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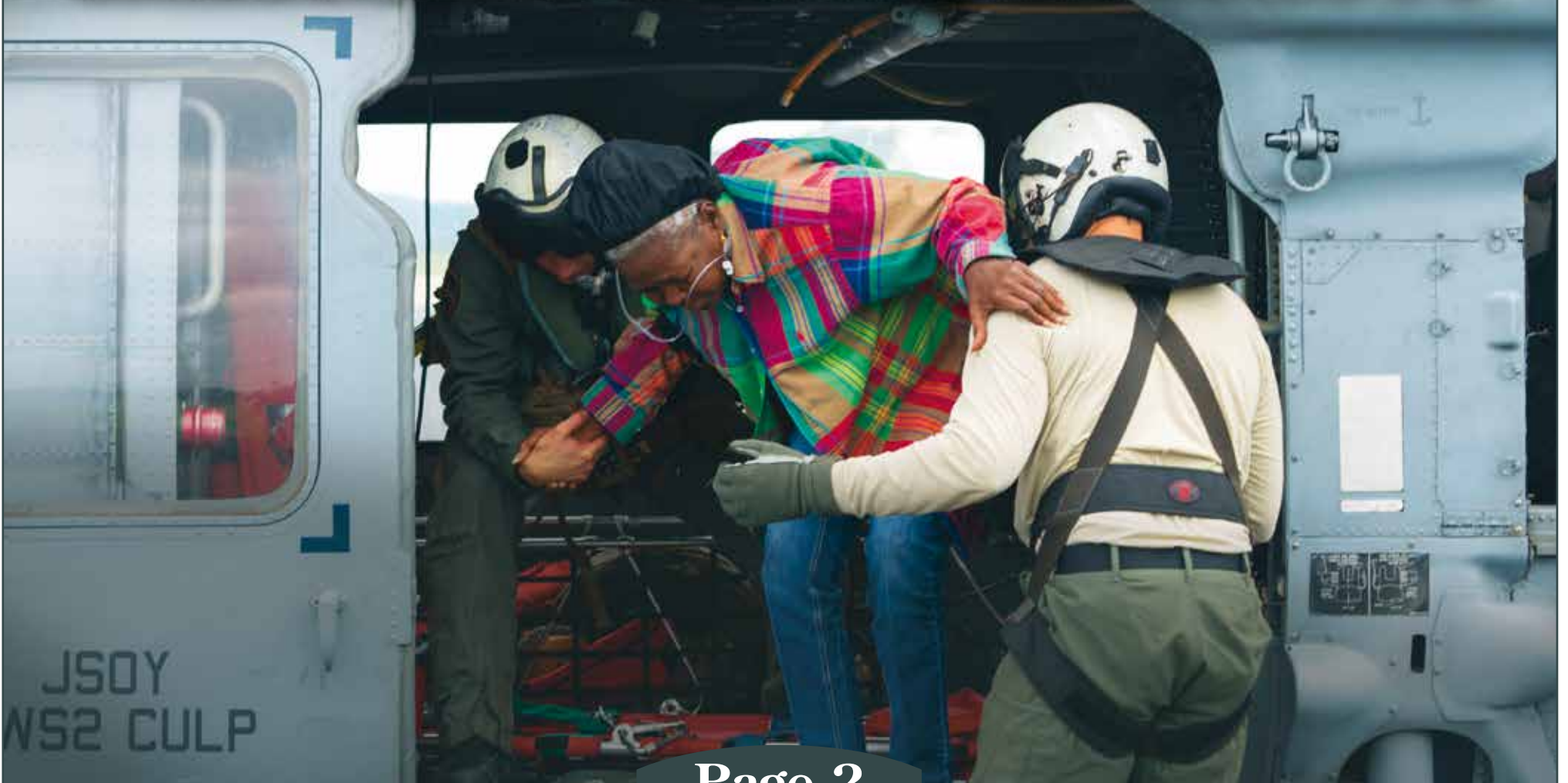
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September 9 - September 15, 2017 52nd Year Volume 20 www.ladatanews.com

A Data News Weekly Exclusive

What Lies Next for Hurricane Harvey Evacuees



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Dallas Prepares for Thousands of Hurricane Harvey Evacuees



Members of FEMA's Urban Search and Rescue Nebraska Task Force One (NE-TF1) rescue a family from a neighborhood impacted by flooding from Hurricane Harvey. Photo by FEMA News Photo

Joe Farkus
North Dallas Gazette/NNPA Member

Dallas is preparing for thousands of evacuees from the Houston area due to the damage and destruction caused by Hurricane Harvey and the widespread flooding and rainfall left in its wake. According to various lo-

cal law enforcement agencies, at least 10 people have been killed due to Harvey—the worst storm to hit the Houston area in half a century. An Associated Press report lists tens of billions of dollars in property damage, and one of Houston's top energy providers, CenterPoint Energy, is reporting that more than 90,000 of their customers in the Houston area lost power.

As evacuees continue to make their way to Dallas, at least three Dallas recreation centers have started taking in displaced residents that need shelter: Walnut Hills Recreation Center, Samuel Grand Center, and Tommie M. Allen Center in South Dallas. All three are currently staffed by Red Cross and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) members.

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Cover photo by U.S. Navy Page/Flickr.

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Cover Story, Continued from page 2.



An aerial view of areas affected by Hurricane Harvey in Beaumont, Texas, Sept. 1, 2017. Hurricane Harvey is the first major Hurricane to make landfall over the United States in over a decade. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Elizabeth Brown)

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A graphic for social media showing FEMA's support to areas affected by Hurricane Harvey. Photo by FEMA
Graphic - Aug 27, 2017

"When you look at what happened in [Hurricane] Katrina, we had 28,000 individuals come to the Dallas area, and they were here for months," Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings told C-SPAN last week. "Making sure we integrate them into schools, making sure we integrate them into housing and [taking care of their] medical needs will be of

the utmost importance."

The mayor reassured immigrants to not be afraid to seek assistance; some immigrants have expressed concerns that their legal status will be an issue.

"We are not asking for immigration status or papers from anyone at any of our shelters. We are using every resource available to as-

sist evacuees," Rawlings shared via his Facebook page. "Our priority is protecting and sheltering our fellow Texans."

Due to the thousands expected to arrive in Dallas over the next week, the Kay Bailey Hutchinson Convention Center's parking garage was converted into a "mega shelter," able to house 5,000 indi-

viduals at one time. Some officials are concerned that simply won't be enough and are exploring other options, as upwards of 9,000 people are expected to arrive at the convention center this week.

"Right now, we're just focused on getting this center opened, and then the state has asked us to start lining up other 'mega-centers,'" said

Rawlings. "We may have as many as we had in Katrina again this year, and so we want to be prepared for those tens of thousands of people who come in."

The North Dallas Gazette is a member publication of the National Newspaper Publishers Association. Learn more about becoming a member at www.nnpa.org.

Fast Food Workers in New Orleans Prepare to Strike

Data News Staff Edited Report

Fast Food workers demanding a \$15 minimum wage in over 300 U.S. cities held demonstrations this past Labor Day. In New Orleans, McDonald Employees at 2757 Canal Street and 1918 Broad Street held protest and rallies outside their work place.

"Good union jobs in factories once created stable, secure work that allowed families to thrive," said Mary Kay Henry, International President of the Service Employees International Union, the largest organization of healthcare workers in the United States. "Hospital work and other service work is now the backbone of our economy, but too many Americans who work in these jobs are falling behind. It's



Protestors across several U.S. cities held a unified strike against current minimum wage legislation. Photo by Anna Waters.

form unions, raise wages, and lift up millions of families."

Workers from Memphis, St. Louis, New York, Los Angeles, Seattle, and Washington D.C. all held unified demonstrations. Many of these workers are fighting for unions.

"America needs unions," U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders said Tuesday in a video released in support of the Labor Day strikes and protests. "Unions are the only way workers have ever gotten ahead in this country. And today, unions are the only shot for workers to take back the country and fight back against corporate interests that have rigged the system against them."

Organized under the rally name "Fight for \$15," leaders of the rally along with Service Employees International Union announced it would hold a series of demonstrations and sessions that would inform the public on electing leaders who support a \$15/hour minimum wage and union rights.

time to rewrite the rules so people doing today's service work can



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Big Chief Keith “WAR” Price 7th Ward Hunters

Glenn Jones
Data News Weekly
Contributor

Timeline: Present – 2017 7Th
Ward Hunters Tribe
2004 – 2010 – Young Cheyenne
Tribe

Big Chief WAR a.k.a Brick is part of a great legacy in this culture. He was introduced to this culture by his father Verdell “Brick” Sceau and uncles who were in the Cherokee Hunters Tribe. The Cherokee Hunters Tribe became the Flaming Arrows after the death Big Chief Clarence “Boy Boy” Guadet. Theodore “Merk” Goodman, original chief of the Flaming Arrows from back of town (back end of the 7th ward aka BaKaStan), welcomed their cousins into the tribe. Currently, the Chief of Flaming Arrows is Kevin Goodman the son of “Merk”. Big Chief Kevin Goodman and Brick were part of the first all-children tribe called the Young Flaming Arrows of 15-20 deep in members—and all positions had Queens. Many of the newer tribes forming since the late 70’s early 80’s came from the Young Flaming Arrows Tribe, especially as it relates to downtown tribes. Speaking with Chief Brick about how the 7th and 6th ward tribes have developed and are connected is like listening to Neil deGrasse Tyson speak about our Solar Systems Evolution. This interview 14 weeks into our 42-Tribes Series is very much educational. Truly every chief has their own story or journey. I’m finding through my learning and understanding of the culture that it’s an ever-evolving life form with seemingly endless branches.

- Q) What was the benefit of masking as a child?
- A) “The culture I come up in was if you didn’t sew you didn’t mask. That’s why we like to start them off young from my experience. It was homework,



Big Chief Keith “WAR” Price 7th Ward Hunters

good grades and we had a shed on Frenchman (I just seen they put a house or something there now). We had twenty to thirty kids every day with adults showing us how to do hats, we were dying white marabou purple. They were showing us this, and we had a workshop because when we came from school we couldn’t do none of this. All of us sat at the table and did homework. There was like twenty of us. There was a long table with twenty to thirty kids. That same table we did homework on we converted that into a workshop with Indian Suits. We couldn’t just mask to say we mask we had to put our hands on it.”

- Q) Without that table available for youth today, who is teaching the youth?
- A) I don’t see too many all-kids tribe but you do have a lot of kids that’s part of the culture and another thing I have notices, more and more kids are learning to dance, to sing, to sew, to build their own stuff. That’s the thing I love about them. Like I said, there aren’t a lot of kid tribes but there are

a lot of kids that mask with some of these tribes that are learning the right way. When I say the right way. When you are playing Indian and you meet an Indian you have to be taught to play a certain way. You can’t just let a kid go out there and develop a style because it could be a wild style he develops. When I say that, it’s a disrespectful style. But, I see a lot of kids posting stuff Indian world. They are sitting there sewing. Lil biddy kids, teaching them how to sing. So, it’s there we just have to do more of it. We have to do more of it.

- Q) What are your thoughts on the labels of Indian, Mardi Gras Indian or Black Masking?
- A) The word Indian is really insulting to a lot of people. It’s really disrespectful to people. It’s like calling Blacks a nigga. A real true native don’t want to be called an Indian. Because they know where they come from. That’s kind of why, we say in the Black Masking World, and going to use Black Masking and other terms cause the Mardi Gras Indian

thing just played out. That’s a term we was given just like African- American. You see what I’m saying? Feel me, we have to get away from that. We are not Mardi Gras Indians. Y’all are commercializing us by saying that. But y’all won’t give us none of the commerce.

- Q) What does W.A.R. stand for and is that the spirit of your tribe?
- A) Willing And Ready, that’s the acronym. I look at everything I do, I take it head on. Willing And Ready to mean, life will throw some things at you. You’ve got to be willing to accept what it throws, you’ve got to be ready to take consequences. Do or die, win or lose. This Indian thing is the same thing. I have cried a many of mornings lately, not thinking I’m going to make it. One morning I didn’t make it. This is passion, blood, sweat and tears. This is something you have to prepare for like an athlete. The same way an athlete prepares his body like a boxer prepare his skills. These beads are not going to jump on their (suit).
- WAR is the spirit I become Mardi Gras morning. I’m not Brick no more, I’m not Keith no more. None of that. When I paint my face, whatever color... red and I put these feathers in my head. When I walk out my door and I sing Indian Red I transform. I’m a whole other person. Like my ancestors, all of them I am aligned with come in me. You might see my eyes roll in the back of my head like I’ve caught the Holy Ghost. That’s what is. That’s what it feels like. I never actually caught the Christianity type, but I always catch this Holy Ghost. It’s like an ancestral thing that comes over me, that’s the WAR spirit that enters me.

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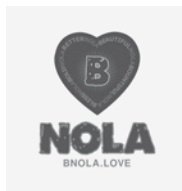
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Backstreet Cultural Museum Benefit Concert

Kichea S. Burt
Photographer

On Friday September 1st, New Orleans Trumpeter Kermit Ruffins and the BBQ Swingers performed at a benefit concert for the Backstreet Cultural Museum. The musical performance was held at Ruffins' Mother-in-Law Lounge at 1500 Claiborne Avenue.



Sylvester Francis



Miss D





Kermitt Ruffins



Bruce Sunpie Barnes



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

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Finding Comedy in Tragedy

“Ms. Pat” Tells It Like It Is



Julianne Malveaux
NNPA Columnist

I don't often write about comedians, but the recent passing of my friend Dick Gregory reminded me of the very important role that comedians play in our lives. Not that Gregory was simply a comedian. He was so much more than that—a civil rights activist, leader, amazing speaker, holistic health practitioner, and so much more. It was in thinking of him that I picked up the book “Rabbit: The Autobiography of Ms. Pat.”

Ms. Pat, also known as Patricia

Williams, is a hot, relatively new comedian, who uses her dysfunctional, early life as fodder for her comedy.

Ms. Pat says that her daughter frequently threatens to put her in an old folks home; she adds that because her daughter is only 14 years younger than she is, they will be in the old folks home together. Funny? Maybe. Tragic? For sure. After all, Williams had her first child by a married man, eight years her senior, when she was 14 years-old, according to her bio. By 15, she had two children, a daughter and son, by the married man, who was a habitual cheater.

While her story is not typical, it is also not unusual and it could serve as the foundation for some sociologist's tale of pathology in the African American community (consider the late Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan's controversial 1953 report on “The Negro Fam-



Julianne Malveaux says that Ms. Pat has a heart of gold and uses personal tragedy to make people laugh. (Screenshot/MsPatComedy.com)

ily”). Ms. Pat's story bears retelling, not because of its pathology, but because she has been able to find the humor in it. Ms. Pat's book tells her story so effectively that you don't know whether to laugh,

cry, scream, or shake her. It's a redemptive story of a woman who, by 20, had been to jail for drug dealing (but not for using), had held jobs as a waitress, factory worker, gas station worker, and then moved up to a house near a pond in an Indianapolis suburb, earning her living as a comedian (“They don't check your background for doing standup,” she says).

While I haven't had a chance to catch Ms. Pat's comedy act, my half-hour conversation with her makes me certain that it's a hoot, just like her book. She tells her story, and she tells it raw; her first 12 years of life will break your heart. She spent her earliest years growing up in her grandfather's “liquor house,” but when her grandfather was incarcerated for killing a woman, she began living a near-nomadic life with her mother and her siblings. Moving every few months, her belongings in garbage bags, she endured hun-

ger at home, ridicule at school, and, but for a couple of dedicated and giving teachers, she lived a rather lonely life.

She got into selling drugs because her baby's daddy sold them and got busted; at 15, she felt that she had no other way to support her two children. For a time, she lived large, but says she “grew up some” when she went to jail, and had time to think about the direction of her life. Jail didn't stop her from dealing—she kept it up until well after she met her current husband. While she was committed to stop selling drugs, she couldn't find work, until one of her social workers remarked that she'd make a great comedian. Why? “Because things that other people find tragic are funny to me,” she says. “When my sister-in-law died in the middle of an Atlanta Falcons' game, I burst

Malveaux, Continued
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It Will Take More than ESSA to Save Black Children



Lynette Monroe
NNPA ESSA Program
Assistant

Last week, late nights, family road trips, and endless leisure came to an abrupt halt as children across the country headed back to school. This year, however, there is something else that requires adjustment besides early mornings and evening homework assignments. This year, a revised national education law goes into effect: the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). ESSA is the reauthorization of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) signed into law by Barack Obama in 2015.

ESEA included landmark legis-

lation such as the Adult Education Act (1966), which provided funding for supplemental education centers and mandated educational programming even during “out-of-session” periods for isolated and rural areas; the Women's Educational Equity Act, which protected women and girls from discrimination in education; ESEA also included protections for those who suffer from discrimination based on race, ethnicity, or disability. ESEA has been updated every five years since it was signed into law. The original intention of ESEA was to provide equal access to quality education, emphasize high standards and accountability, authorize funds for professional development, design effective instructional materials, provide supplemental education programs, and promote parental involvement.

Previous reauthorizations include the now infamous No Child Left Behind (NCLB), signed into law by President George W. Bush



Lynette Monroe says that we must hold ourselves accountable for the academic success of our children. (Official White House Photo by Pete Souza)

in 2001. ESSA replaces NCLB.

Education has been hailed the “new civil rights issue.” However, as we know, all too well, a law alone will not save us. The unanimous decision in *Brown v. the Board of Education* occurred in 1954; it was

not until 1988 that school integration reached an all-time high with 45 percent of Black students attending majority-White schools. In 2003, a study by Harvard's Civil Rights Project found that schools were more segregated in 2000 than

in 1970 when busing for desegregation began. So we see, that laws alone will not fix decades of restricted access and rationed opportunity. We also can conclude that without a watchful eye we are bound to repeat history.

During an interview at the University of California Berkley on October 11, 1963, Malcolm X said that if the government, “really passed meaningful laws, it would not be necessary to pass any more laws. There are already enough laws on the law books to protect an American citizen. You only need additional laws when you are dealing with someone, who is not regarded as an American citizen.”

The goal of the 2015 reauthorization of ESEA is equity, but so was that the goal in 1965. A major component of both the 1965 ESEA and ESSA as the 2015 reauthorization is parental involvement. We must be the change we want to see.

Monroe, Continued
on page 10.

One of the Oldest HBCUs in the Country Could Fold in September

Stacy M. Brown
Washington Informer/NNPA
Member

After years of financial trouble and heartbreaking enrollment decline, Cheyney University, one of the oldest Black institutions of higher education in America, is on the verge of fiscal ruin and in danger of losing its accreditation.

Cheyney's problems have sparked rallies, protests and an outpouring of support and outrage from state senators, alumni and others.

"On the one hand, it's tragic. On the flip side, this didn't happen overnight," said Johnny Taylor Jr., the president and CEO of the Thurgood Marshall College Fund. "While there were all sorts of other factors, including a bad economy in 2008 and state and federal [agencies] that failed to help, this still reflects badly on Cheyney's board of trustees and the university's president."

Founded in 1837, by Richard Humphreys, a reformed slave trader, Cheyney represents more than just a place of learning, said Pennsylvania State Representative Stephen Kinsey, who recently joined students and others at a rally for the school.

"Cheyney represents the struggle of being Black in America, fighting to be recognized, speaking up to be supported, and a never-ending struggle to be treated equally," Kinsey said.

A report issued by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights noted that, although HBCUs only make up three percent of today's colleges and universities, more than 20 percent of African-American college graduates attend an HBCU.

"For years, these historic institutions have produced amazing leaders, that not only contribute to their respective fields, but who also pride themselves on their 'lifting while they climb' attitudes," said U.S. Senator Bob Casey, D-Pennsylvania.

Cheyney has faced a myriad of financial struggles as funding to the school decreased and tuition rose. Since 2010, enrollment dropped 50 percent from over 1,500 students to an estimated 746.

Since 2013, Cheyney has borrowed over \$30.5 million to stay



Cheyney University is in danger of losing its accreditation in September. (Cheyney University)

solvent and, if school officials can't deliver a plan that satisfies the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, the school could lose its accreditation in September.

This would be particularly devastating, because the school's accreditation is tied to its access to federal grant programs, including Pell grants.

The Philadelphia Tribune reported that State Rep. Stephen Kinsey (D-Pa.) said that nearly three-quarters of the students are from low-income households and qualify for federal Pell grants.

State Rep. Stephen Kinsey (D-Pa.) said that he felt obligated to save Cheyney University, during a recent rally about the fate of the school, according to the Tribune.

Pennsylvania State Senator Vincent Hughes, a Cheyney trustee, said work continues to prevent the loss of accreditation. "We've been working with the governor and others," Hughes said. "I wish I can guarantee things, but I also can't allow myself to think negatively."

Such notables to attend Cheyney include, the late "60 Minutes" journalist Ed Bradley; charismatic educator Marcus Foster; former Chicago Bears linemen James Williams; Emmy-winning anchorman Jim Vance; and Philadelphia Tribune Publisher Robert Bogle.

"Cheyney University of Pennsylvania has been an important con-

tributor to the education of African-Americans since before the Civil War, and the data shows that we need every HBCU in the country to continue their legacy of contributing to its education outcomes," said Dr. Michael L. Lomax, the president and CEO of the United Negro College Fund. "HBCUs continue to show their outsized impact, representing three percent of all two and four-year nonprofit colleges and universities, enrolling 10 percent of African-American undergraduates, producing 18 percent of all African-American bachelor's degrees and generating 25 percent of all bachelor's degrees in STEM fields earned by African-Americans annually."

Lomax added that federal and state governments, alumni, corporations, philanthropists, and others need to invest more heavily in institutions like Cheyney University.

"The governor has been working closely with the state system and its board to create a path forward for Cheyney, that allows it to build off its history, continue as a degree-granting institution, and address its financial struggles," said J.J. Abbott, a spokesman for Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf.

Pennsylvania Democratic State Rep. Jordan Harris, a member of a task force formed to advise Cheyney's administration, said the university has been underfunded for years and without permanent leadership.

"The task force's job is not to tell the university what to do, but to make recommendations," Harris said. "For the past two years, the state system has provided a line of credit to Cheyney University to be sustained financially. The State System of Higher Education needs to forgive that debt immediately

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How to Dress your Infant to Impress



Delaney George
Fashion Columnist

Your new bundle of joy has entered the world and you want nothing but the best for them: best crib, bib, bottle, and Balenciaga booties. Infants are fragile but it doesn't mean they can't be fashionable. Some of the most high-end brands sell clothing for infants as young as four months. Here are two top brands new mommies and daddies can have their little one taking their first step in style.

Gucci: Gucci's kids line is well-known, almost as much as they're high fashion men and women's clothing. However, Gucci's newborn line is made for the most fashionable toddler. From their waterproof jacquard to their signature Gucci onesie, a Gucci baby is a fabulous baby.

Ralph Lauren: Ralph Lauren is one of the classiest lines out, and



Baby Khaled steps out in an all Gucci onesie with the Gucci tennis to match. Photo by: @Grofferson on Instagram

their infant ensembles follow in their footsteps. The well-known brand recently dropped an all-black infant dress with a white collar and flowy hemline. This ensemble would be great for family dinners, outings, Sunday best and for any occasion where your little one should look her most prim and proper.

So next time you attend a baby shower, a new born visit, or are planning to have a baby, make sure they are stepping into the world with style and grace. You never know, you may be grooming the next top designer, model or stylist. For more on infant brands email Delinkey@yahoo.com



Ralph Lauren's signature horse and man symbol covers their infant shoes with multiple colors. Photo by: Shoesx_



Gucci booties/footies for a newborn. Photo by: @Shoesx_ on Instagram

Malveaux, Continued from page 8.

into tears. I don't know if I was crying, because she died or because she never got to see the Falcons finish losing that game."

Ms. Pat says she stays out of politics and "tries to stay neutral." Still, she manages to make a few pithy, funny political comments. She likens Confederate flag wavers to Cleveland Browns fans when she says, "They are used to losing. They are serious about their losing team." She won't say much about the current occupant of the White House ("look, I want to sell books"), but she does note that he has caused, "regular Black folks to start reading the [newspaper]. I never used to read The New York Times, but I have to keep up with

him." And, she notes that her family Christmas cruise was cancelled, thanks to the 2016 election; "I was not getting on a boat with that fool in office," she quips.

While Ms. Pat avoids political talk, her story can have an impact on public policy. How do young mothers support their kids, if they are too young for a work permit? How can ex-offenders support themselves, if they can't find work because of their criminal record? Why are there so many resources now available for opiate addicts, when so few were available for those who were addicted to crack cocaine?

Ms. Pat said that, when she was child no one told her that she was loved.

"So, now I love everybody," she says.

The woman has a heart of gold. Not only did she raise her own children, she took on the responsibility of raising four more young children that belonged to her sister who was struggling with drug addiction.

While the situation may be tragic, it is fodder for more comedy for Ms. Pat.

Ms. Pat calls her 31 and 30 year-old, who her "Medicaid kids" and her 17 year-old and a 19 year-old that she has with her current husband, her "Blue Cross kids."

Some have called her "The Black Roseanne," because she has a sitcom in the works (produced by Lee Daniels). I just call her funny, poignant, and blunt.

Like Dick Gregory, Ms. Pat, uses comedy to blunt the outrage of tragedy.

Monroe, Continued from page 8.

Laws are an opportunity to hold our leaders accountable. We must hold ourselves accountable for the academic success of our children. At the 1979 Amandla Festival in support of relief and humanitarian aid to Southern Africa, Dick Gregory, in his fifteen minute introduction of Bob Marley and Wailers, stated:

"We the decent people of this planet must stand up and say to the rest of them inhumane, cruel beast that we are not going to tolerate it no more. And then they'll say, 'what are you gon' do about it?' If I don't do nothing, but get out of my bed everyday and look myself in the face in the quietness of my living room and say, 'I'm not gon' tolerate it no more, I'm not gon' tolerate it no more, I'm not gon' tolerate it no more' that alone, when enough people stand doing it, is enough to win."

So, let's challenge ourselves this academic year to say, "we not gon' tolerate it no more." We are not going to tolerate inadequate resources, unqualified teachers, unresponsive school boards, and low academic standards. Let's challenge our children to rise to the occasion. Let's challenge ourselves to attend community meetings, to join the PTA, to check our children's homework, and to make sure our children's teachers know us by name.

Learn more about the Every Student Succeeds Act at nnpa.org/essa.

Lynette Monroe is a master's student at Howard University. Her research area is public policy and national development. Ms. Monroe is the program assistant for the NNPA's Every Student Succeeds Act Public Awareness Campaign. Follow Lynette Monroe on Twitter @_monroedoctrine.

New Orleans Hip-Hop Artist RED DOG Releases New Album "Trinity: The Last Revolution"

Edwin Buggage
Features Writer

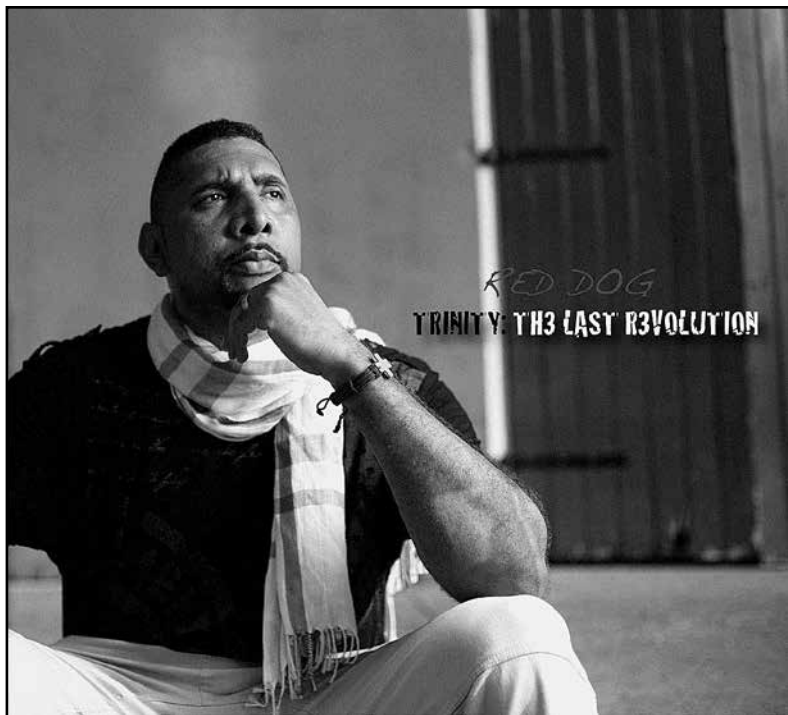
Music that Inspires

RED DOG (David Jackson) is a rapper and multi-instrumentalist, first being a classically trained pianist then moving onto drums and eventually falling in love with rap and hip-hop. Since releasing his first album in 2005, his eclectic approach to his artistry continues to push the lyrical and musical limits of hip-hop. This is on full display in his latest album entitled, "Trinity: The Last Revolution" showcasing his growth as both an artist and a Christian. The CD is chock-full of songs that are conscious and uplifting. It features collaborations with breakout hip-hop star Dee-1, Contemporary Christian Singer Lauren Settembrini, Underground Rapper Truth Universal, Philharmonic Cellist Anat Nevo, Rock Guitarist Eric Maldonado, R&B Singer J9, Gospel Singer Don Jackson and Reggae Singer Claudius England and Legendary Rapper and Producer Daddy-O from Stetsasonic.

Since its release in July, the album has been receiving critical acclaim and the stellar music that marries RED DOG's insightful and inspiring lyrics was produced by Legendary New Orleans Jazz Musician and Jazz Professor Tyrone Jackson under his Moniker Maestro T, ranging from hip-hop, jazz, reggae to rock. Lyrically, RED DOG has never been better. His rapid-fire staccato style punctuates the trap song "That Gospel Thing" but he is reflective and soulful on the duet with Lauren Settembrini on "Now I Believe." He also performs with Hip-Hop Legends Truth Universal, Dee-1 and Daddy-O on the prophetic song, "Apocalypse Now."

Speaking of his new project he says, "This is my third album, I am really excited about it and it reflects where I am right now. It's more mature and I am focusing on the topics of religion and social justice. These are a few of the issues that are close to me and where my passion lies and I address some of them on this album."

More than simply a studio artist he takes his music to schools, churches, prisons and other places sharing his message of uplift and hope. On this day, as we speak by phone, he is on set in Atlanta shoot-



RED DOG

ing a music video. Speaking of the reception to the album and promoting it, he says "The reception of this project has been great, we are getting some play from different radio stations and it's been nothing but positive responses. I am shooting a video for a song called "Now I Believe". I have also been performing at different churches and festivals around the country and we are using social media to get people engaged and expose them to the music."

Practicing What You Preach

His life is one that mirrors his message, where outside of music his mission is to give back and serve others. "I have been fortunate enough to work with St. Mark's Mission that does a lot of work feeding the homeless, I've worked with Sheriff Marlin Gusman's Prison Re-Entry Program to minister to those who are on the cusp of re-entering society and to try to help reduce the recidivism rates. I also work with people living in public housing and I also mentor youth around the City. I feel it is important that if you are going to be out here spreading a message you have to practice what you preach."

RED DOG is someone who is very reflective and continues to stay authentic to his heart as it relates to his art. He is one that is not concerned with commercial success at the expense of his soul. "I remember falling in love with hip-hop as a young guy; I did talent

people. Today much of that has gotten lost as the focus is on materialism. Unfortunately, this has also happened in the church, where it was about the messages of hope and salvation, some churches and pastors have fallen into the trap of capitalism where some of these TV church pastors and others are making sales pitches asking people to send money and not focusing on the message of hope, salvation and serving others. This is the foundation of what I believe one should do as a Christian and this is something I not only rap about but I live it."

Doing God's Work and Changing Lives Through Music

RED DOG eschews the title of Christian Rapper, for he feels it is limited in describing the scope of his musical repertoire. "I am a rapper, who is a Christian, and I guess my music reflects who I am and things I am concerned about such as social justice issues, anti-war, peace songs, internal struggles, mental health issues. If I had to describe myself I would say I am a socially conscious and Christian Rapper who speaks on the human experience."

Music is only one way of many ways RED DOG has chosen to serve humanity. He says this aligns with his meaning and purpose in life, "I feel fulfilled in my purpose knowing that I have to do good in the world and that is my daily mission, to make a difference in someone's life. To be a positive influence on people in my little sphere through my music and my life; it is not about changing the world of 7 billion people but about changing the people around me and spreading the love to the people I encounter while doing God's work."



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