what I tell them is that if people could use social media for foolishness, then why can’t I use it for something that is righteous,” he says of his use of social me-

dia as a means to speak on a host of issues. It is something he hopes can inspire people to work towards solving some of the ills that plague their community.

While he is using social media to reach people in new ways, at the core of his will to give back is a deeply rooted spirituality. This approach in some ways resembles a form of evangelistic outreach similar to the works of SCLC (Southern Christian Leadership Conference) during the struggle for Civil Rights in the 1950’s and 60’s. Speaking of this parallel he says, “I remember Bishop Lester Love, Senior Pastor of the City of Love Church, where I am a member, said of me in front of the congregation ‘That you will bring people together and make a difference and it will not be in the pulpit.’ Now I know what he was talking about, it is my use of social media that’s helping make people aware of the things going on and what they need to do to improve the conditions of their community.” Continuing he says, “Sometimes Christians get caught up inside the confines of the church building, but outside the church building is where the work needs to be done. This avenue using social media I feel can help bridge the gap to mobilize people to support positive efforts towards change in New Orleans.”



He also believes that in addition to a renewing of a focus on spirituality in the African-American community, he feels racial disparities surrounding the issues of education and economic inequality must be addressed. “The new oppression is economics,” says Roy. “The movement of Donald Trump of 2016 reflects this growing divide in this country. Make America Great Again translates to some as let’s put them back in their place. The recipe to combat this in my opinion is us getting ourselves together spiritually, and then we can become one to address the social, political and educational ills of our community. Then we can fight for economic parity because

we have to keep our eyes on the prize and remember that if you do nothing you will have nothing, but if you do something you have the possibility which to turn it into possibilities. So I would love to show our Black people young and old that there is a possibility which can turn into possibilities.”

Roy’s has had the opportunity to work with many celebrities who’ve come to New Orleans. He says they see so much beauty in its rich history and cultural heritage. “I’ve had the pleasure to work with Oprah Winfrey, legendary Hip-Hop Artist Doug E. Fresh, the Music Producer Swizz Beatz, Shaquille O’Neal and many others. What they love about the City is the sincerity of the people in it. Now for us to keep this afloat, we have to get tougher and demand more of ourselves and our political leaders and our spiritual leaders. And everything goes back to spirituality, what is your driving force, what is your motivating force, because right now there are so many people hurting in this City. But it is up to us to work together to maintain our presence and cherish our institutions and the culture we have here in New Orleans. Because the greatest resource the City has are the people whose roots lie deep in this City for gen-

erations and we must fight for that to continue for generations to come.”

When it comes to his life’s meaning and purpose; Roy speaks of the “Drum Major Instinct” a speech made by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968. Where he spoke against the need for glory of those seeking to be in the front of the line, but telling his audience the Drum Major Instinct can be used for good if one desires to be first in the line loving their fellow human beings and serving others. “When my life on earth is done I want people to remember I was a dude from the 3rd Ward on Baronne Street who possessed the Drum Major Instinct. I have a personal plea to make a difference. If I don’t say something or do something, then it doesn’t sit well in my soul. Therefore, I must do something, I must say something because my ancestors said something, so I feel my life can be one lived not in vain but with a purpose.”

**JMJ**  
Joseph M. Jones  
Continuing Education Fund



# Beyonce' Performs Formation World Tour at Superdome

## Data News Staff Edited Report

On Saturday, Sept. 24, 2016, Beyoncé Knowles will showcase her Formation World Tour at the Mercedes-Benz Superdome. The Formation World Tour will feature over 30 original songs by Beyoncé, including "Sorry," "Hold Up," "Daddy Lessons" and "Freedom, which are featured on Beyoncé's newest album "Lemonade." The performance will also feature original hits, including "Single Ladies," "Run the World (Girls)," and "Drunk in Love." According to the Mercedes-Benz Superdome, Beyoncé's performance will be a multimedia affair with rotating screens, controlled fire explosions, and other captivating imagery.



## CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE CAN LEAD TO ANEMIA LEAVING YOU FEELING TIRED AND WEAK

There are some things that you should know if you've been diagnosed with chronic kidney disease. In certain people, chronic kidney disease can lead to a serious condition called anemia. Anemia occurs when your body doesn't have enough red blood cells. Red blood cells carry oxygen to the rest of your body, giving you energy to do your daily activities.

If anemia due to chronic kidney disease is left untreated, you are at risk for serious health consequences, including a higher risk of heart complications or needing a blood transfusion. If you are unsure if you have anemia, or it's been a while since you've checked, a doctor can diagnose it through a simple blood test.

### > QUIZ <

#### COULD YOU HAVE ANEMIA DUE TO CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE?

	YES	NO
Do you have chronic kidney disease?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have any of the following symptoms:		
> Feel tired often	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
> Shortness of breath	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
> Dizziness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
> Racing heartbeat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you have chronic kidney disease and checked off at least one of the above symptoms, you may have a condition called anemia.

#### ANEMIA SYMPTOMS ARE EASILY MISSED

Symptoms of anemia are very common to many other conditions and can therefore be easily missed. Common anemia symptoms include:

- > Feeling tired often
- > Shortness of breath
- > Dizziness
- > Racing heartbeat

#### ANEMIA DUE TO CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE CAN BE TREATED

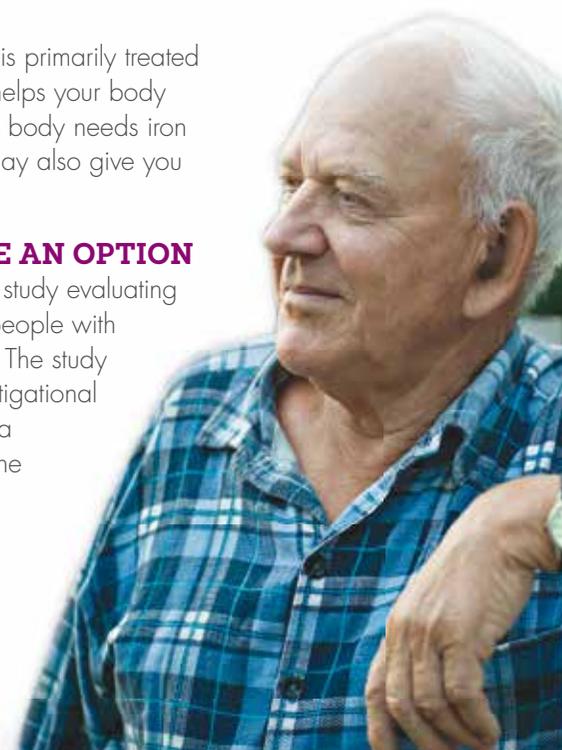
Anemia due to chronic kidney disease is primarily treated with an injection of a medication that helps your body produce red blood cells. Because your body needs iron to make red blood cells, your doctor may also give you iron, either in pill form or as an IV.

#### A RESEARCH STUDY MAY BE AN OPTION

The PROTECT Study is a new research study evaluating an investigational oral medication for people with anemia due to chronic kidney disease. The study compares the effectiveness of the investigational oral medication to an approved anemia medication given by injection. During the study, qualified participants will either receive the investigational oral study medication or the approved injection.

Treating your anemia may give you more energy and reduce your risk of serious health consequences.

#### PROTECT STUDY



# Smithsonian National Museum of African-American History and Culture

*A Sneak Peak of the First National Museum of Black History*

By Marion Hercyl  
Data News Weekly Contributor

Publishers from the National Newspaper Publishers Association had the opportunity to have a private preview of the national first museum dedicated to African American history last week during the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Conference. The Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture will celebrate its grand opening this Friday and will be the place to visit when you travel to Washington, DC. Located on the National Mall, directly across from the Washington Monument, the museum is a shrine to our journey in this nation, and houses some of our most precious national treasures. Make sure you plan to visit this incredible museum.



Inside the Atrium of the Museum



Statue of John Carlos and Tommie Smith memorialize the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City



Black Women's Liberation Movement Exhibit



Authentic reproduction of slave quarters in Antebellum America



Statue of US Congressman Captain Robert Smalls

*Congratulations*

on the opening of the Smithsonian's  
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September 24, 2016

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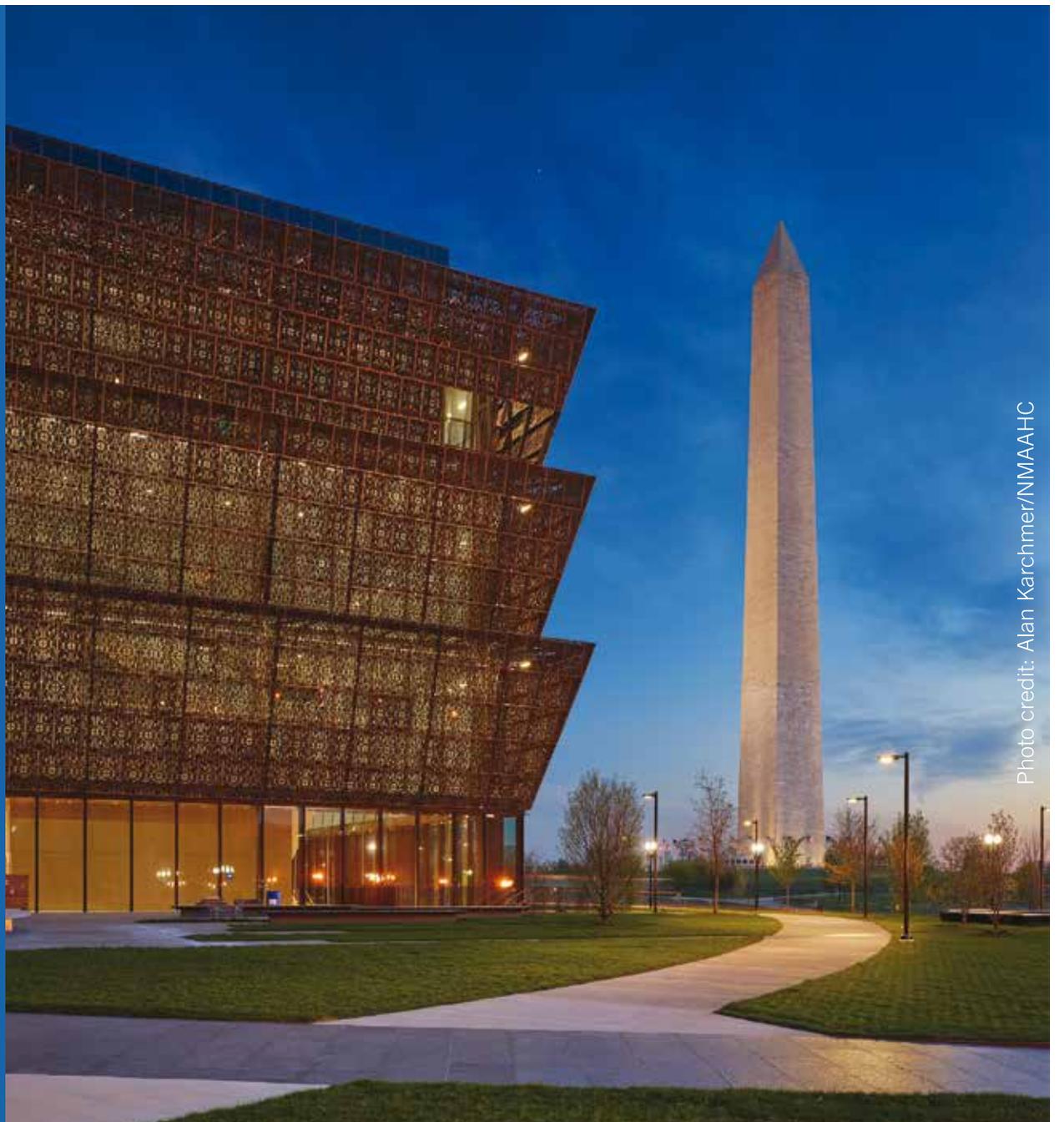


Photo credit: Alan Karchmer/NMAAHC

# We Must Close the Payday Loan Debt Trap Once and for All



**Julianne Malveaux**  
NNPA Columnist

an unemployment rate at 4.9 percent, and the income and poverty report, which shows a 2.4 million increase in the number of workers, the Obama economic team can rightly assert that economic recovery has trickled down.

Still, poverty rates are way too high – almost one in four (24.1 percent) African American households lives in poverty. The number of African American children in poverty, though falling, remains too high (31.6 percent). And the number of people living in “extreme poverty” (with incomes at less than half the poverty line) is alarming – more than ten percent of African Americans (and 6 percent of the total population) live in extreme poverty.

The persistence of poverty, even in the face of good news, provides opportunities for those whose riches come from the exploitation of poor people. Those who provide payday loans are among the worst, because they set up a debt trap that it is almost impossible for poor people to escape from. Indeed, these predators treat the poor as profit centers and enrich themselves from other people’s misery.

Even as we celebrate the economic progress of the past year, we must ensure that usurious payday lenders are curtailed by regulators who can restrict their ability to extract interest rates in excess of 300 percent from the very poor.

This is how it works – payday lenders provide “emergency” loans for those people who have more month than money, and who simply can’t make ends meet. The loans are small and the terms are usually something like \$15 per \$100 for 7 to 14 days. The loan may be secured by a paycheck, a pre-dated check, or an automobile title. If the loan is not paid back on time, a borrower may negotiate an “extension,” which requires more fees. Repeated payday loans result in \$3.5 billion in fees each year.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) is considering regulations to protect consumers from exploitation and usury from short-term loans and auto title loans. A coalition of faith leaders has asked people, who have been affected by payday loans to comment on their website, FaithforFairLending.org, hoping that the CFPB

will be influenced by the experiences that many have had with payday lending.

Rev. Sekinah Hamlin, who leads faith initiatives for the Center for Responsible Lending, says that faith leaders have mobilized, because they expect that the payday lending industry will fight any regulations to curtail their activity. The CFPB will be accepting comments about payday lending until October 7, and the Center for Responsible Lending (ResponsibleLending.org) hopes that people will share letters and comments encouraging CFPB to curtail payday.

While it is important to curtail payday lending so that low-income borrowers can avoid the debt trap, the longer term solution to the debt trap is better pay for people who could access traditional credit options, or avoid debt altogether, if they earned reasonable pay. The working families agenda that some in Congress have embraced (which includes an increase in the minimum wage, among other provisions to assist those on the bottom) is a step in the right direction. The fight for \$15, which would provide

families at the bottom with incomes of about \$31,000 a year, would also alleviate poverty and make it easier for people to make ends meet.

It is important that those of us who care about economic justice make our voices heard before October 7. To stop the payday loan debt trap and encourage the CFPB to issue regulations that will protect those who are so easily exploited, comment online at FaithforFairLending.org, or send your comment to The Center for Responsible Lending, Faith and Credit Roundtable, 302 W. Main Street, Durham, NC 27701.

Tackling the payday lending issue, however, is only a small step toward economic justice. Those who want economic justice must also be committed to electing those who will implement a working families agenda. The economic good news that was released early this month does not mean that we are out of the woods around poverty issues.

Julianne Malveaux is an author and economist. Her latest book “Are We Better Off? Race, Obama and Public Policy” is available via [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) for booking, wholesale inquiries or for more info visit [www.juliannealveaux.com](http://www.juliannealveaux.com).

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- (B) Get creative with glue.**
- (C) Try to make sweatbands a “thing” again.**

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Newsmaker, Continued from page 4.



Cotton opened the first grocery store in the Lower 9th Ward since Hurricane Katrina in September of 2015.

nessman was able to rebuild his home after being devastated by the storm, but noted something in the community was missing.

“I saw the community was suffering. They didn’t have a grocery store. I called up all the big box stores and they said there wasn’t enough people,” Cotton said.

The nearest grocery store, according to Cotton, is Walmart, which is roughly three bus rides away from the Caffin neighborhood.

“It wasn’t about the numbers; it was the people who were suffering.

So I said if they’re not going to do something, I’m going to do something,” he added.

Cotton spent his life savings to build the store. He purchased a blighted 4-bedroom home and remodeled part of it into a window-operated grocery store. Over two years later, Cotton saved enough money to expand from a window operation to a storefront.

“The look on some of the customers’ faces is epic. It’s a store that has a sense of home. The look on people’s faces make this all worth it,” Cotton said.

# Love Expression Concert

## *Black Gospel Choir*

**Leonard Lewis IV**  
Data News Weekly Contributor

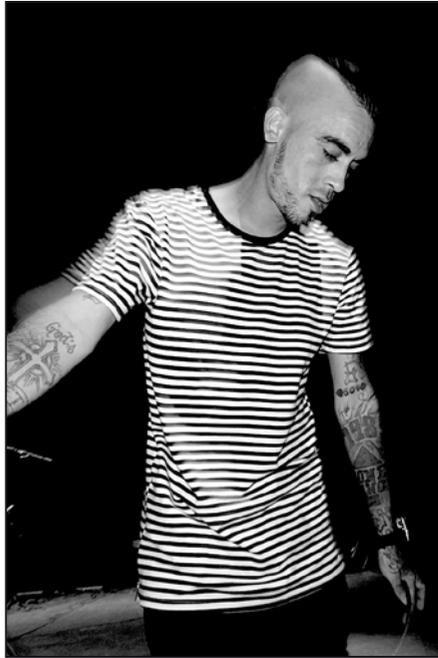
Local Music Firm, Beulah Productions, held its first Love Expression Concert at the historic Carver Theater located on 2101 Orleans Ave. on Sept. 16, 2016. The Love Expression event featured local artists and captivating social media efforts to encourage residents in the City and throughout Southeast Louisiana to act with love instead of hate. Both the police-shooting death of Alton Sterling and the Great Flood of 2016 inspired Glenn Jones to create #LoveNolaBR this year. The hashtag, Jones said, is meant to symbolize community love and unity in New Orleans and Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

“Since this is the first Love Expression Concert, we wanted to promote changing the energy of New Orleans and Baton Rouge,” Jones said of the free concert. “Our mission is to solve the issues within our communities through love,” he said.

The married couple and Performing Duo, Semaj and Jordan Lorrius of the group Love Evolution, want to spread love throughout the state.

“Love is the fabric of our music and lyrics, since there is so much hate in the world. We want our music to remind people that love conquers all,” said Semaj Lorrius, vocalist for Love Evolution.

#LoveNolaBR will have quarterly events at the Carver Theatre throughout the year.



### Cover Story, Continued from page 3.

According to The Spears Group's official press release, the Raising Cane's is also featuring a 10-foot One Love Wall where “attendees will be encouraged to share a message of love and encouragement as well what they love about fried chicken and the festival.”

The festival will host a fried chicken wing eating contest, and a best fried chicken contest. Additionally, in honor of the Raising Cane's signature meal, there will be a fried chicken tender eating contest during the festival. Both of the events will be judged by food writers and critics around the nation, according to The Spears Group.

Music during the festival will be headlined by DJ Mannie Fresh, Tank and the Bangas and Sweet Crude. According to Spears, the live entertainment will ensure the festival is distinct.

“Each of our entertainers infuses their own unique twist on the traditional sounds of New Orleans,” Spears said in an official press release. “Festival goers will enjoy great food and a dynamic lineup of live entertainment.”

### The Spears Group

The Fried Chicken Festival is not The Spears Group's first event. The public relations organization has hosted several events in New Orleans and across the southern region of the United States. The group produces an Annual Dinner En Blanc, a dressed-in-all-white affair and concert in New Orleans, Atlanta, and Houston. Additionally, the organization hosts the Millennial Awards, an award ceremony where young professionals are honored.

# Jim Smith Jr.

## *The No Excuse Guide to Success*

### Data News Staff Edited Report

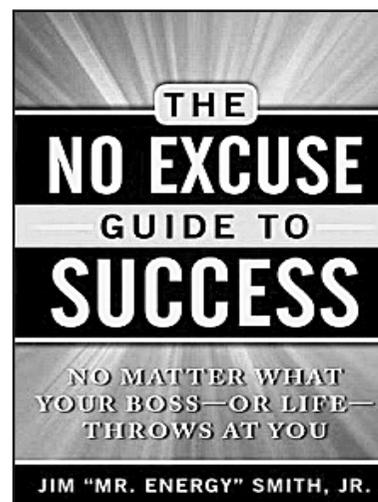
On Tuesday, Sept. 27, 2016, Jim Smith Jr. will discuss and sign his book, “The No Excuse Guide to Success: No Matter What Your Boss-or-Life-Throws at You.” The book signing will be hosted at the Garden District Book Shop, located on 2727 Prytania St., New Orleans, LA.

The No Excuse Guide to Success shows you how to abandon this unworkable routine and stop the destructive pattern of making

excuses and blaming others to stop whining and start winning.

The No Excuse Guide to Success gives you the tools and techniques you need to:

- Make life-altering changes in how you approach your career and your life
- Stop blaming others and start believing in yourself
- Own your choices and break down self-created barriers to success
- Embrace uncertainty and stop being afraid to win.



# African-American Wellness Walk

**Jasmyne Bracy**  
Data News Weekly  
Contributor

It's a stereotype that African-American men do not like going to the doctor. So, in order to change the culture, John Gregory of the National Center for Urban Solutions started the National African-American Male Wellness Walk 12 years ago, in Columbus, Ohio. The organization surveyed 100 Black men in a study conducted in 2004 and the results showed that 90 percent of the participants had some illness, and didn't even know it.

On Saturday, Sept. 17, 2016, the National Walk came to New Orleans, and was held at Joe Brown Recreational Park. It was the first time the walk was held here in Louisiana, according to Joseph K. Byrd, who served as the Vice Chair of the event. "They felt that there was a need here, especially with different diseases surfacing around the Gulf," Byrd said.

New Orleans is a City that has a high amount of health-related challenges, according to the New Orleans Health Department. African-



New Orleans resident participate in African American Wellness on Sat., Sept. 17, 2016.

can-Americans have high rates of illnesses related to obesity, coupled with low rates of health insurance coverage, according to the City's health department. African-American men in the City have high rates of heart disease, cancer, strokes,

diabetes, and kidney disease, according to City data.

Both health and community organizations sponsored the event alongside major companies. The New Orleans East Hospital, State Farm, 100 Black Men of Metro

New Orleans, and many representatives from local clinics handed out information on healthy lifestyle choices.

"Men should go to the doctor, but some are just scared," said Ronald Harris, a member of the 100

Black Men of Metro New Orleans. "We committed to help empower men and portray a positive way of life, so when we heard about this event we immediately wanted to get involved."

Even though the event targeted African-American men and their health outcomes, the walk attracted families and loved ones. The James M. Singleton Charter School Band performed as kids ran about in the park. "I heard about this event from my boss and I really wanted to come see what this was about, the crowd is amazingly friendly and just out here to have a good time," said Xavier Ray, State Farm Representative.

Volunteers handed out water for the runners and walkers, guided families to the gym for free health screenings, and assisted with the bike hike. Ethan Ashley, a Volunteer Service Coordinator, said he was excited to have such a large turnout of volunteers at the end "We had so many volunteers, that some just sort of had to hang out because we had help already," Ashley said. "What really made me glad was the young men that signed up."



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THE PUBLIC IS INVITED

## September is Sickle Cell Awareness Month

**Kaelin Maloid**  
Data News Weekly  
Contributor

September is the ninth month of the year and is also Sickle Cell Awareness Month. September was dedicated to Sickle Cell Awareness in 1975, according to Sickle Cell.

According to the South East Genetics, The Sickle Cell Disease Association of America advocated Sickle Cell Awareness Month to encourage reflection on people whose lives were affected by the disease.

According to lifesource.org, 1 in every 500 African-Americans have the disease, and 1 in every 12 Afri-



can-American carry the trait. Sickle cell is a life-long disease that affects the red blood cells. In fact, it's an inherited blood condition that results in the red blood cells taking an abnormal or "sickle" trait. Red blood cells are usually disc-shaped, but red blood cells affected by sickle cell are crescent, or sickle, shaped. Disc-shaped blood cells are flexible and can move easier to deliver oxygen. However, the crescent-shaped cells can stick to vessel walls, which can create blockage that stops the flow of blood and oxygen can't reach the tissues.

People with this disorder should see their doctor every 3 to 12 months, according to nhbl.nih.gov. There are treatments, such as medicines and immunizations. Some people maybe even need blood transfusions.

For more information on Sickle Cell Awareness Month visit <http://www.sicklecelldisease.org>.

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# NNPA Honors Champions of the Black Press

By Sarafina Wright  
NNPA News Wire Contributor

Black publishers representing over 200 newspapers gathered to honor some of the top leaders in Washington, D.C. who champion the Black Press and who have helped to improve the quality of life for Black America.

Dr. Benjamin Chavis, Jr., president and CEO of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), and Denise Rolark-Barnes, the group's chairwoman, hosted the 2016 National Leadership Awards Reception on Thursday, Sept. 15 at the Renaissance Hotel in Washington, D.C.

"We are honored to be back in the nation's capital to address the business concerns of the NNPA's 200-plus, Black-owned media companies around the country," Barnes said.

"Our Annual Leadership Awards Reception, held in conjunction with the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Inc.'s [CBCF] Annual Legislative Conference, is one of NNPA's signature events that mirrors what so many of our publishers do in their own communities all year long."

Mollie Belt of the Dallas Examiner, Karen Carter Richards of the Houston Forward Times, Shannon Williams of the Indianapolis Recorder, Dorothy Leavell of the Chicago Crusader, Cheryl Mainor of the Chicago Defender, Rod Doss of the New Pittsburgh Courier and



Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson (pictured above) Rep. Charles Rangel (D-NY), Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC) and Rep. G.K. Butterfield, Jr. (D-N.C.) received the 2016 Leadership Award where each reiterated the necessity of Black-owned and operated publications.

a host of other publishers attended the annual event.

"We gather at a significant moment in America's history," Barnes said. "We join the CBCF and others who will pay tribute to the life and legacy of Congressman Charles Rangel, Democratic representative for the 13th Congressional District of New York, who will retire this year after 46 years of national political service."

Rangel, Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.), Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson and Rep. G.K. Butterfield, Jr. (D-N.C.) received the 2016 Leadership Award where each reiterated the necessity of Black-owned and operated publications.

Rangel said that while he will re-

tire at the end of the Congressional session in order to spend more time with his family, he will continue to provide service as needed for the Congressional Black Caucus, his home state of New York and the rest of the country.

Tony A. Gaskins, Jr., a motivational speaker and life coach received the Millennial Leadership Award for his work with the NBA and Ford Motor Company.

In a prepared statement, Jim Taylor, the vice president of African American Outreach Strategy at AARP, said that his organization is very proud of the ongoing relationship with the NNPA, because both groups share the same commitment and passion for serving the African-American community.

"We are very proud of our ongoing relationship with the NNPA because we share the same commitment and passion for serving the African-American community. They have been a consistent voice of the Black community throughout their great history," said Taylor. "At AARP, we are a voice for African Americans age 50 and over and their families, as we fight and advocate for issues of importance to this community, particularly in the areas of health security, financial resilience and personal fulfillment.

Chavis agreed with Taylor's sentiments.

"We admire and salute these transformational leaders," Chavis said. "At this moment in history, the United States of America is yet at another political, economic and social crossroad. The outcome of the Tuesday, November 8, national elections will have a profound impact on Black America and the whole of humanity."

Chavis reiterated that the Black Press has a sacred obligation and responsibility to lift up a new generation of leaders and freedom fighters. He also placed a priority goal of getting out the Black vote in the upcoming national elections in November 2016.

"This marks the 189th year of the Black Press in America," said Chavis. "Since the Freedom's Journal in March of 1827, the Black Press has continued to be on the frontline of the freedom struggle and movement."

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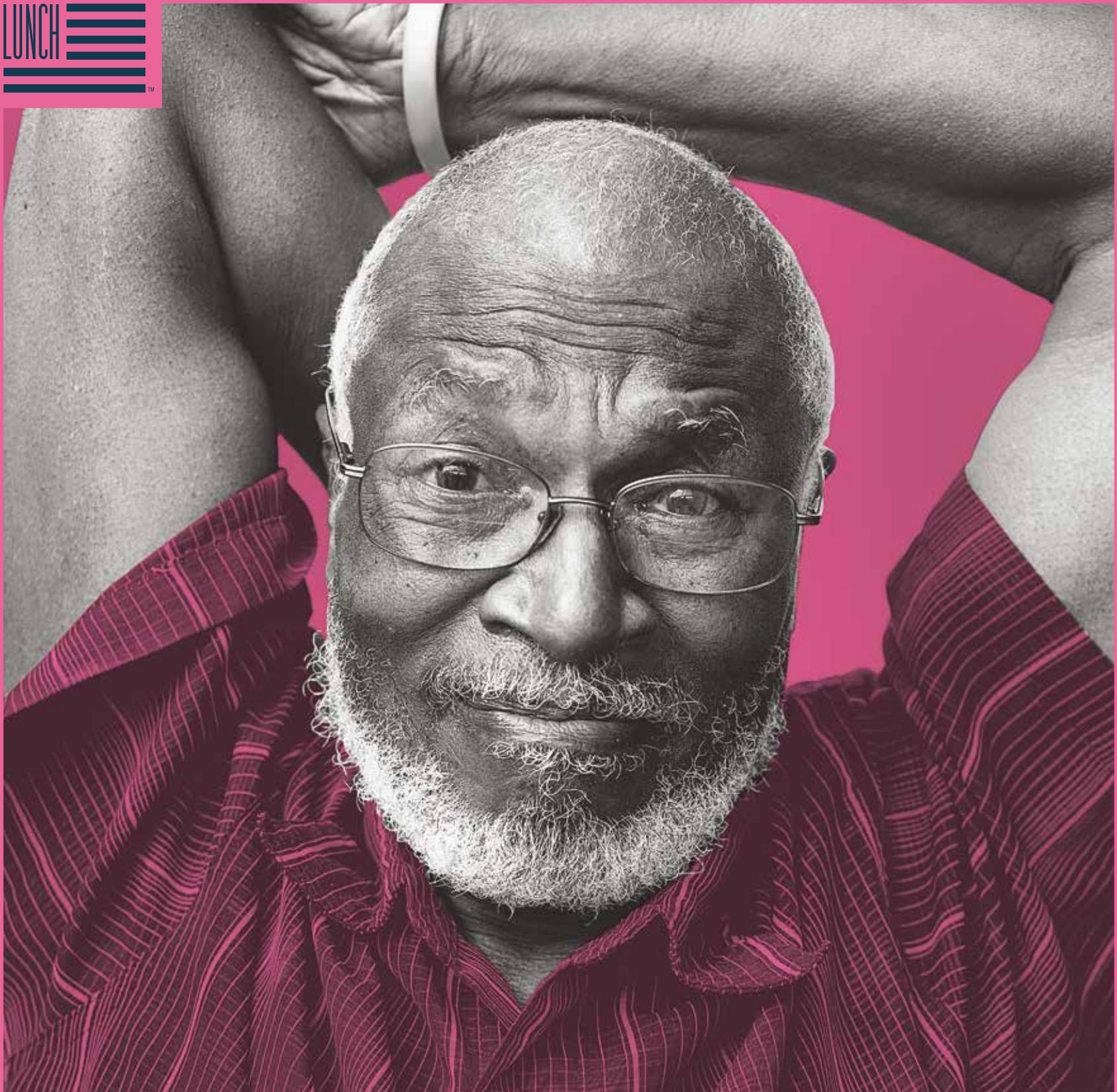
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