Race in 21st Century America

Power to the People!

Newsmaker
Salute to the Black Press

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2018 Trendsetters
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21st Century and Race in America

By Edwin Buggage
Data News Weekly Editor

America’s Original Sin
Racism in America is nothing new; from its inception it has played a part in shaping racial behavior and policies for centuries. Conversely, there's also been a response where there have been those both Blacks and Whites who have been committed to fighting back this scourge that is a stain on a country founded on all people having the rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

We are again at a crossroads of where the U.S. will stand at this time in its history as issues of race and racism are once again in the forefront of conversations around the nation. We have seen an escalation in all things racial since Donald Trump has been elected President of the United States. His rise some would argue has ridden on a wave of racially charged incidents and language that has not been seen in decades. If we were to examine some of the rhetoric it seems that we are in a time warp confused about whether it is 2018 or 1918; with the latter being a sad time in the nation's

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history where segregation and the lynching of Black bodies from trees were a way to keep Blacks in their place. This nadir in the history of the U.S. also saw some of the vilest racial rhetoric spewed by many Whites from those at the bottom rungs of society, to those who occupied positions of power, to the KKK, who were at their most powerful at the time.

Today America is in the midst of the un-civil war, where the gap of political polarization is widening. This is something that not only threatens racial relations, but democracy as we have come to know it in this country. It is in this time that the U.S. needs to re-examine a few of the words that appear in the Preamble to the Constitution “We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union establish, justice, and insure domestic tranquility.” We must ask ourselves what that means for America in the 21st Century.

Trumpism is the New Normal

In recent times race and racism is a topic some would rather ignore than talk about in a frank and open way. This practice of avoidance hasn’t gotten us any closer to solutions. Bart Everson is a founding member and past President of Friends of Lafitte Corridor, a columnist for Mid-City Messenger, and a participant in New Orleans Lamplight Circle. He is currently serving as chair for the Green Party of New Orleans.

“It seems at first blush racism is obviously worse with Trump’s rhetoric. Since he’s come into power it is bringing out the hard-core old-fashioned racist, The Nazi, White supremacist types; they are not trying to dress it up or hide. It seems he has given them the confidence to say what they want without fearing any repercussions,” states Everson.

But he also believes that the recent rise in racism among Whites did not start with Trump’s ascendance and was always there taking many different forms. “Some have pretend racism disappeared all of a sudden and was no longer an issue of importance especially among White Americans, maybe they have this luxury or fantasy because it does not impact their lives in a direct way, but I would assume people of color were a bit more cognizant of the hate mongering and racial bias that goes on in their everyday lives.”

Everyday Bias: Starbucks, Blacks and Boycotts

This everyday bias recently came to a head when two African-American men in Philadelphia were arrested at a Starbucks when the store manager called the police on them while they were waiting to have a meeting with a business associate. This incident was captured on video and went viral. Starbucks in response decided to recently take a day closing its stores early to give the first of what they call sensitivity training so that these incidents would not happen again.

Dana Smith works in the mental health field and has lived in multiple states across the U.S. and regularly uses Starbucks as a satellite office space and to relax with friends. She has friends and associates of different races and feels the day of training is a good thing, but that the organization is not as much the problem as individuals who feel when they see Blacks they assume the worse and overreact. Making her point she says, “The employees of Starbucks spent a day to do this training; any training you can get is wonderful. As far as the boycott I disagree, and think the focus is misdirected. Starbucks in their official policy that discriminates against Blacks; it was the individual manager who made the decision to call the police. And while it is a good first step for the company as a public awareness piece and conversation starter, I don’t believe it will change many of the White employees at Starbucks of who have prejudices and negative feelings about Blacks because they are so ingrained in American society.”

All Words Matter

Recently, Actress and Comedian Rosanne Barr had her hit TV show cancelled because of a tweet about former top Obama Aide Valerie Jarrett, likening her to if the Muslim Brotherhood and the Planet of the Apes had a baby. Much of this type of rhetoric online was also the case during much of the Obama Presidency where he and his wife were both attacked, called monkeys and other racial epithets. And the one with one of the largest bullhorns attacking the legitimacy of Barack Obama and the Birther Movement is oddly enough Donald Trump, who began his climb to the highest office in the land chugging to this falsehood that President Obama was not born in the U.S.

This sort of ignorance is something that is troubling to Xavier University Professor Robin Vander, where some of her work focuses on race. “I believe we are at a tipping point where a crisis is coming on. It is not just about language, some of this has led to violence,” says Vander. “Look at what happened in Charlottesville, it is a clear reflection of the language, the discourse and the current administration that licensed and unleashed people’s fear which is being acted out.” She says while some strides have been made there is still a long way to go to eradicate racism in America, “It is willful ignorance at play and is part of a pattern in this country that for every stride forward on the racial front there is a backlash.” Continuing Vander says we must begin to fix the root causes of racism if the society is to move past it, “I would suggest people read Michelle Alexander’s book The New Jim Crow, because I think we cannot any longer underestimate how deeply woven racism is in the fabric of society. These issues are not new, we have never addressed race in a way to move beyond this social construct once and for all.”

Confederates Closer to Home

During the past administration of Mayor Mitch Landrieu and the present administration of Mayor LaToya Cantrell, the city has made strides in removing Confederate statues. This was a flashpoint in racial relations in New Orleans as council meetings as well as in the media and online things got heated on both sides of the issue. So much so that the statues were removed it was not publicly announced and when it was done there was heavy security by NOPD.

Everson has been a grassroots activist for decades and published a piece in the Mid-City Messenger addressing this issue. “It is a great example of how true leadership comes from the grassroots, so it is my understanding this campaign started to remove the monuments started with grassroots activism take Em Down NOLA. Mitch then took their cue and it just so happen to be a political opportunity for him as well. But I think it took the momentum they had built and took it over the edge and the former Mayor and the City Council used their political power to make it happen.

I didn’t grow up here to have the same associations; I never got to talk to anyone pro monument until after they’d been taken down. I disagree with these people having an uncritical response to change. People I spoke to who have a familiarity in my opinion had not thought through what they’d symbolized and the history of how the monuments were put up.”

Finding A Place of Peace in America

Slavery was America’s Holocaust and alongside the genocide of the Native Americans, its greatest sin. Dana Smith who has traveled throughout Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean says the confederate monuments have no place in a City that’s multi-racial and represents the worse time in America’s history. These people in her mind were traitors and not patriots and should not be celebrated.

Speaking of her travels to Germany where Hitler and the Nazis led a reign of terror during World War 2, that included the Holocaust
A Tricentennial Salute to the Black Press in New Orleans

By Shearon Roberts
Data News Weekly
Contributor

Christopher Dylan Brown graduated with the Class of 2018 from Xavier University of Louisiana this May. The New Orleans native and mass communication major took my journalism and converged media courses as a student and will ultimately pursue a career in public relations. But on March 15, 2018 he paid his first visit to the African-American Museum in Washington, D.C. and he spotted an exhibit item dedicated to the African-American Press called “The Power of the Press.” The exhibit text singled out 1827 when Freedom’s Journal first published in New York City. “Ever since, African-Americans have used the press to establish an independent voice for Black communities and advance the struggle for freedom and equality,” the exhibit text noted of the significance for freedom and equality, “the independent voice for Black community.”

The New Orleans native and who attends Xavier and at Dillard University

Black Press in New Orleans is not just a bygone institution, it still lives and breathes and inspires the latest generation of millennials who will take up careers in the media. It is also a place of recording the notable firsts of African-Americans in New Orleans and the State of Louisiana, that don’t make the headlines in the mainstream media.

Yet 300 years later, the Black Press in New Orleans is not just a bygone institution, it still lives and breathes and inspires the latest generation of millennials who will take up careers in the media. Four years ago, my colleague Dr. Sheryl Kennedy Haydel and I developed a partnership that allowed students at Xavier and at Dillard University to cover the community and have their reports published in the City’s African-American newspapers. To date, over 500 stories have been reported from mass communication students. Some now hold jobs in newspapers and communications offices in the City and across the country. However, they first cut their teeth understanding the power and responsibility of the media in the City’s Black Press.

In marking the 300 years this City, these millennial students speak for their generation to highlight what the Black Press still represents today. As contributors to this civic exercise of journalism, these students see that their work provides a rough cut to history that tells the stories of Black people as told from our own voices.

Reflections from the Spring 2018 Reporting Class:

“I found that media displayed more negative than positive stories about the Black community,” said Amye Brandom Skinner, a mass communication major, who wants to one-day work in International Public Relations. “For once, our community was uplifted in the media and I played a role in highlighting Black excellence, service, and culture. I can only hope my future work allows me to do the same,” said Brandom Skinner, a native of Detroit, Mich.

“As a young African-American woman, writing stories about people of color is an inspiration for me, because growing up I noticed that the media displayed more negative than positive stories about the Black community,” said Jade Myers, a mass communication major who was born in New Orleans, but raised in Houston, Texas and who hopes to work one day as a broadcast reporter. “Currently writing for Black publications, I have been inspired to write about a broad range of stories in the Black community, from the importance of equity in the Black community to traditional New Orleans parades. While beginning my career journey, I observed that the Black community has so much more to offer than what is often displayed to audiences. As my journey towards my career continues, I hope to be the one to change the negative portrayal of African-Americans in media and instead get the positive stories of the Black community heard.”

Jared Braud, a New Orleans native in the class also wants to work in broadcasting. “The benefit for me publishing with the African-American newspapers was getting a sense of professionalism and it helped me to see that this is the field I want to go into,” Braud said.

“My reporting experience this semester helped me prepare for my career in mass media by training my eyes and ears into noticing what’s right for the story and what’s not,” he said of his experience.

“It’s such an awarding experience because it allowed me to be in touch with the Black community and discuss things that involve the Black community,” said Piper Thurman, a mass communication major at Xavier, and a Houston resident.

“For reporting this semester gave me a lot of knowledge and insight into the world of the media. It’s helped teach me numerous skills I can apply to my career in broadcast journalism.”

“The benefit of being published in an African-American newspaper is that it shines a light on the good that our people are doing in our communities. It is a celebration of us,” said Ka’Lyia Ellis, a New Orleans native, who attends Xavier.

“My reporting experience helped me realize that I like other fields that come with reporting such as photography and filming. I’ve also learned to be self-sufficient and resourceful.”

Dillard student and New Orleans native Glenn Rebert II, like Ellis, said through reporting in the class, he realized for sure where his strengths lies. “My reporting experience this semester helped me prepare for my career in mass media because it helped me solidify my decision to be behind the camera and how to properly do so by learning about the different types of shots needed for both photography and broll,” Rebert said.

Precious Smith in the class said she wants to pursue public relations but working for the Black Press helped her with her communication skills. “My reporting experience has helped me prepare for my career in mass media through ongoing communication and interaction,” she said.

By Shearon Roberts
Data News Weekly
Contributor

Xavier mass communication Professor Dr. Shearon Roberts at the 2018 Commencement with her former student Christopher Brown.
The Opioid Crisis
A Justice & Mercy Initiatives Program

By Bill Hill
Data News Weekly Contributor

Opioid Addiction has become one of the greatest problems facing our nation, claiming as many as 120 lives each day. As part of a new “Justice & Mercy Initiatives” Program at Central St. Matthew UCC in New Orleans, on Saturday, May 12, 2018, the church held a forum on opioid addiction where members of the congregation and the community-at-large were invited to a breakfast presentation led by Special Agent Brian Singleton of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration.

A forty-minute DEA video entitled “Chasing the Dragon” explored the tragic lives of several opioid victims and revealed the real horrors of addiction. At the close of the video, Special Agent Singleton was joined by Trooper Troy Pichon of the Louisiana State Police Narcotics Bureau, United States Attorney’s Office Community Outreach, Officer Quinn Smith, New Orleans FBI Community Outreach, Officer Lory Chanvin and Odyssey House Outreach Coordinator, Emily Loska. Each offered insight into the insidious nature of opioid addiction abuse and how law enforcement and recovery agencies are learning to work together to fight this growing epidemic.

Originally administered to relieve the pain suffered by patients afflicted with terminal diseases, opioids are now frequently prescribed by doctors for relief of chronic pain.

Recently, Actress and Comedian Rosanne Barr had her hit TV show “Rosanne” cancelled because of a tweet about former top Obama Aide Valerie Jarrett. In her tweet, Barr stated that Jarrett is the offspring of Rosanne, but the society-at-large finds it not acceptable.

Cover Story, Continued from page 3.

While it is important that we understand the problem of race, it is time to move towards solutions. One of the biggest two things that is important is overcoming the fear and ignorance that arguably are the two key ingredients that creates racial animus. “Educating people and putting them in safe spaces to have these conversations are important if we are to confront and combat racism,” says Professor Vander.

To further illustrate her point she says, “I was in grad school as a teaching fellow in N.C. Chapel Hill. The first time I taught a class called ‘The Black Experience in America,’ students were silent. They were afraid, so I took a stack of index cards in the context of this class what is your greatest fear and the other side what is your greatest pleasure in this class? Many were afraid of upsetting others are things getting volatile. These are the White kids fearing saying something stupid or being attacked or called racist.”

Dana Smith agrees and says Blacks cannot always be offended because Whites do not know that some of the things they may say are racist. While the outrage is justified that we must not always be emotional and irrational, but use these moments not only to teach individuals, but in the case of Rosanne Barr, but the society-at-large that certain types of language is not acceptable.

Vander, who was chosen last year to facilitate a four-part series of conversations on race sponsored by the Louisiana Endowment of the Humanities, says more of these conversations need to take place. “I found these conversations as they went on to be very helpful, because these were places where all people could talk about their thoughts on race and at the end respect the different perspectives. For it is not very often that there are spaces people can have honest and open dialogs about race without it being overly emotional or people being afraid to be offensive. So, this was quite refreshing, and I feel should be something that continues.”

Moving toward Solutions

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Black and White and the Future of New Orleans and America

As the City continues to reflect and look back on 300 years and say there are great things this City should celebrate. But as it relates to issues of race New Orleans continues to have problems surrounding equity, fairness and justice.

Bart Everson who has a daughter in elementary school and he and his wife live a very integrated life; is somewhat pessimistic about the future of the City unless there are systematic and structural changes to address the inequities. “I worry my daughter will not have a New Orleans to live in. The focus should not only be on the City 300 years of looking back; but can we even imagine will the City even be here 300 years from now. This question should be governing or at least informing everything we do; finding ways of living that we address issues of equity and social justice.”

Today the City is at another historical moment electing its first female mayor LaToya Cantrell, and questions abound about how she will govern, and will she be able to in some ways bridge the wide divide that is race in New Orleans? “I supported LaToya and I endorsed her publicly and I have high hopes that she will do great things. She comes from the community activist background, so I would think that she would understand engaging the community says Everson.

Much of what will happen in the areas of race on a local and national level remains to be seen. But solutions will begin with people seeing each other as fellow humans and that difference does not mean deficient. This is the true starting line if New Orleans and the world can get to the finish line of all people being treated equal. This does not simply lie at the doorstep of whoever is the president, mayor or any elected leaders. It begins with everyday people, ordinary people, listening to each other and respecting each other, and working together to become extraordinary.
Upcoming Fashion Influencers

The world of Fashion is ever-changing and new trailblazers arise every day. From makeup to hair, or even the latest style of heels, Fashion is always innovating on a style. Here are three Fashion innovators to look out for.

Brittany Byrd: New York native and design artist brings an edgy street style with a Tokyo inspired flare. Many of her looks are laid-back, and dark toned but she always manages to rock the latest designer ensembles and more importantly, colored hair.

Keleam: Upcoming musical artist Keleam embodies contemporary art within her style. Using a lot of textures, a patterns Keleam gracefully rocks any style she wears. Although her closet may be full of many solids and patterns, she always finds a way to bring out the spark in her style.

Teisha Jeanie: Also known as the queen of “slay” incorporates over the top makeup to her style like no other. Jeanie, a California native takes pride in colored eyeshadows, and eye designs to match all her hot looks. Her style is a more modern day urban, funky, style with a vintage 70's feel.

For more information on these upcoming fashion innovators, email Delinkey@yahoo.com

Above: Brittany Byrd sports red latex pants with a graphic tee and army jacket.

Right: Keleam strikes a fierce pose in a pinstriped dress

Above: Teisha Jeanie rocks a sheer top with silver metallic pants and colorful tiger platforms

(Photos courtesy of LanesLense)
Gabriel The Great, Turns 8

By Marion Hercyl
Data News Weekly Contributor

A big Happy Birthday to Gabriel Jones, otherwise known as Gabriel The Great, who turned 8 last week. A big celebration was in store for Gabe and his friends at Laser Tag, where the party goers took a spin on the whirlbirds and gobbled cake and ice cream. What a great day to turn 8! Happy Birthday Gabriel!

Nicole’s Traditional Hawaiian Luau Birthday Party

June Hazeur
Data News Weekly Contributor

On Saturday, May 19th, it was Nicole Carter’s Birthday and also our own Terry Jones. Since they share the same birthdate she included him on the cake. Every year Nicole has her Traditional Hawaiian Luau Birthday Party at The Prime Example, it is always a blast. She traditionally invites some of the Zulu Club Members to come and join in the festivities. It includes Hawaiian pineapple cups for your drinks and everyone is given a lei to wear. They were available in a variety of colors and styles. She goes all out to make this a great event. It is totally a luau. Everyone enjoyed delicious food and lots of booze to drink.

Photos by Jerry LaVigne

Visit www.ladatanews.com for more photos from these events
When it Comes to Voting, We’re Fighting a Second Civil War

By Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr
Founder & President, Rainbow PUSH Coalition

The talk shows are filled with the latest rumor about WikiLeaks and Russian interference in our elections. What was done still remains a mystery. But Republican tricks — the systematic efforts to suppress the vote — are an established fact, and a far greater threat to free elections.

The facts are not in dispute. A recent report by the United Nations special rapporteur on extreme poverty notes that in addition to suffering the most extreme inequality in the industrial world, the U.S. ranks among the lowest for voter participation. Voter registration levels, for example, are 64 percent in the U.S., compared with 91 percent in Canada and the United Kingdom and 99 percent in Japan.

This isn’t an accident. As The New York Times reports, conservatives have openly stated for years that they do better when fewer people vote. In the South under segregation, the power structure used any number of tricks — poll taxes, and special quizzes, intimidation and just plain murder — to keep blacks from voting. Now, Republicans are clear that they must suppress the vote if they are to keep power. As professor Donald Jones stated at a Florida hearing of the National Commission for Voter Justice, “When it comes to the vote, we are in the Second Civil War.”

The National Commission for Voter Justice was launched by Rainbow/Push early this year to undertake a 2-year mission of documenting the status of voting rights in the U.S., educating the public about ongoing threats and inspir- ing reforms to reaffirm the right to vote. The NCVJ has held hearings in four states — Michigan, Georgia, South Carolina and Florida — and produced research from six states.

The NCVJ found that systematic efforts are underway to make voting more difficult in states across the country. Voter purging and voter caging is being conducted on a much larger scale since 2016 than is popularly recognized.

In Georgia in 2017, 320,000 voters who had been purged from the voter rolls had to file a lawsuit to regain the right to vote. In Florida, black voters are being purged after being labeled “inactive,” by not responding to a mail request for confirmation of address. The Interstate Crosscheck System, invented by Republican attorneys, is used by 27 states and is estimated to lead to the wrongful purging of hundreds of thousands of voters.

States also work to make voting harder. They limit the days of early voting, reduce the number of polling places, leading to long lines and frustrated voters, and relocate polling places to distant communities. Georgia is notorious for moving polling sites from black communities to inaccessible locations with poor advance notice. Ex-felons who have served their sentence are still disenfranchised in Florida and other states; student face more and more barriers designed to keep them from voting.

Republican state legislators have pushed to pass voter ID laws across the country. Thirty-four states now enforce these laws. Eleven percent of U.S. citizens — 21 million people — lack a government-issued photo ID, the ACLU reports. One in four African-Americans lacks this form of ID. The Government Accountability Office found that strict photo ID was not supported.

“Voter Justice was launched by the NNPA early this year to un- derline the need for voter registration and voting rights,” said Dr. Benjamin Chavis, Jr., president and CEO of the NNPA. “In particular, Black women are now the effective van- ines in the fight for Black voting rights across the country.”

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New Orleans is no stranger to art mediums like music, food, and visual arts. When seeking events and organizations that cater to all forms of art, one could say this type of event is impossible to find, until now. Creative Curators Kenneth & Antarah Lelani Hasan-Spears, have introduced a new and intriguing way to combine, music, live art, and a creative platform for artists. Founded in February 2016, Abstract Nola provides an art experience for attendees as well as a safe place for entrepreneurs to showcase and sell their work.

Abstract Nola produced over 50 events and has worked with popular, local brands such as Audubon Nature Institute, SMS Development, and Axiom Art Gallery. Aside from their dedication to the betterment of artists and entrepreneurs, Abstract Nola also offers a number of creative services ranging from graphic & web design, as well as creative events and brand consulting for clients. Each Abstract event can host a range of artists such as comedians, poets, vocalist, and even live body or canvas art. Abstract events like their Art parties and concerts/market series are held bi-weekly and monthly.

The next Abstract event is the June Concert + Market Series located at Lot 1701 (1701 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd). Artists can participate by submitting inquiries to info@abstractnola.com and patrons can purchase tickets to Abstract events by visiting www.AbstractNola.com/Tickets. For more information on Abstract Nola email info@abstractnola.com.

ID laws reduce turnout by 2 to 3 percent. Open voter suppression laws had a far greater effect on the 2016 election than whatever the Russians did. Wisconsin’s right-wing Gov. Scott Walker had previously signed into law new voter ID requirements, some of which a Federal District Court had found discriminated against minority voters. Conservative judges at the appellate level upheld the law. Republicans openly bragged that this would make the difference in the election. The result, by the state’s own records, was that 300,000 eligible voters lacked the proper ID. African-American turnout was down dramatically and Hillary Clinton lost the key state by only 22,700 votes.

We should take steps to ensure that no foreign power can interfere with our elections, but we should also act boldly to ensure that the right to vote is not undermined by zealous partisans at home. Voter registration should be automatic. Voting should be facilitated, not made harder. Early voting days should be extended; polling booths easily available; hours extended. No one should have to wait for hours in a line to cast a vote.

In the end, we should amend the Constitution to specifically establish the right to vote. This basic democratic value is now contested. We have public officials openly bragging about their schemes to suppress the right to vote. There is no greater threat to a democracy. Now it is up to patriots to defend the most basic right of all.
Tricentennial Exhibition Highlights Contributions of African Heritage to New Orleans

By Juliana Tomasoni  
Data News Weekly  
Contributor

People in New Orleans have one more venue to celebrate the Tricentennial. The New Orleans Historic Collection on Chartres Street in the French Quarter held a reception to launch its exhibition titled “African Heritage of New Orleans: 300 Years in the Making” on June 1, 2018. The majority saw for the first time the collection that shows significant historical and contemporary occurrences and sites associated with people of African descent in New Orleans.

“New Orleans has such a huge history, but sometimes the heritage of African-Americans is mentioned last, and I think is important for us to understand and reflect on the tricentennial, just how important the contribution of Africans to the City is” said Zela Palmer, the Director of the Dillard University Ray Charles Program, one of the contributing institutions to the exhibition.

The African Heritage of New Orleans: 300 Years in the Making highlights how far people of African descent have come in New Orleans from the struggles and fights of enslaved Africans who strove for and achieved their own self-determination.

The main exhibition is highlights contributions of African heritage to New Orleans. One of the goals is to attract the young and students to learn about this legacy, organizers said. “We want them to come to the exhibit and really learn about their history, because unfortunately a lot of our history is not in the curriculum,” Palmer said. “They should not have to wait until they go to a Historically Black College and University to learn about African-American history,” she said.

The exhibition is offered through the collections of The New Orleans Arts & Culture Coalition. The NOACC is a collective of local arts, education, and cultural nonprofit organizations that serve as a coordinated voice for the recognition and promotion of civil and human arts, history, and culture in New Orleans.

Besides Dillard University, many other institutions are contributors for the exhibition. Partners include Xavier University of Louisiana, the Amistad Research Center, the New Orleans Public Library, the Louisiana Civil Rights Museum, the New Orleans Jazz Museum, The Plessy and Ferguson Foundation and others.

People who attended the event at 400 Chartres Street enjoyed a presentation of the “Le Code Noir” by The Voices in The Dark Group and dinner was served with typical creole and Louisiana food. Besides the main exhibition, there will be eight citywide exhibitions in different institutions for the rest of the year, organizers said.

“The main exhibition is highlighted from slaves to the Civil Rights Movement, and it just gives kind of an idea of the main points, moments and people who really pushed to make this City great,” Palmer said. The exhibition is free and open to the public.


“One day,” Brown said. “I want to publish my own newspaper.”

“Publishing with an African-American newspaper was beneficial to me in many ways. It taught me how to appreciate, support and contribute to the African-American community in a small way,” said Junine Goodison, a Xavier student who attends Xavier. “My reporting experience this semester helped me because it was my first experience and the whole semester was a learning experience to give me the basic tools I need to start my journey towards my career.”
she became the first Black woman elected to the U.S. Congress. Relative to statewide elected executive offices, only three (3) Black women currently serve in a statewide office—Jenean Hampton (R-Ky), the Lieutenant Governor of Kentucky; Sheila Oliver (D-N.J.), the Lieutenant Governor of New Jersey; and Denise Nappier (D-Conn.), the State Treasurer of Connecticut. Together, these women represent 4.2 percent (3 of 71) of all women statewide elected executive officials and 0.96 percent (3 of 312) of all statewide elected executive officials in the entire country.

Going even further, only 12 Black women have ever held statewide elected executive office in just 11 out of the 50 states, and prior to Abrams’ historic quest to become the next governor of Georgia, no Black woman has ever been elected governor, let alone become the governor of the entire country. Abrams may be just the political party. Abrams may be just the gubernatorial nominee of a major political party. Abrams may be just the person to change things.

Abrams has become a major catalyst behind this exciting new trend of Black women running for office nationwide and at the local level. Maybe this time will be different. Time will tell. November to be exact. Stay tuned.

This article was originally published at BlackPressUSA.com. Jeffrey L. Boney serves as Associate Editor and is an award-winning journalist for the Houston Forward Times newspaper. Jeffrey has been a frequent contributor on “The Nancy Grace Show” and "Crime & Justice with Ashleigh Banfield." Jeffrey is a radio personality and a dynamic, international speaker, experienced business development strategist and Founder/CEO of the Texas Business Alliance. If you would like to request Jeffrey as a speaker, you can reach him at jeoneyl@forward-times.com. Follow Jeffrey on Twitter @realTalkJankies.

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Join our DTU Fellows on this multi-city journey as they discover unsung heroes and share stories from African-American communities that will surprise and inspire. DTU is back and better than ever! Are you ready to ride?

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