How Communities Can End HUMAN TRAFFICKING
While New Orleans is known for being a culturally-relevant City, it’s also a hotspot for Human Trafficking. On Saturday, August 5th, during an open community event, Judge Joy Cossich Lobrano, Louisiana Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals, held a discussion on human trafficking in the City at the Central St. Matthews United Church of Christ. In her quest to raise awareness for at-risk youth, Lobrano cited joint research between the Modern Slavery Research Project at Loyola University and Covenant House of New Orleans. According to the organizations, approximately 60,000 people are coerced into slavery in the United States.

“You can only sell a gun or a drug one time,” Lobrano said. “But you can sell a human over and over again. Human Trafficking has to stop. I believe it has to change on a local level.” Lobrano advocates for a higher rate of community involvement.

Cover Story, Continued on page 3.
engagement. While laws define the rules and punishments, it takes a community to help someone at risk, Lobrano added.

Factors that put youth at risk include poverty, homelessness, unemployment, a history of sexual abuse, and mental illness. Additionally, societal and parental pressures can also put youth at risk.

Researchers in the joint analysis limited this study to the Covenant House of New Orleans population, which serves about 150 youth a day and 700 individuals per year. In a study that included 99 anonymous youth at the Covenant House of New Orleans, nearly 25 percent of the respondents participated in sexual labor.

“Trafficking is an issue all over the world. New Orleans is a challenging City in Human Trafficking. It not’s just during big events and it’s not just women,” she said. Trafficking includes non-willful drug dealing, physical labor, sexual labor, survival sex—sexual acts in exchange for food, housing, or basic necessity—, or illegal or informal work.

Shared Hope International measured the effectiveness of criminal laws that would punished traffickers, buyers, and facilitators. In 2011, the State of Louisiana scored 70/100 points for effective policies in favor of at-risk youth. In 2013, Louisiana scored a 93/100, steadily increasing policies to prevent human trafficking in the state.

Lobrano said that offering services is a start to preventing at-risk youth from getting involved in human trafficking.

“Laws are great.” Lobrano said. “But right now, the girl who was 19 is not a delinquent, now she’s a victim. She’ll go right back to the Pimp. Why? They need services and shelters.”

As of August, of 2017, New Orleans is the only City in the State of Louisiana that has a recovery home for former Human Traffic victims. The site, Eden House, a non-profit group, can only house eight women at a time. Many of their constraints are due to lack of available funding.

Eden House has a two-year program that helps women achieve education and a solid start to enter the workforce. While rigorous, the program has had two successful graduates of the program in the last five years.

“The law has come up but the services have not,” Lobrano said.

Lobrano, considering factors that put youth at risk for human trafficking, said that no parent wants to be a bad parent. Instead, the community lacks services to help these parents avoid consequences.

In 2004, Lobrano helped jump start the non-profit Plaquemines C.A.R.E Center, which offers Counseling, Assessment/Advocacy, Resources, and Early Intervention to assist youth and families in need.

“We need communities to wrap around at-risk families and having care centers is the start,” Lobrano said. “As a community, you need to look around you. Stopping human trafficking and protecting human dignity is how this campaign will grow.”
August 5th Flood Impacted Several New Orleans Establishments in Treme

On Saturday, August 5th, several neighborhoods in New Orleans were left underwater after a summer storm dropped 9.3 inches of rain in some neighborhoods. That flood has affected Black businesses.

The Zulu Headquarters, located at 722 North Broad Street, took water damage on the first floor. During Saturday’s rain storm, Broad Avenue was not drivable for several hours.

“As I sat and listened to the presentation, that’s not what I came here for,” said Naaman Stewart, President of the Zulu Social Aid and Pleasure Club, at a special meeting convened by New Orleans City Council, held on Tuesday, August 8th.

“I didn’t come here to get confused about statistics and data about flooding.”

City Council held the meeting to retrieve answers from City Officials about why many neighborhoods in New Orleans flooded. There, the City hosted presentations by the National Weather Service, New Orleans Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, Sewerage & Water Board, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Department of Public Works.

“If we flood like this in a typical summer rain storm, what’s going to happen during a hurricane? What’s going to happen during a tropical depression? We can’t live being concerned if our properties are going to flood during a rain storm.”

Stewart said that staff are currently gutting the first floor of its headquarters.

“Feel sorry for the people who live in the neighborhoods. Feel sorry for the business that might not have flood insurance. Those are the people we need to be worried about,” Stewart said.

Stewart critiqued the Sewerage and Water Board for not being honest with the public.

“If there is in fact some major problem with our pumping system, they need to tell us that. To say that this is the new norm, that’s not acceptable to me or anybody else in this room.”

Stewart urged the council to ensure the residents will know what will be the next steps to prevent a flood like this from occurring in the City.

“We have to get these problems corrected, or there will be no City of New Orleans,” Stewart said.

Sewerage and Water Board

On Tuesday, August 8th, Executive Director of the Sewerage & Water Board, Cedric Grant announced his retirement days after Saturday’s flood.

“...Information I have learned over the last 24 hours indicate that some parts of our system did not operate as they should have, which is disappointing because it contradicts information that I was given to provide to the public. Our staff was not forthright, which is unacceptable,” Grant statement read.

At the special City Council Meet, Grant took responsibility for misleading the public, stating that all pumps were operational. General Superintendent, Joe Becker said that 14 out of 121 pumps were not in operation.

On last Sunday, S&WB announced all pumps were operational. Seven pumps were announced out of service Monday, and 14 as of Tuesday, August 8th.

Treme’ Flooding

Other businesses that took water damage include Willie Mae’s Scotch House, The Broad Theater, and McHardy’s Fixin’ Chicken.
Big Chief Demond Melancon
Young Seminole Hunters Tribe

Glenn Jones
Data News Weekly
Contributor

Timeline:
Present – 2013 – Big Chief Demond Young Seminole Hunters

As a young chief, Big Chief Demond is a strong, well-read, humble, student of Black Masking Culture and confident contemporary artist that embodies the spirit of “Bras-Coupe.” Sitting down with Chief Demond, it is obvious the strength in his leadership comes from his knowledge of this culture and years working up the hierarchy. As he says, no one beat him as a Spy Boy.

“I was the Spy Boy of the Nation!” Chief summons the spirit of Bras-Coupe (enslaved African Prince given name “Squire”) as his inspiration in Black Masking Culture. Most familiar with this culture is familiar with the Charles Deslondes and the 1811 Slave Revolt. Little know there were many revolts and many small bands (gangs) that were heroes to slaves and later became folklore. Bras-Coupe was written about mostly by George Washington Cable but his actions are acted out in much of the Black Masking Culture today says Big Chief Demond. More importantly for Chief is that Bras-Coupe was reported to be an African Prince standing 6’7 who eventually wore Indian headdress rafting down the Mississippi after raiding plantations and the City.

The Original Seminole Black Masking Tribe pays homage to the Seminole Freedman (freed Black slaves) that joined the Seminole Indians (aboriginals) fighting the Indian vs United States battles and revolts. The young Seminoles follow the same mandate but incorporate today’s concerns (economics) by having his tribe utilize there sewing skills and artistic designs into contemporary art. As Chief says when we sewing our suits that’s sacred, but outside of that we work!

Q) What is the spirit of your Gang?
A) Cultural, deep studying to bring some real deep historical pieces to the street and teaching the youth. Sewing keeping the culture going, you know culture bearing. Really sewing to the bone, doing what our elders did and bringing back to that. That’s what my gang is supposed to do, just bring that old school back and letting be known we all bout about that needle and thread.

Q) From your perspective Chief, what does this culture pay homage too?
A) I’ve heard stories of the slaves running to the Indian reservations for refuge and it had to happen that way. But I’ve studied and heard from elder chiefs and man… studies of Africa, I studied rebellious slaves. Bras Coupe was an African Prince that could not be sold at Congo Square. The Slaves watched that! He came with a distinctive dance, the bamboula and nobody knew that dance and he was beast with it. His statue trickled down, he started doing different things, they locked him up. Sent him to Pointe Cousse Parish, Louisi-
a. He broke loose, he killed slave masters and did different things like that. Knowing that they stole his wife, they locked up his wife. So, he came back for his wife. She was creole she was light skinned, so he did a few rebellious things to the slave masters but he was a hero to the slaves. He shot, couldn’t be killed, shot different times, cut arm, cut his ear off, took his ligaments and he still lived until a fisherman rat-
ed (bludgeoned to death) him out for 2000 dollars (accord-
ing to historical records it was Francisco Garcia former ally that settled for 200 plus dollars with the City of New Orleans in 1837).

Q) Who inspired you in this culture as a youth?
A) Big Chief Tootie Montana (Yellow Pocahontas, Big Chief Joe Pete (Seminole) and Keitoe (Seminoles) and many others.

Q) What’s your tribe’s mission?
A) Get away from New Orleans for the City 300 years we are quoted in every proposal. “Oh, we gotta put them in the plan, oh they together!” “All Nations” All tribes will come to City Hall…. If we do that, and show them we together, not just no uptown Indian Council, downtown. No, it’s a one council and we all togeth-
er. Yeah, one a nation.

Q) Chief some believe the biggest secret of this culture, is how much money is being made outside the culture on the culture?
A) If you out there than you can tap into that, then you can find out who stealing! Than we find out and expose it. I one of those people that expose it all. Some hate me for that, I am who I am. I expose it, imma young-
ster and imma Elder youngster cause I’m just fastened and molded. I’ve been here since the 90’s. All the elders that are gone, I sat with them. I sewed with them, conversed with them got with a lot of them and they all gave me pointers and advice but the first elder to put a needle and thread with beads was Ferdinand Bigard.

Q) What is your advice for the youth coming into this culture?
A) Learning this culture, studying this culture, learning how to sew is paramount in this culture. When you come into a tribe you have to respect and honor your Chief. Hold him high and learn your posi-
tions. When you out there on the streets its Indians Games but it’s Not! It’s an honor to wear Feathers!

For more information go to BNOLA.net
Kichea S. Burt

Despite the massive rain that flowed through the City, the Old U.S. Mint continued to host its anticipated SummerFest. With performances by Charmaine Neville, Hot 8 Brass Band, and Kermit Ruffins, it will be a festival worth remembering.

Barbara Shorts Preservation Hall Jazz Band Quiana Linell Nicholas Payton and Eric Burt Stephanie and Marlon Jordan David L Harris Treme Baby Doll Treme Million Dollar Baby Dolls Catherine Russell A Young Musician Ellis Marsellis Kermit Ruffins

Visit www.ladatanews.com for more photos from these events
Leading Louisiana in Quality Care

AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana is committed to leading the state to better health.

We received the highest quality scores* in 10 categories and high marks in several others — making us the Healthy Louisiana plan for you.

*A According to the National Committee for Quality Assurance's 2016 Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS).
President Obama’s Policies Still Drive Economic Growth

Lauren Victoria Burke
NNPA Newswire Contributor

In May of 2017, the Black unemployment rate hit its lowest level in 17 years: 7.5 percent. Then, in June, the jobless rate for Blacks fell to 7.1 percent, before rising to 7.4 percent in July, according to the latest jobs report.

The jobs numbers over the last six months have generally been impressive. It’s fascinating to note that, suddenly, all the accusations that low jobs numbers were “fake” when President Barack Obama was in office have suddenly vanished.

The Black unemployment rate hit 16.7 percent in September 2011—the highest Black unemployment since Ronald Reagan was in office pushing “trickle down” economics. Overall, the Black unemployment numbers were higher, on average, under President Obama than President George W. Bush or President Bill Clinton.

The 30 year-high for Black joblessness in late 2011 prompted members of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) to embark on an August 2011 jobs tour. That same year, President Obama barred members of the CBC at their annual gala to “put on your marching shoes...and stop whining and complaining.”

The Black unemployment rate, in general, was lower under President George W. Bush than it was under President Obama. Economists agree that the high jobless numbers, under President Obama, were largely driven by the economic downturn known as the Great Recession.

Obama’s economic policies are continuing to bear fruit during Trump’s first six months as the Black jobless numbers improve.

Black unemployment still remains double than it is for Whites. July’s numbers showed Black unemployment at 7.4 percent, Hispanics at 5.1 percent and Whites at 3.8.

In 2013, AFL-CIO Chief Economist Bill Spriggs wrote: “A big puzzle in looking at the changes in the Black unemployment rate is the fact that the labor force is older now than during past major downturns in the mid-1970s and early 1980s. In 1975, the Black unemployment rate spiked to 15.4 percent. In 1982 and 1983, the Black unemployment rate skyrocketed to above 20 percent for a nine-month period starting in October 1982.”

Several political observers pointed out that many jobs being added to the U.S. economy are in the service sector, such as restaurants and healthcare.

“Ensuring workers have better jobs and better wages also means they should be trained with the tools they need to succeed in our economy,” said Rep. Bobby Scott (D-Va.) the top Democrat on the Education & Workforce Committee in the House, in a statement on August 4.

The economy added 209,000 jobs in July.

Though the reasons for rising and falling Black unemployment over the last six months are not clear, it is clear that the current numbers reflect Obama’s economic policies; President Donald Trump has yet to implement any economic strategy and his proposed budget won’t take effect until next year, at the earliest. Additionally, Congress has passed nothing related to the economy regarding taxes or jobs.

Lauren Victoria Burke is the White House Correspondent for NNPA and a writer and political analyst. She appears on NewsOneNow with Roland Martin every Monday. She can be contacted at LBurke007@gmail.com and on twitter at @LVBurke.

New Education State Plans Receive Mixed Reviews

Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Contributor

Education policy experts have expressed serious concerns about some of the state plans submitted under the Every Student Succeeds Act.

President Barack Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) into law in December 2015. The law replaces the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act; states will begin implementing ESSA in the fall.

Erika McConduit, the president and CEO of the Urban League of Louisiana, said that some ESSA state plans have failed to take into account the academic performance of historically disadvantaged students.

There’s also a lack of clarity on how many poor-performing schools would be identified as needing improvement, or what actions would be required to show they’ve improved, said McConduit, who served as one of the policy experts that recently reviewed more than a dozen state education proposals that were submitted to the Department of Education.

“While we do believe that states obviously have a vested interest in wanting to advance the outcomes of students, there is cause for concern when it comes to accountability,” McConduit said.

Federal oversight has always provided a layer of accountability, ensuring there are checks and balances; those protections may no longer be available under some of the plans that been reviewed, which worries education advocates, like McConduit.

McConduit, who earned a mass communications degree from Howard University and a law degree from Loyola University New Orleans College of Law, said that as states transition from NCLB to ESSA, education advocates don’t want to lose any ground that has been gained in closing the achievement gap between Black and White students.

Recently, McConduit worked with a group of education policy experts organized by the Collaborative for Student Success and Bellwether Education Partners to review state accountability plans.

The Howard University graduate also took part in the Education Trust’s “ESSA Boot Camp II: Advocating for Equity and Achievement in ESSA Implementation,” which focused on rating systems for schools, and support and improvement for struggling schools.

McConduit said that it’s difficult to say that ESSA will be successful across the board.

“What we have seen in the peer review process—not all states have submitted and we’re looking at a fraction so far—some [state officials] have really focused on designing [good plans],” she said. “We’ve also been disappointed with some states who really did not resolve critical details in advance of submitting their plans.”

As a reviewer and a leader of a civil rights organization, McConduit said that she worked deeply on Louisiana’s plan, making sure that certain components were included. McConduit said that she was disappointed to see how some states did not move to flesh out thorough plans.

“We know there are gaps, historic gaps, where there have always been groups of students left out of the mainstream,” McConduit said.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) ESSA requires, “each state to create a plan for its statewide accountability system. In particular, ESSA calls for state plans that include strategies for reporting education outcomes by grade for all students and for economically disadvantaged students, students from major racial and ethnic groups, students with disabilities, and English learners.”

NCES also said that, “states must specify a single value for the minimum
Prominent Cuban Director Eyes New Orleans for Caribbean Film Exhibition

Deja Dennis  
Data News Weekly Contributor

Havana, Cuba – The allure of the emerging New Orleans Film Industry has been recognized by filmmakers in the Caribbean, and New Orleans could even be the future site for the Travelling Caribbean Film Showcase.

Rigoberto López, a prominent Cuban Filmmaker and the President of the Caribbean Cinema Group, said that hosting the film showcase in New Orleans would promote the Caribbean Film Industry that reflects and connects the shared experiences of Black people within the Diaspora, living in the Americas.

“I think it is possible that we can show these films at a university in New Orleans,” López said in Spanish. The films that are selected for the showcase are prominent works of Caribbean Directors, and mostly depict the Black experience.

Born in Havana, Cuba, López produced a number of well-respected films. He wrote, directed and produced the award-winning film Roble de Olor (Scent of Oak) in 2004 that explored the intersection of race in the Caribbean in the 19th Century. His more recent work is Vuelos Prohibidos (Forbidden Flights) in 2015. He has filmed in various parts of the Caribbean, South America, and in Spain and has visited the U.S. for talks on Cuban cinema, society, and culture. He sees New Orleans as an ideal opportunity to grow Caribbean Film, particularly as the City is now considered the center of Hollywood South.

“The Black presence in the Caribbean is fundamental,” López said in Spanish. However, people in the region do not always get to see the films made by directors from the region. “People in those countries know of films from outside but not of their own native cinema, from their own countries, they have not seen them. So, this is a possibility to promote a better visibility for cinema in the region, in other countries in the world,” he said in Spanish.

Actors Harry Belafonte and Danny Glover serve as honorary presidents for the showcase. The first showcase was held in Kingston, Jamaica in June 2005. From then on, each country chose a date to host the event. In Cuba, it is hosted in September. The films are judged and selected based on their artistic quality, logic, and themes, to show the rest of the world the craftsmanship of Caribbean Filmmakers and provide a look into Caribbean life.

“There are diverse titles that respond to the idea of the Black experience among us,” López said about the films that are selected. A lot of them discuss racial discrimination, social violence, and migration. López also noted the differences in the experiences of Afro-Cubans and African-Americans. He discussed topics like segregation and racial prejudice. Although López knows that there exists racism in Cuba, he believes that the effects of it have been worse in the U.S. The portrayal of African-Americans in Hollywood Films sometimes reinforces this view of Black people among many Cubans.

“In the movies, Black people are mostly the drug dealers and the killers,” said Lusmila Lamothe, 23, who studied communications at the University of Havana. This is the image Lamothe said many young Cubans see of African-Americans through U.S. Cinema.

Many Black filmmakers in the region, like Lopez, agree that race is a far more complex issue that can be explored beyond the Hollywood narrative. The main objective of Caribbean Cinema is to show a more diverse representation of Black people in the Americas to combat the negative stereotypes shown in American media. This agenda is becoming easier to achieve as the film showcase gains more recognition.

“Prominent Cuban Filmmaker Rigoberto Lopez and his team plan a production schedule for upcoming projects.”

Residents sit outside a film theatre in the Vedado Enclave in Havana, Cuba. A sign notes the upcoming Travelling Caribbean Film Showcase for 2017.
Strictly Business 101

There comes a time in all our lives when we must trade in our flip flops for a pair of loafers and ditch the mini skirt for a pair of slacks. Business attire and fashion is coming back in style now that August is here. School is in session and workers are back at their cubicles. Here are a few tips of how to dress your most fashionably professional.

Patterns: The old fashion black slacks and solid pencil skirts are styles of the past. Today, you can jazz up your business and work attire with a touch of color or a wild pattern. Pants can be midi, or long, if they are eye catching with polka dots, stripes, or any pattern far from plain.

Blazers: Blazers are advancing with pockets, shoulder enhancements and even within their colors. You can rock a cream, blue, red or even multicolored blazer and still look like a boss. Blazers are a good intro into tailored suits also: because who doesn’t look good in a suit?

Fabulous Flats: Feel free to throw those 2007 baby doll shoes away for a newer chic pair of flats that will work for business or normal attire. Flats today are pointy, elevated, colorful, designer, and more. Although they are hard to find, the flats of your dreams could be found through online shopping.

For more Business 101 tips follow @Delanii on Instagram or email Delinkey@yahoo.com

Custom pattern suits by Ljai Amor, worn by a model on skates.

Custom painted suit by Ljai Amor worn on Singer/Songwriter Denisia. Shot by: @Bdragonimagery

YOUR SON’S HAIRCUT ACCIDENTALLY TURNED INTO A BUZZ CUT

Do you:
(A) Loan out Dad’s toupee.
(B) Get creative with glue.
(C) Try to make sweatbands a “thing” again.

When it comes to being a parent, there are no perfect answers — just being there is enough. So don’t worry, you don’t have to be perfect to be a perfect parent. There are thousands of teens in foster care who will love you just the same.

888.200.4005 AdoptUSKids.org

TEXTING AND DRIVING MAKES GOOD PEOPLE LOOK BAD.
STOPTEXTSSTOPWRECKS.ORG

Delaney George
Fashion Columnist

Delaney’s Armoire

Custom pattern suits by Ljai Amor, worn by a model on skates.

Custom painted suit by Ljai Amor worn on Singer/Songwriter Denisia. Shot by: @Bdragonimagery
3 Ways Shrinkage can Promote Healthy Hair

Shrinkage is one of the greatest enemies of your average natural-haired woman. Many naturals struggle with hair that shrinks so much it only shows half to ¼ of their actual length. Many women wear natural hair to promote hair growth and overall hair health. However, some naturals may feel discouraged when they’ve been taking care of their natural hair for years only to find that it hasn’t grown at all. More than likely, the hair has been growing and getting healthier. Unfortunately, for many naturals, it can take months to years to see your curls get exceptionally longer but here are 3 ways shrinkage may actually be a blessing than a curse.

1. Contrary to popular belief, shrinkage is what allows your hair to grow out healthy in the first place. Curly/Kinky hair bends around itself naturally forming loose to tight spirals. Leaving these spirals alone so they can flourish, allows your hair to grow without the manipulation of straightening or stretching.

2. The natural shrinkage of curls helps your hair to retain more moisture. Tightly curled hair can naturally retain more moisture for a longer period of time, especially in the roots. Moisturized roots can lead to more healthy hair growth over time.

3. If you shrink more than 50 percent to 75 percent of your actual length, shrinkage can keep your hair off your shoulders. When your curls constantly rub against your shoulders this can cause friction which may lead to split ends and breakage.

Happy Growing!

Not all shrinkage is the same, but its purpose is universal. Photo via https://lumynexessentials.com.
Congratulations to our Discover the Unexpected (DTU) Fellows!

Discover the Unexpected, presented by the all-new 2018 Chevrolet Equinox in partnership with the National Newspaper Publishers Association, celebrates the impressive achievements of our HBCU student journalists.

Because of our DTU Fellows, summer ‘17 was full of important stories that inform, inspire, and shatter perceptions about African American culture as well as our community.

Don’t miss their stories and videos from this road trip of a lifetime.

#discovertheunexpected

DISCOVER MORE OF THEIR STORIES AT NNPA.ORG/DTU