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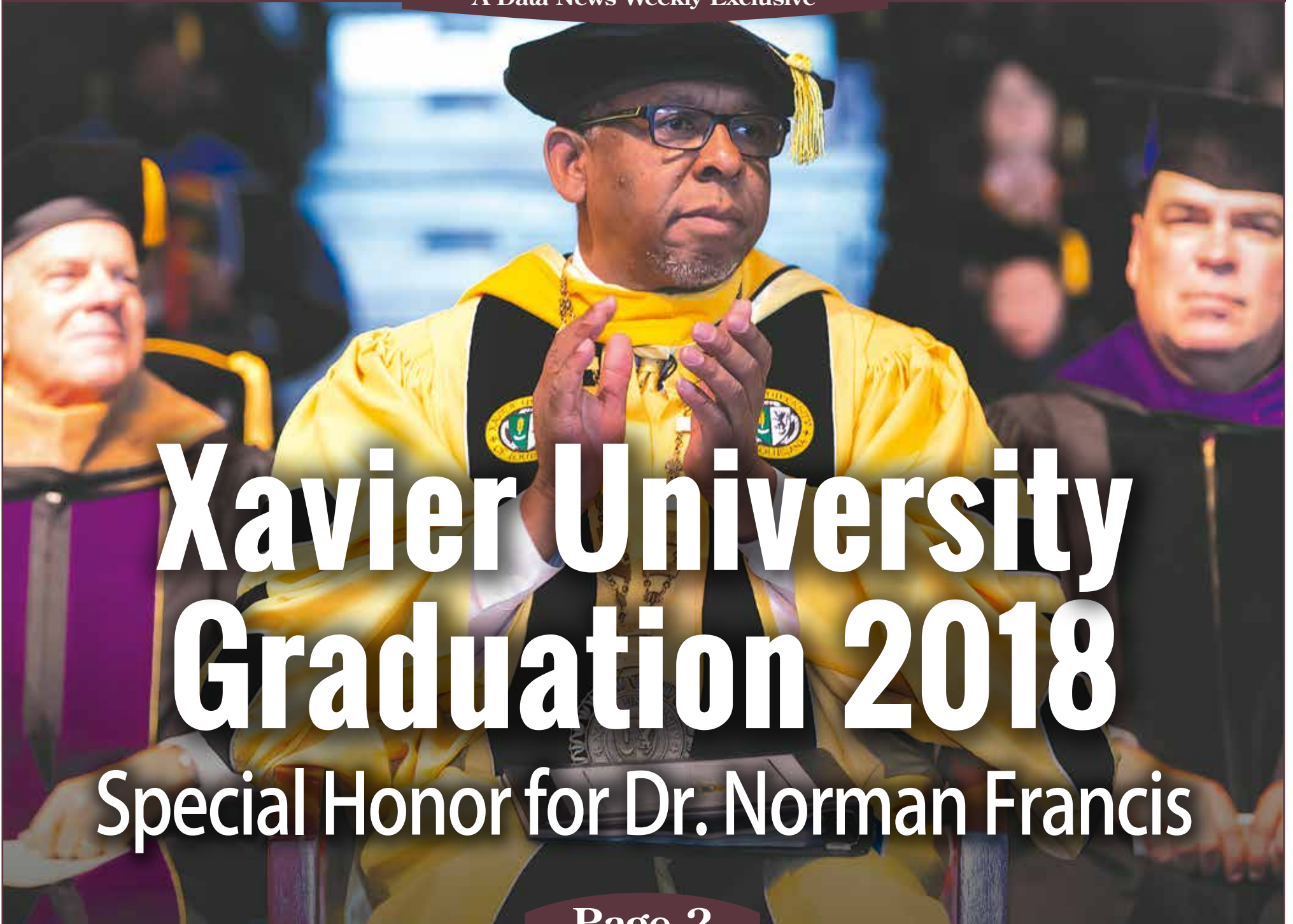
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Highlights**

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A Data News Weekly Exclusive



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Xavier University Graduation 2018



Pictured above are President Reynold Verret (far left) and Nikole Hannah-Jones and Dr. Norman Francis (far right) with a group of the 550 graduates, who were awarded degrees as Xavier University of Louisiana held its 91st Annual Graduation Ceremony Saturday, May 12th at 10 a.m. in the University's Convocation Center.

By Benjamin Bates
Data News Weekly Contributor

Xavier University of Louisiana held its 91st Annual Graduation Ceremony Saturday, May 12th at 10 a.m. in the University's Convocation Center.

Award-Winning New York Times investigative

Journalist Nikole Hannah-Jones addressed some 550 undergraduate, graduate, and pre-professional students and their families at the commencement. She was joined by Xavier University of Louisiana President Reynold Verret in honoring Dr. Norman C. Francis, President Emeritus of the University, who was awarded an Honorary Degree from his alma mater.

Nikole Hannah-Jones, has been a staff writer for The New York Times since 2015, is known for her long-form writing style and her investigative coverage of civil rights, education, fair housing, school segregation, and discrimination in the United States.

Hannah-Jones has a Xavier connection, having penned a landmark piece for The New York Times

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Cover Story, Continued from page 2.

magazine on Xavier's Premed Program, "A Prescription for More Black Doctors," which appeared in September 2015. She also helped to edit a new book by one of the Xavier-educated physicians featured in that piece (Dr. Pierre Johnson '02) and two of his associates, "Pulse of Perseverance," which was published earlier this year.

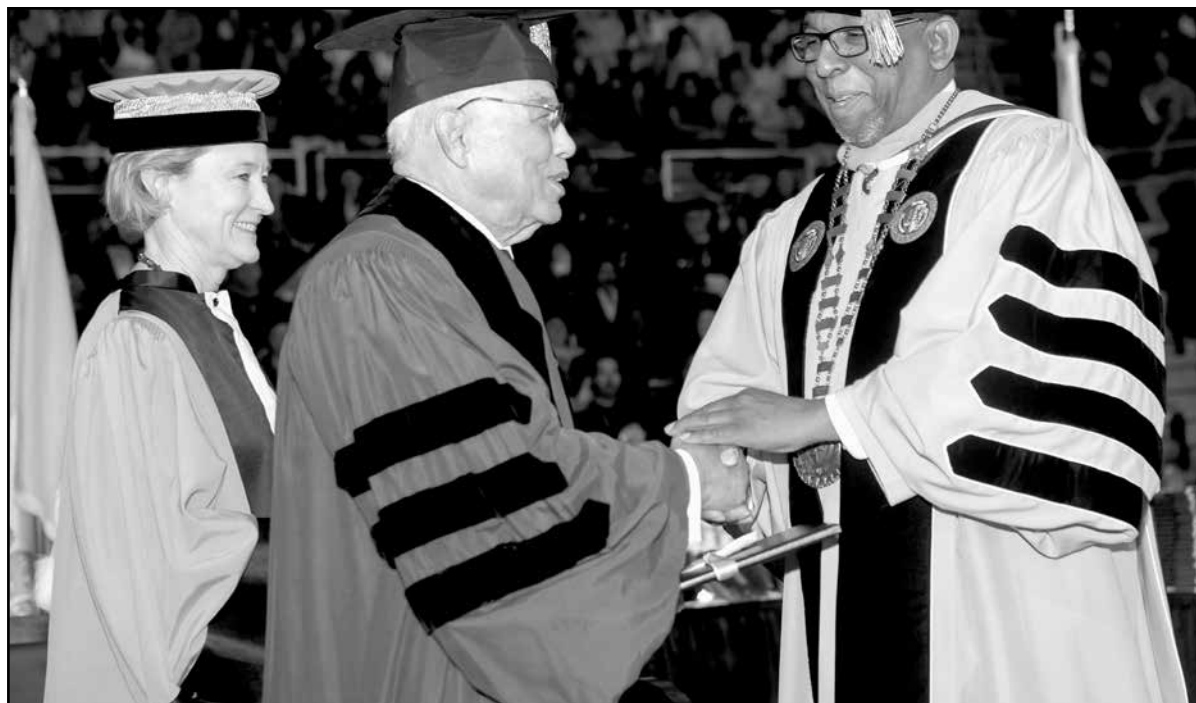
Norman C. Francis Receives Honorary Degree

During his long tenure as President, Dr. Norman C. Francis and Xavier University of Louisiana were virtually synonymous.

As the leader of the nation's only Historically Black and Catholic University, Francis guided Xavier's growth. During his 46-year presidency of Xavier University the enrollment more than doubled, broadened its curriculum, expanded its campus, and strengthened its financial base. Its tradition of academic excellence was further enhanced.

"The Norman Francis era at Xavier will not be remembered solely for its longevity, but also revered for the success, immense change and growth, triumph, and opportunities it produced," said Xavier University of Louisiana President Dr. Reynold Verret. "On his watch Xavier saw its national reputation as a leader in higher education explode, and thousands of graduates benefited, becoming submersed into a unique educational experience that embraced their potential and allowed them to pursue their dreams."

Francis, himself a Xavier graduate (1952), was at one time the longest-sitting university president in the U.S. Francis was named Xavier



Former XU President, Dr. Norman C Francis receives an Honorary Doctorate Degree from XU President Reynold Verret.



Nedra Alcorn, Associate Vice President of Student Services with Graduates.

er "President Emeritus" in 2015. Through his leadership, the University instituted a core curriculum and mandatory comprehensives,

and became recognized nationally as a leader in minority education, particularly in the STEM areas. Among the major accomplishments

of Francis' tenure was the successful completion of several capital campaigns. Giving by alumni also increased dramatically. He is credit-

ed with being the catalyst for nearly every building constructed on the campus during a period of four decades.

Francis also enjoyed a prestigious personal reputation. He served in an advisory role to eight U.S. Presidential Administrations – not only on education issues, but civil rights as well – in addition to serving on 54 boards and commissions. In 2006 then-President George W. Bush presented him with the nation's highest civil award, the Presidential Medal of Freedom. In 2009 he was named one of "America's Best Leaders" by U.S. News Media Group and the Center for Public Leadership (CPL) at Harvard Kennedy's School of Government.

"To these accomplishments Dr. Verret adds, "Today, Xavier sits at the edge of its tomorrow. We remain the #1 producer of African American students who complete medical degrees, are recognized as the #2 HBCU in America, and continue to expand our academic offerings to meet the changing needs of today's students. All of this is done while we continue to honor our founding mission of contributing to the promotion of a just and humane society."

Xavier University has been atop many lists for its educational excellence including best value among southern regional colleges and universities in the 2018 edition of "Best Colleges" by the U.S. News Media Group. Xavier also ranked No.1 in its grouping, heading the list of only 15 schools that qualified for the Southern Region Category listed under "Great Schools, Great Prices."

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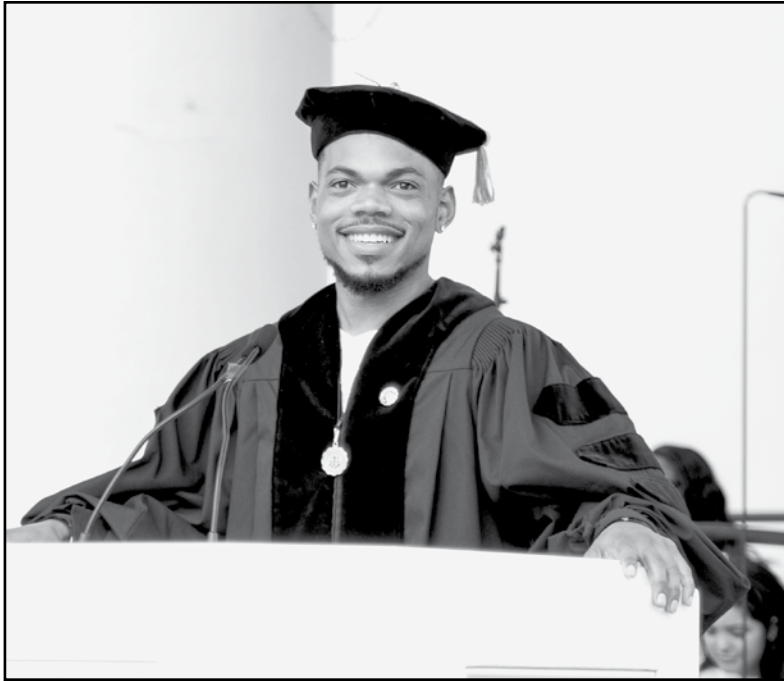
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"Chance the Rapper" Delivers Dillard Commencement Address

By Jade Myers
Data News Weekly
Contributor

Every year thousands of college graduates walk across the stage to receive their degree. But on May 12th, Grammy Award-Winning Hip-Hop Artist Chancelor "Chance the Rapper" Bennett was among the Class of 2018. Bennett delivered the commencement address at Dillard University's 82nd Ceremony on the Avenue of the Oaks, and also received an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters.

It had been some time since Bennett walked across a graduation stage. He told the graduates and their family that he never had the opportunity to receive his high school diploma or attend college. The opportunity to be Dillard's Commencement Speaker was a



On May 12th, Grammy Award-Winning Hip-Hop artist Chancelor "Chance the Rapper" Bennett delivered the Commencement Address at Dillard University's 82nd ceremony on the Avenue of the Oaks.



Bennett was also was among the Class of 2018, as he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters. (photos by Joshua Williams IV)

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surreal experience for him, he said. He urged graduates to be better than the people they admire, and to exceed who their heroes are, what they did, or what they achieved.

"Living up to your heroes is amazing, but it is not good enough," Bennett said. "The difference between goodness and greatness is going beyond. You have to push forward and surpass their greatness in order to pay homage to their [heroes] struggle," he said.

Bennett said he felt that Beyoncé's recent performance at Coachella was one of the greatest performances ever, even greater than some of Michael Jackson's best. The importance of having heroes or icons, Bennett said in his speech, was not for the current generation to simply replicate what they did, but to watch, learn and study what they have done and use that to become greater. Bennett said going further than past icons and heroes is what this generation owes them.

His insights and philanthropy in the Black community is why Dillard University's President Walter Kimbrough said he worked hard to bring Bennett to the Gentilly campus. Kimbrough said he felt this

generation of graduates needed to hear from speakers who are very different in their backgrounds, but still equally substantive. Having Bennett as his university's commencement speaker was a good experience because he felt Bennett challenged graduates to push the envelope and go further.

"We sometimes look at idols and think that this person is the best, but if we do not look past that to figure out what we do to build on their legacy, then that is not good enough," Kimbrough said.

"It is a disservice to our ancestors if we would [only] try to emulate them," Kimbrough said.

The relevancy of Bennett's career and advice resonated with some graduates who said they felt it was timely to hear from someone from their generation who had defied odds and is giving back to the community.

"Having Chance, the Rapper here was very inspirational," said DaNaisha Kidd, who graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from Dillard.

"To have someone as a millennial, someone to relate to. It was enjoyable and a big bang to the end of our journey," Kidd said.

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Big Chief Keelian “Dump” Boyd Young Maasai Hunters

By: Glenn Jones
Data News Weekly
Contributor

TRIBAL TIMELINE: Present- 2018
Big Chief Keelian “Dump” Boyd

“The Hat Man”

In the soon to come but not yet available Black Masking Dictionary, “The Hat Man” – A person that constructs crowns for/with Black Masking Indians, Social Aid and Pleasure Clubs as well as Carnival Krewes.

Big Chief Keelian “Dump” Boyd is the answer to the question, what happens when “Your” chiefs’ favorite hook-up man starts his own Tribe? Well one thing will be for sure, his tribe will be extremely “Pretty”, intricate and something never seen before. I asked Chief who taught him or handed down “The Hat Man” tradition to him? He says it wasn’t one person, it was an accumulation of experiences and art classes and he created something of his own. Chief Dump says, “it’s like a bad Smokey (Robinson) record and I just said let me add some bad guitar licks to it!” Big Chief credits old friend/mentor and colleague instructor and sculptor, Ahk Phan as a person that showed him what was possible with his hands and art. Mamma Furu, Coach and the Louis Armstrong Development Program gave him discipline. From the ages of 8 to 12 he says he learned how to be a young man and how to be humble and to accept things for what they were worth. When Chief got older and he started truly considering art he looked at Monet for his work with flowers and lilies, bayous and pads of natural settings. “Then I started to look into my own people. I did a little research on Jean Michel Basquiat and the history of him and I felt like it was so awesome, I felt like I was so him



Big Chief Keelian “Dump” Boyd Young Maasai Hunters

and I didn’t feel like it he wasn’t finished doing what he had to do, so I wanted to finish what started, but in my own way.” “I’m at my freest state, I’m in my Garage/studio creating what nobody can stop me from creating. Nobody can tell me what color to wear, nobody can tell me what beads to choose, nobody can tell me where I can go for the beads, and no one can beat me for what I’m wearing. You respect me for who I am on that day. I wish our government saw it that way; we would be in a better place. There is a lot of sacrifices we make to do this, and I’m not going to say it’s for nothing because it’s for my people. The greatest thing about being a Mardi Gras Indian, the greatest thing about being a Black Masking Indian is that it’s Black. It’s not Bacchus, it’s not Rex, it’s not Zulu, it’s not Orpheus it’s not any of that it’s Black its....us, it’s what they didn’t want us to enjoy with them. The Mardi Gras part I can leave out, but as a Carnival Indian, I can accept being called

more than Mardi Gras because of the history.”

Chief says he received the name Young Maasai Hunters from Big Chief Shaka Zulu of Golden Feather Tribe. Chief first masked in 1996 as a Spy Boy for Monogram Hunters under Big Chief Tyronne “Pie” Stevenson. Chief Dump Respects the game (mentorship) he received from Monogram Hunters. As He says “That’s the only Chief I know, these people are really still indigenous to what they do, and that’s us. We are still indigenous to what we do. A lot of things we do are still secretive, a lot of things we do are still precious, and I don’t want to release that. Because it’s still for us, everything else is for everybody. Rap is for everybody; hip-hop is for everybody. That wasn’t for everyone at one point. But a dollar sign changed a lot for a lot, but we still have set backs and deal with life! We still have that structure that can’t be conquered so we are Invictus!”

I asked Chief after 12 years of masking what made him think he was ready to bring his own tribe out in the tricentennial of the City and what was the feeling that morning coming out? Chief says “I pretty much was prepared, because I did so much for young kids, I did so much to help a lot of people in the neighborhood, not only my neighborhood. I have helped guys from uptown and guy’s downtown in the 9th Ward. I’ve held plums and I’ve held feathers know what I’m saying.” When you have touched every aspect of the Black Masking World its only right you become what you’re supposed to become. I didn’t take this; I was given this by Big Chief Tyronne “Pie” Stevenson my cousin.”

Although Chief Keelian “Dump” Boyd Tribe just came out this year, his family name of Louis Dolliole is both prestigious and large in members, arrived in Spanish Louisiana in early 1700’s dating back before the Louisiana Purchase. Louis Dolliole son Jean Louis is recorded as one of the major builders of the French Quarters. I asked Chief, having so much invested in this culture; what do you feel when you sing in your suit?

“I love it, I love it, because I’m not just singing for me. I’m singing for every entity of a Mardi Gras Indian, every entity of a Black Masking Indian, every entity of a slave, a creole man, an old Black man, I’m singing for my people.” Our songs are spiritual in a million and one ways” Because they can be so encouraging and so uplifting. They are not all about oh I’m going uptown and kill this Chief. No, we are going to make peace with that Chief uptown, because it’s about unification.”

This was an enlightening interview that, again we could not fit all in this article. Please go to Bnola.net for video interviews with more info and content!

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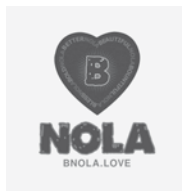
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Summer Weddings: Latest Fashions for Brides and Guests

By Delaney George
Data News Weekly Fashion
Columnist

As we approach the summer months of June and July, more and more celebrations of love will emerge, and wedding bells will ring. There are many Fashion do's and don'ts of this century when it comes to properly attending a wedding. As for the bride, every style is different but today there is more pressure on the bride for having the "perfect" dress now more than ever. Here are some Wedding do's and don'ts and tips for all wedding attendees this summer.

Guests: Guests are the bulk of the celebration. The couple is looking forward to seeing their guests look good but not too good. A guest should never show up in all white unless requested to. All white is a color reserved for the bride, and you cannot steal the bride's shine.

However, a guest can wear ensembles that are stylish and chic but not too fancy nor too dressed down. For example, sundresses and jumpers are great and perfect for the heat but not for a wedding. Guests can bring all the style they can handle by wearing lace, sheer, or linen based gowns and evening dresses.

Brides: Brides of today are far more pressured but have much more Fashion freedom. From strapless dresses to short wedding dresses there is so many options, so a bride can achieve that perfect look.

For example, these days it's all about the trains. A bride is expected to steal the hearts of all who sees her with a beautiful full train flowing beyond her. Today's brides also cling to body-con dresses versus the big poufy look of some gowns. There is anything from capes, crowns, and mini wedding gowns to help a Bride choose for her special day. For more information on wedding fashion email Delinkey@yahoo.com



Bride embodies elegance and grabs the attention of all with her ruffled train on the back of her gown.



Dresses of today are like a blank canvas for you to create.



This non-traditional dress is an all-white high low dress with a corset frame and an off the shoulder accent. This silk midi dress is perfect for bridal guests attending any summer wedding.

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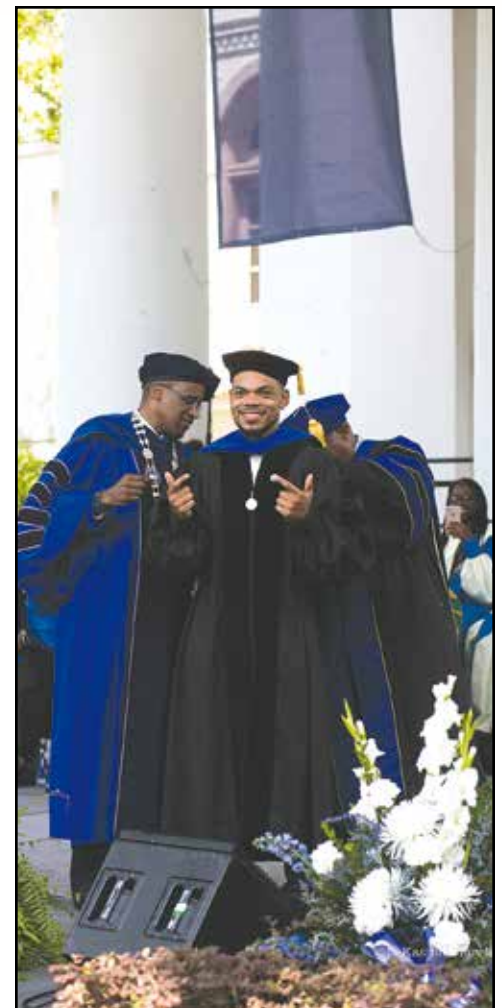
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HBCU Graduation Excitement

By Benjamin Bates
Data News Weekly Contributor

This past weekend, Dillard University and Xavier University Commencement ceremonies were cause for great celebration from parents, families, friends and alumni, as the 2018 graduating classes marched across the stage and received their hard earned degrees. We at Data News Weekly wish all of the graduates, from Undergraduates to Master's to PhD's, it was a moment of great accomplishment and we honor each of you! Congratulations Graduates!



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

To Be Equal

Congressional Black Caucus Introduces Bill Based on Main Street Marshall Plan



Marc Morial
President and CEO
National Urban League

“Every man is our brother, and every man’s burden is our own. Where poverty exists, all are poorer. Where hate flourishes, all are corrupted. Where injustice reigns, all are unequal.” – Whitney M. Young

The Main Street Marshall Plan, the National Urban League’s comprehensive blueprint for addressing lack of opportunity and economic inequality in America’s urban communities, has been introduced as federal legislation by members of the Congressional Black Caucus.

The National Urban League long has advocated for a major national

commitment to alleviate poverty and expand economic opportunities in America’s most neglected communities, modeled on the Marshall Plan that eliminated widespread poverty in Western Europe following World War II. Then-Executive Director Whitney M. Young first proposed a “Domestic Marshall Plan” in the 1960s; elements of that proposal were incorporated into President Lyndon Johnson’s War on Poverty.

In 1990, National Urban League President John E. Jacob urged Congress to shift \$50 billion in defense spending — part of the so-called “peace dividend” resulting from the end of the Cold War — into an “Urban Marshall Plan.”

The Congressional Black Caucus’ Jobs and Justice Act, unveiled Thursday at a news conference at the U.S. Capitol, represents the most inclusive legislation of the Main Street Marshall Plan, first proposed as part of the 2016 State of Black America and finalized in detailed form last year.

Among the provisions of the bill based on the Main Street Marshall Plan, the Jobs and Justice Act:

- increases funding for programs that promote minority-owned businesses (MBDA and SBA).
- creates incentives for infrastructure spending bills to include development programs that recruit and train individuals from communities with high unemployment rates.
- authorizes states to establish local hiring bid specifications or consider the hiring of local workers in the evaluation of bids and proposals for federal-aid highway projects.
- invests in transportation infrastructure through the successful “TIGER” program, which provides competitive grants to local governments and transit agencies to fund innovative highway, bridge, and transit projects.
- funds the creation of more than 1.9 million jobs by addressing critical physical and digital infrastructure needs in schools.

- establishes new programs or amends existing programs for job skills training for older individuals and for workers in highly-skilled industries; and scholarships for students pursuing degrees in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) and teaching certifications.
- makes the work opportunity tax credit permanent
- allows states to assist, through Title XX Block Grants, low-income and long-term unemployed individuals with developing their own businesses and self-employment opportunities.
- incentivizes businesses to create apprenticeship programs.
- creates a grant program to subsidize summer jobs for in- and out-of-school youth ages 14 to 24 and year-round jobs for youth ages 16 to 24 who are out of school and work.
- Raises the federal minimum wage to \$15.
- Urges businesses contracted to

rebuild infrastructure, to actively recruit, hire, and provide on-the-job training to African American men ages 18 to 39 through existing jobs, apprenticeships, and “earn while you learn” programs.

As I said when we introduced the detailed Main Street Marshall plan a year ago, it is time for the nation to treat its urban communities and cities as the jewels that they are. This comprehensive plan to rebuilt and accelerate the growth of America’s urban communities will accelerate the growth and progress of the nation as a whole.

I urge you to contact your member of Congress and urge him or her to support the Jobs & Justice Act.

Marc H. Morial is President and CEO of the National Urban League and former Mayor of New Orleans. You can connect with the National Urban League : Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/National.Urban.League> Twitter: <https://twitter.com/naturbanleague> Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/naturbanleague> Website: <https://www.NUL.org>

Discovering the Best of Black America in 2018



Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.
President & CEO, National Newspaper
Publishers Association

There is an old African proverb that says, “What you seek, you will surely find.” We live in a world where the news cycle continues to decrease, because of innovations in communications technology. Yes, we are living in the fast-paced digital age. The high-velocity delivery and transmission of news and information, however, may or may not produce authentic or accurate facts

or simply the truth.

Yet, for more than 47 million Black Americans the reality of life’s multiple challenges and opportunities are not the primary concerns and focus of what is popularly known as “mainstream media.” Thus, the value and mission of the Black Press of America today is more strategically important than ever before, for Black Americans and others who embrace the trend-setting cultural, academic, technological and game-changing achievements that are accomplished daily in Black America.

This is why the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) is pleased with the continued partnership between the General Motors’ Chevrolet Division and the NNPA to sponsor the 2018 Discover the Unexpected (DTU) Jour-

nalism Scholarship and Fellowship Program. We are identifying and mentoring the next generation of young, gifted, talented and committed journalists and publishers who will rise to take their rightful place as our future community leaders and business owners.

Seeking out the best of Black America, not only in the field of journalism, but also in the overall context of the long-protracted struggle for freedom, justice, equality and empowerment is of the utmost importance. This summer in Georgia, Virginia, New York and in Washington, D.C., six NNPA journalism scholars selected from Historical Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) located across the nation will have the opportunity to work in Black-owned newspapers.

These outstanding NNPA DTU

Fellows will also journey together to highlight and file news reports about real life stories that are occurring in our communities. In the current national media climate where allegations of “fake news” are routinely propagated, we will welcome receipt of the news and inspirations from the writings, videos and social media postings of our young, aspiring journalists.

We are also grateful to the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO) for assisting Chevrolet and the NNPA to notify and reach HBCU students attending 120 HBCUs across the nation about the DTU fellowship opportunities. In fact, over 23,000 online responses were made by students who were interested in the DTU program.

Reviewing and evaluating the

numerous applications that were submitted revealed the tremendous academic achievements and commitments of HBCU students, who fervently desire to serve the empowerment interests of Black communities via their respective journalism skills and talents. This, in itself, is a good news story.

Too often we only learn or hear about the tragic injustices and systematic racial discriminations that are in fact facets of the realities that are all too prevalent in Black America. We need, however, more balance and truth-telling in the media when it comes to the struggles and plight as well as the resilience and transformation of Black America.

For more than 191 years, since the first publication of “Freedom

Chavis, Continued on page 10.

National Project Seeks Stories of African-American Veterans

By Tylan Nash
Data News Weekly
Contributor

The Veteran's History Project arrived in New Orleans on May 9TH hoping to enlist New Orleans residents interested in interviewing war veterans for this Library of Congress National Project. With support from the local chapter of the American Association for Retired Persons, residents trained on how they could help veterans get their war stories recorded and shared with the public.

"The idea was to have individuals around the country interview the veterans in their lives, and [have] their communities help gather their first-person narratives," said Monica Mohindra, the Senior Liaison Specialist at the Library of Congress for the Veterans History Project.

The United States Congress created the Veterans History Project in October 2000 as part of the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress. The purpose of the project is to collect, preserve, and make accessible the personal accounts of America's Wartime Veterans so that future generations may hear directly from veterans and better understand their selfless service. Veterans who served in the United States Military, in any capacity, from World War I through recent conflicts are eligible to participate, regardless of branch or rank.

Acting as historians themselves, individuals and organizations from around the country were called to participate in this War Preservation Effort by collecting first person interviews and sentimental artifacts that are then sent to be archived in The Library of Congress.



Local AARP members, residents and the Library of Congress team after a May 9th visit to New Orleans for the Veteran's History Project.

The project's staff said anyone over the age of 15 can participate in this National Preservation Effort. For example, the Office of the Veteran History Project has received information from veterans' family members and friends, high school and university educators, authors, veterans' service organiza-

tions, places of worship, retirement communities, scout troops, local businesses and professional associations. Loved ones of a deceased veteran may also submit their veteran's first-person narratives, and any other artifacts that show that they participated in a war.

More than 20 residents showed up to the workshop on Xavier University's Campus, to learn more about what rules and regulations they should follow when recording and editing the histories they collect, before submitting it to the Veterans History Project.

Morris Warner, a U.S. veteran who served his country in the Marine Corps for more than 30 years, and retired as a Sergeant General, reflected on what it meant to him to be able to serve his country.

"I wanted serve my country, because I know to live in America,

we need to be a part of it," he said. He added that his experiences as a Black veteran during segregation, and what he experienced during his service at this time, was an important story to record and share.

"The military is an extension of our society," he said, "the people in the military are people you will find in everyday life, and with that they will bring along their biases."

Mohindra also gave her opinion on why she believes that it is important that African-American Veterans get their story out to the public. "It is a story that is not as well-known, or told enough, and the experiences are unique to their background," she said.

Interested residents can learn more about how to participate in the project at the Library of Congress' site www.loc.gov/vets.

Opinion

Austin Badon Announces Candidacy For Clerk of First City Court

Former State Legislator Seeks to Fill Position Vacated by Judge Ellen Hazeur

Data Staff Reports

In the course of my career in public service, I have always strived to give the utmost constituent services to the people of Louisiana. I have always considered myself to be a Servant Leader, meaning that I place the needs of others before my own. With that said, I am offering myself to become the next Clerk of 1st City Court, replacing outgoing Ellen Hazeur who is moving on to a judgeship at Civil Court.

I know that my leadership in the Legislature as Chairman of both the Education and Municipal committees, as well as having a Masters degree in Management, gives me the skill set to be a hard working Clerk of 1st City Court. I am a man of God with a strong faith in mankind. I believe that I am my brothers' and sisters' keeper.

I have been blessed to have a large number of elected officials and community leaders who support my candidacy. I have passed major pieces of legislation as a rookie legislator and throughout my tenure most recently having reduced



the criminal penalties for marijuana possession which incarcerated many of our young people. I have also offered my assistance outside of the Legislature with my work in finding missing teacher Terrilyn Monette and Jean Stokes.

As your Clerk of 1st City Court, I will make the office more accessible and transparent by increasing outreach efforts, social media and upgrading our electronic capabilities. I have a tremendous amount of respect for the employees of the Clerk's office and for the work and friendship of Ellen Hazeur. I ask for your vote and support as I seek this office to better serve you.

Best wishes,

Austin Badon
Candidate for Clerk
of 1st City Court

Data News Weekly is Hiring

Data News Weekly Newspaper, The People's Paper, is hiring for two positions in our New Orleans Office.

Sales Manager/Retail Ad Manager

About the Job

Data News Weekly Newspaper is the leading African American media company in New Orleans, publishing a weekly newspaper. Additionally, its website under ladatanews.com is the most read Black website in the region.

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Gert Town Project Works to Improve Residents Well-Being

By Precious Smith
Data News Weekly
Contributor

In a community where families experienced historical and cultural mistrust, local clinicians are working to re-establish connections between local institutions and the residents around them. That was the aim of a Town Hall for a Gert Town Research Project held on April 30, 2018 at Xavier University's Community Outreach Center. When links are renewed, there is better participation in these types of collaborative projects, said Cirecie Olatunji, the Director and Founder of the Xavier University Community Outreach Center, as she addressed residents.

The town hall served as the culminating event for the Clinical Needs Assessment in a Gert Town Project headed by Olatunji, an Associate Professor of Counseling at Xavier, Meghan Berger, a Xavier graduate, and students in Xavier's Graduate Counseling Program. The owner of the community's McDonald's Branch, Terry Scott, also attended the event to learn more about how corporate entities in the



Xavier students present findings of the Gert Town Community Needs Assessment. (photo by Precious Smith)

community can better serve residents.

"Inclusive participation that emphasizes authentic collaboration with the community group before, during, and after the research is so important," Olatunji said.

Gert Town is labeled as dangerous, with high crime and abandoned homes.

"Despite these stigmas held against Gert Town, my fellow peers and I experienced nothing short of genuine conversations and warm

greetings from many of the Gert Town residents," Berger said.

Conducting a needs assessment focuses on families within the community by understanding their specific needs and listening to the community's voices. "We can't just come in and do something for the community. That's simply not enough. We need to do stuff with the community," Berger said.

Clinical Needs Assessment mutually involves the community as a representative in the research

team, Berger explained. "Researchers and the community in all phases of the research process [work] to improve health and well-being through taking action, including social change," Berger added.

The Needs Assessment Project was set up as a research design. It identified and developed appropriate partnerships with the community as counselors conducted needs assessments to utilize the strengths of the families served. The three characteristics of the assessment consisted of co-learning, shared decision making and mutual ownership of the processes and products.

By using the community-as-client approach, Xavier students and alumni were able to conduct a psychosocial profile of the community

to determine the counseling needs as articulated by Gert Town residents.

The Outreach Center's mission is to seek out community involvement in a wide range of projects that ultimately sustain and support residents. "With Gert Town being just among the outskirts of the Community Outreach Center, their main goal is to raise the visibility of families living within the marginalized community, increase community engagement, integrate family services and build upon the strengths within each family," said Angelle Guillard, a current resident of Gert Town.

Without residents' involvement, the project would lack the necessary data to make meaningful change. "We attempted to encapsulate the entire experience to reveal residents' perceptions of their overall mental health and well-being," Berger said.

Tiffany Henderson, a former Gert Town resident, said her involvement and contribution not only with the Xavier University Community Outreach Center but also with the Needs Assessment Project was an important exercise to revive her community. "I was baptized down the road at Zion and feel overwhelmed with joy to know I was able to give the residents of my community a voice," Henderson said.

Chavis, Continued from page 8.

Journal" in March 1827, the Black Press of America has continued to be on the frontlines reporting our triumphs, defeats and our successful resistance to oppression, injustice and inequality. Each generation has a responsibility to help prepare the next generation to take the baton of history and to run to win by breaking and setting new records of achievement and excellence of all fields of endeavor.

Again, we publicly thank General Motors – Chevrolet for enabling the NNPA to award this group of young, freedom-fighting scholars to sharpen their pens and commitments to become champions of the freedom and responsibilities of the press. The Black community will benefit. All of America will benefit. The DTU Fellows will seek and they will find. They will also exemplify the good news.

Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr. is the President and CEO of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) and can be reached at dr.bchavis@nnpa.org. You can follow Dr. Chavis on Twitter @drbenchavis.

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Cosby Jurors Allegedly Shopped for Book Deal During Trial

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Contributor

Before they convicted Bill Cosby on three counts of aggravated indecent assault last month, some of the jurors were already plotting on how they could cash in on the case.

People familiar with three of the jurors on the case said they had a book deal on their minds, long before evidence was presented in the courtroom.

"The 80-year-old comedian faces up to 10 years in prison on each count, but Cosby is likely to serve them concurrently," CNN.com reported. "A sentencing hearing with Judge Steven O'Neill has not yet been scheduled, and Cosby remains out on bail."

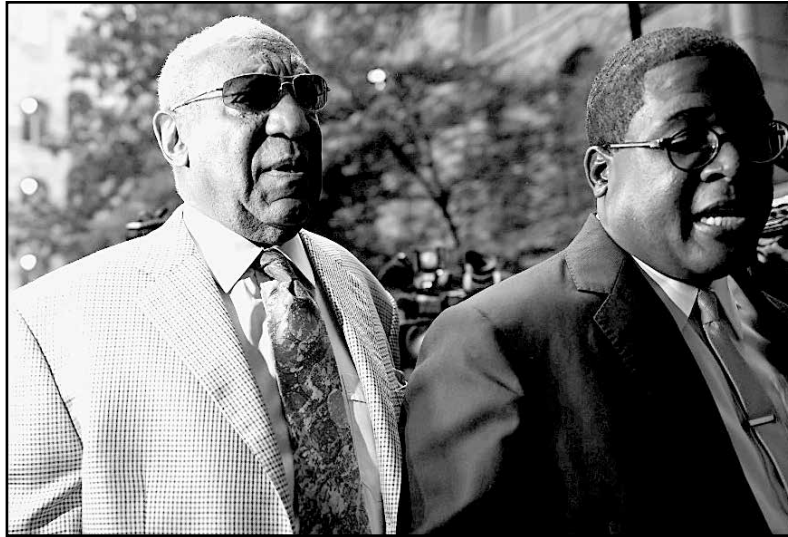
Juror No. 11 and juror No. 12, two White males, "specifically talked about how much they could make after they send that old man to prison," said a Norristown resident, who goes by the nickname, "Deacon Stone." Stone declined to provide his given name, because he said he feared for his safety, but he was visibly present throughout the trial.

According to Stone, another juror was told, "Dude, do the right thing, get that book deal," by a close family member.

Asked how he came across the information, Stone and another man, who didn't want to give his name, said they are "closer than cousins" to one of the jurors.

During the trial, juror No. 12 appeared to talk to Montgomery County District Attorney Kevin Steele's spokeswoman Kate Delano in a flirtatious manner. At least three individuals regularly complained of the juror raising his eyebrows and winking at Delano, who may have not been aware of the juror's actions. Juror No.12 was also observed smiling "almost uncontrollable" at attorney Lisa Bloom, who's client Janice Dickerson testified against Cosby.

"If jurors in the Cosby trial were motivated by the possibility



Jurors in the Bill Cosby sexual assault trial in Norristown, Pa. talked about shopping a book deal based on their experiences with the case. (POOL PHOTO)

of getting a book deal, then they would have had incentive to find him guilty, guilty, guilty—just like they did," said famed forensic psychiatrist and expert witness, Carole Lieberman. "Finding him 'guilty' made it a landmark victory of sorts, because of the #MeToo [movement] and because it brought down a once-powerful celebrity. If they had found him 'not guilty,' there wouldn't be much of a story there, so people wouldn't be as interested in reading about it in a book."

Eleven of the 12 jurors have already joined to hire a publicist.

Juror No. 1, who was observed sleeping throughout the trial, appeared alone on ABC's Good Morning America after the verdict and said Cosby's 2006 deposition hurt the comedian.

However, former Montgomery County District Attorney Bruce Castor made a deal with Cosby in which Castor agreed that if the comedian sat for the deposition, his words could never be used against him in any current or future criminal prosecution.

Castor blasted O'Neill in an email last month.

"A judge with an enormous potential bias did not disclose that possible bias to the lawyers to give them the option to seek a new

judge," Castor said.

In explaining why he made the deal with Cosby, Castor said: "I thought making Mr. Cosby pay money was the best I was going to be able to set the stage for. I was hopeful that I had made Andrea Constand a millionaire."

Constand did reach an out-of-court civil settlement with Cosby worth \$3.4 million.

Castor reiterated that he granted Cosby immunity from prosecution and that future prosecutors were bound to honor that deal.

Castor also blasted Steele.

"A sitting prosecutor spent \$1 million proving Cosby is guilty in campaign ads, before charges were ever brought," Castor said. "That's in direct contravention of written ethics rules which says prosecutors cannot do that. What is happening to Cosby, as bad a man as he undoubtedly is, should never happen to anyone in America. I'm 36 years in the justice system, much of it at a pretty high level and I'm disgusted that any citizen entitled to the presumption of innocence has been treated this way."

Castor continued: "I didn't say anything, because it is up to the judge and the lawyers to police their own conduct. I kept waiting for someone to ask me, but it never

happened."

Matt Pinsker, a former prosecutor and magistrate who is now a criminal defense attorney and adjunct professor of criminal justice at Virginia Commonwealth University, said he was appalled when he heard about the jurors in the Cosby case.

"It's completely inappropriate for jurors to be planning a book deal, and it could result in a mistrial," Pinsker said. "Jurors should be focused on doing justice, and not profiting from their public service. A prospective book deal is legally and morally problematic because it gives jurors a profit incentive."

Kimberly Bathgate, a spokeswoman for the Montgomery County Court, said the judge and district attorney would have no comment.

Cosby's spokesman Andrew Wyatt could not immediately be reached for comment.

In April, Cosby, 80, was found guilty on three counts of aggravated sexual assault stemming from a 2003 or 2004 incident involving Andrea Constand at his Elkins Park home.

He's scheduled to be sentenced later this summer and faces up to 30 years in prison.

Ryan Babcock, a trial lawyer who owns a firm in Brunswick, Ga., said juror misconduct can be a serious problem at trial, particularly with technological advances made in the last decade.

"The parties are entitled to jurors who don't have their minds made up about a verdict before the trial starts, and jurors who are not influenced by third parties outside of the courtroom trial," Babcock said. "That can be especially challenging in a high-profile case like Bill Cosby's. The comment about [the book deal] alone would not amount to juror misconduct. In any event, juror misconduct could result in a new trial or reversal on appeal, but should not impact the sentence itself."

This article was originally published at BlackPressUSA.com.

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