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**SU True Blue Gala Highlights**

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A Data News Weekly Exclusive



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# Creative Energy Drives Local Artist Kentrice Schexnayder



'Shotgun' by Kentrice Schexnayder

Story and Photos By Ka'lya Ellis  
Data News Weekly Contributor

Being a creative is a difficult challenge in a world built for college graduates who are expected to become lawyers or doctors. But local artist from the Tremé area and Warren Easton High School alumna, Kentrice Schexnayder, almost took this path – until she realized her passion for art was her purpose.

“When I was growing up I always thought that art wasn’t something to make a career of because of the starving artist stereotype,” said Schexnayder, whose love for creating art started at age six. She was inspired by her peers in her community to pursue their natural gifts and having friends who were also creative made her push forward in her artistry as she got older.

“Seeing them made me say I don’t have to follow the norm. I could use my talent to pursue my dreams,” she said.

From 6, to now 31, she goes back to the time of being in first grade thinking of days when she would trace old cartoons, to gradually teaching herself to draw out those same cartoons. “I always knew to get better at drawing, I had to practice and be consistent,” she recalled.

Schexnayder’s body of work includes larger gallery paintings that she learned to make while attending college, but later on, she got into portraits, after it grew in high demand by her clients. “I had to go back to that six-year-old who wanted to learn more, in order for the vision to be perfect,” she said.

Her time in college, she put towards making a career in art. She graduated in 2010 from the University of New Orleans with a bachelor’s degree in fine arts and a minor in business after she realized psychology

**On the cover:** Local artist from the Tremé area UNO alumna, Kentrice Schexnayder, stands next to the live painting she created for Shea Moisture during Essence weekend in July, 2018.

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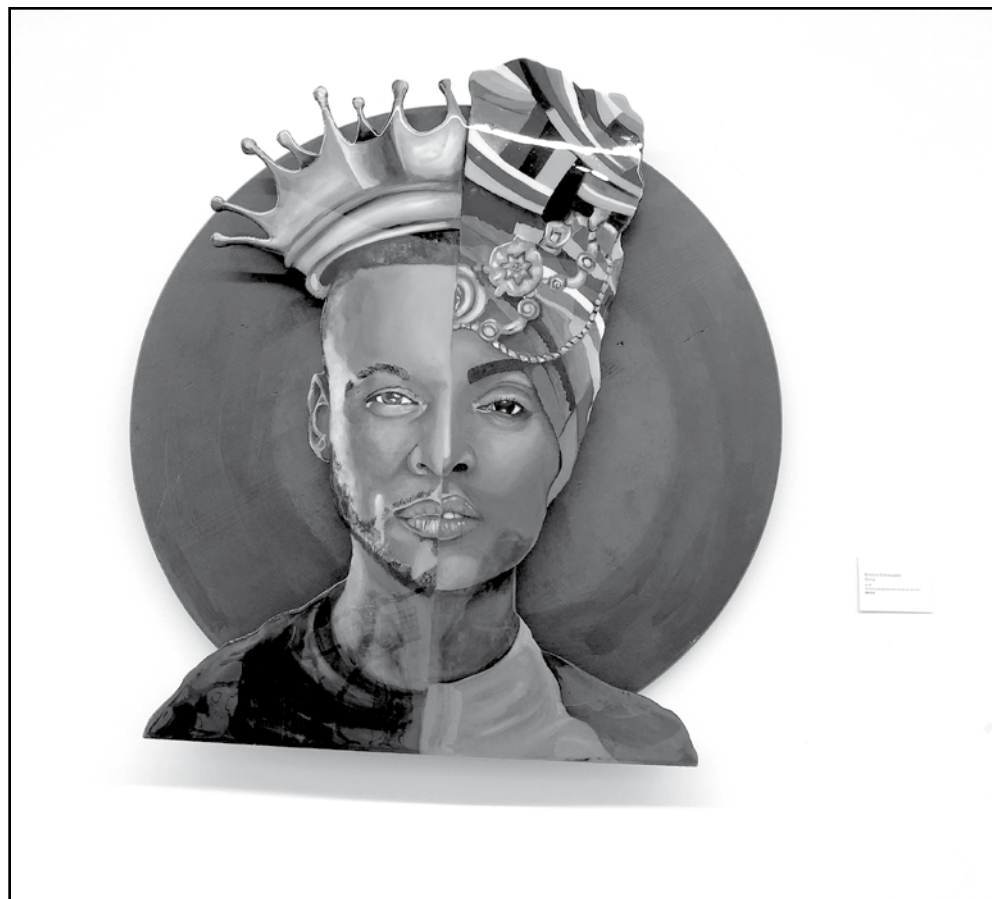
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Cover Story, Continued from page 2.



"Pain Killer" by Kentrice Schexnayder



"Quing" by Kentrice Schexnayder

wasn't her calling. Schexnayder used her knowledge of business and her art skills to start her establishment "Ken 6 Studio" in 2015. She recalled that her company may have started off small, but over the years grew with the help of doing small contracts and one-off custom creations, ranging from hats to t-shirts for clients. Both big and small jobs laid the groundwork for the local promotion she needed to position herself as a full-time artist. She recalls the exact moment when she knew it was time to pursue art as her main job. It was a quote she first heard from motivational speaker, Gary Cox, at a financial seminar she had attended years ago.

"If you can tell 20 people a day for 3 years straight what you do, you will never have to work for anybody a day in your life," said Schexnayder of Cox' words that sparked the flame for her entrepreneurship.

Her company ranges from painting murals on many local businesses such as "We Dat" Restaurant and other known structures across the city, to exterior and interior home paintings. It is hard to find a place in the metropolitan area she hasn't been able to place her work, she said.

"Every time I'm in town, I see something new that Kentrice has put her stamp on and it's really adding a pop to the area," said Darlyn Brown, a New Orleans native, who now resides in Atlanta, Georgia and is fan of Schexnayder's work.

She attributes social media to helping her to take off and grow. "I get people in the street calling me by my studio name," she jokes, "I

love it though I love the feeling of people recognizing my work and being inspired."

Her 2019 plans for her company are to continue to expand her business and doing more murals for other local businesses. She also plans to do her own art exhibit in 2019.

She plans to continue to promote her work locally. Her art pieces have been featured in many art shows in New Orleans such as Art Madness that was held in March 2018, where she presented her piece "Quing," a three-dimensional, acrylic, and wood-based piece that displays half-woman, half-man of color in royal garments. The vibrant colors of the composition bring the work to life putting the viewer in perspective of being the reflection of the king or queen they are seeing.

"Quing is an inspiration, I love the colors and how she made the portraits look like everyday people such as myself," said Kemme Polk, a local seventh ward resident, of Schexnayder's unique piece.


For Essence weekend in July 2018, she created a live painting for Shea Moisture. The experience was one for the books, she said, as the memory of that moment came back to her. "I do my work because I love seeing the viewer's expression of being moved getting a commission is just a plus for me," she said.

In her spare time, Schexnayder volunteers at local camps and non-profits including WQUE 93.3 FM's Wild Wayne Summer Camp. Her mantra is that young people are the future, so she hopes that brings art as an outlet of joy for them.

She wants upcoming creatives to know that they don't have to give

up. "Don't stop creating always create no matter if you're a rapper, hair


stylists, or artist. Your creativity is needed in the world."




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# Data News Weekly Wants You to Get Out and Vote

**Benjamin Bates**  
Data News Weekly  
Contributor

## Vote Vote Vote!!!

Early Voting has begun and ends on Dec. 1st. Data News Weekly in its role as the People's Paper encourage our citizens to get out and vote.

In the November Elections we saw nationwide what voting can do, as where we see more women and minorities elected. While the December Election hasn't been getting as much coverage, we believe that every election matters and every vote counts.

So as part of our service to our community, we have provided voters information that will empower them at the polls.

Early voting for the Dec. 8th Election begins Saturday Nov. 24th and lasts through Dec. 1st. Residents who would like to vote in this election should have registered by Nov. 7th if they signed up in person or by mail. For those who registered online the deadline was Nov. 17th.

Hours for early voting are 8:30 AM to 6:00 PM daily and polling locations are closed on Sunday. The deadline to request an absentee by mail ballot is Dec. 4th by 4:30 p.m. Voters can request an absentee by mail ballot online through the Louisiana Secretary of State Voter Portal or in writing through your Registrar of Voters Office (other than military and overseas voters). The deadline for a Registrar of Voters to receive a voted mail ballot is Dec. 7th by 4:30 p.m. (other than military and overseas voters).

## Elections in Orleans Parish

PW HRC Amendment - Sec. 5-301 - CC

A little-known Amendment is on



the ballot with far reaching implications; given it has something to do with the future governance of the Sewerage and Water Board.

It reads:

Shall Section 5-301 of the Home Rule Charter of the City of New Orleans be amended to change the composition of the membership of the Sewerage and Water Board to remove one citizen member and include the Chair of the Public Works, Sanitation, and Environment Committee of the New Orleans City Council or its successor committee, a member of the committee appointed by the chair, or a Civil Engineer appointed by the chair?

New Orleans voters are considering a change to the city's home

rule charter that would alter the makeup of the Sewerage & Water Board, slightly undoing a change made in 2013 during the Landrieu Administration.

The reason for this change was to bring more technical expertise to the utility's governance. To achieve this goal, three seats held City Council members were removed from board, shrinking it from 13 to 11 positions.

The board leadership is as follows: The mayor, who leads the board as its President, serves in their role and has the power to name eight "citizen" board members with backgrounds applicable to drainage, sewerage and water system oversight. The nominations for these posts came from

the city's university presidents.

It is without a doubt that something must be done differently at the Sewerage and Water Board to better service its customers. Prior to the present administration there have been calls for accountability, so we at Data News feel it is incumbent for citizens to educate themselves on this Amendment and how it could impact the future of the Sewerage and Water Board.

## Orleans Parish Civil District Court Division E

New Orleans voters also will have the opportunity to decide who will serve as Judge in Division E on the Orleans Parish Civil District Court.

Omar Mason is a practicing attorney handling civil litigation for nearly 20 years. He placed 1st in the primary.

His opponent is Marie Williams, who has over two decades of experience handling criminal and civil cases.

Both candidates are Democrats who have made previous runs for Judge.

## Statewide race

The runoff for Secretary of State is between Kyle Ardoin, a Republican, and his opponent Gwen Collins-Greenup, a Democrat.

Ardoin has held the post on an interim basis since May when he was appointed to take over from Tom Schedler, who resigned amid a sexual harassment scandal involving an employee in his office. Although troubles over a voting machines contract have emerged during his brief tenure, Ardoin is touting his experience with the state agency, where he became first assistant in 2010.

Collins-Greenup, who works for the Public-School System in East Feliciana Parish, made the run-off by matching Ardoin with 20 percent of the vote in the Nov. 6th primary. Collins-Greenup, who graduated from Southern University Law Center and will sit for the bar exam in February, has stressed a platform of voters' rights in her campaign for the office that oversees elections in Louisiana.

## Early voting locations:

- City Hall, 1300 Perdido St., Room 1W24
- Algiers Courthouse, 225 Morgan St., Room 105
- Chef Menteur Voting Machine Warehouse Site, 8870 Chef Menteur Highway
- Lake Vista Community Center, 6500 Spanish Fort Blvd.

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# Xavier Alumni Use Politics and Policy to Make A Difference

By Chris Anders  
Data News Weekly  
Contributor

Almost 50 years ago, then Xavier University students like Rudy Lombard, Norman C. Francis, and many others fought for and protected their freedoms during the Civil Rights Movement. Now, at the front-line in a new age of Civil Rights Activism, Xavier graduates say they are still working to make an impact on a state and national level. Participating in politics and electing the right people for office are critical, said the alumni who spoke on the continued work of the Civil Rights Movement today at the 4th Annual Dr. Lombard '61 Symposium on Civil Rights on Nov. 17th.

"I thought it would be important for us to have the perspectives of someone who is an elected official and also someone who works in government," said Victor Jones, the senior supervising attorney at the Southern Poverty Law Center, who hosted the event.

The forum recognized the increase in people of color being elected into office following the Nov. 6th mid-term elections. The change in the makeup of the House means that issues like Criminal Justice Reform have now risen to the top of the national legislative agenda. The wave of Black women being elected into office included Democrat Lauren Underwood from Illinois, who became one of the youngest Black women to be elected to Congress and Ayanna Pressley, who won her race to become the first Black woman in Congress from Massachusetts. Overall more than 20 Black women were elected for office after the mid-term elections, making it the highest number in history.

The implications of this more diverse Congress were not missed by the forum's two panelists Crystal Moore, a White House Fellow on the Domestic Policy Council and Royce Duplessis, a State Representative for Louisiana's District 93.

Serving in government agencies and on national initiatives, at all levels, regardless of the administration, is just one way to continue the work of advocacy for the Black com-



Royce Duplessis, host Victor Jones, and Crystal Moore at the 4th Annual Dr. Rudy Lombard Symposium on Civil Rights on Saturday, Nov. 17th. (Photo by Chris Anders)

munity. It can start by playing a role in advocating how federal dollars are spent, said Moore, a 2007 alumna of Xavier. Her work in the White House focuses on funding different programs at HBCUs around the nation. Every year the United States Department of Agriculture gives \$1.2 billion to institutions of higher learning in America to fund various opportunities for college students.

"We are currently doing a reorganization strategy for USDA, so they can better support and offer more funding opportunities to HBCUs. In the past HBCUs would only go for a small amount of that and it makes me proud to connect HBCUs to all the funding opportunities," Moore explained.

Being in a position that has some authority over which colleges get access to these types of grants from the USDA allows Moore to serve in government and to make meaningful changes that trickle back to the community. Moore said she was pleased to be able to return to her alma mater and to report that her hard work and position is paying off. She believes helping young African-American students get enough money to attend school could potentially be very important for the next gen-

eration of Civil Rights Activism.


"Education is the most important thing in politics, on the policy making side and on the side of the people elected, who make the policies," Moore said.

Trump's election, the speakers noted, had the result of increasing voter turnout in the African-American community. Even in Louisiana, voters approved Amendment 2 by 64.4 percent of all votes, which would require a unanimous jury of 12-members for a felony conviction.

"Attending Xavier made me feel fortunate, confident, and gave me a sense of responsibility to serve the community," said Royce Duplessis, who won the State House seat in March after chairing the City Planning Commission. "It made it a no brainier for me to run for office," said Duplessis, who is also an attorney.

The two speakers encouraged students that they can either run for office or serve in government, but that in both cases, they are able to represent the places they come from to bring about change. They noted that the university continues to contribute to new leadership with the election of the city's first Black female Mayor LaToya Cantrell, also a Xavier alumna. Xavier communication studies student Kayla Brown, who attended the event, said she was motivated by the stories of Xavier alumni, who are making a difference in politics and policy-making.

"Being able to hear success stories from people in the African-American community and from people that went to Xavier inspire me," Brown said. "It helps me believe that one day I can run for office and make a change."



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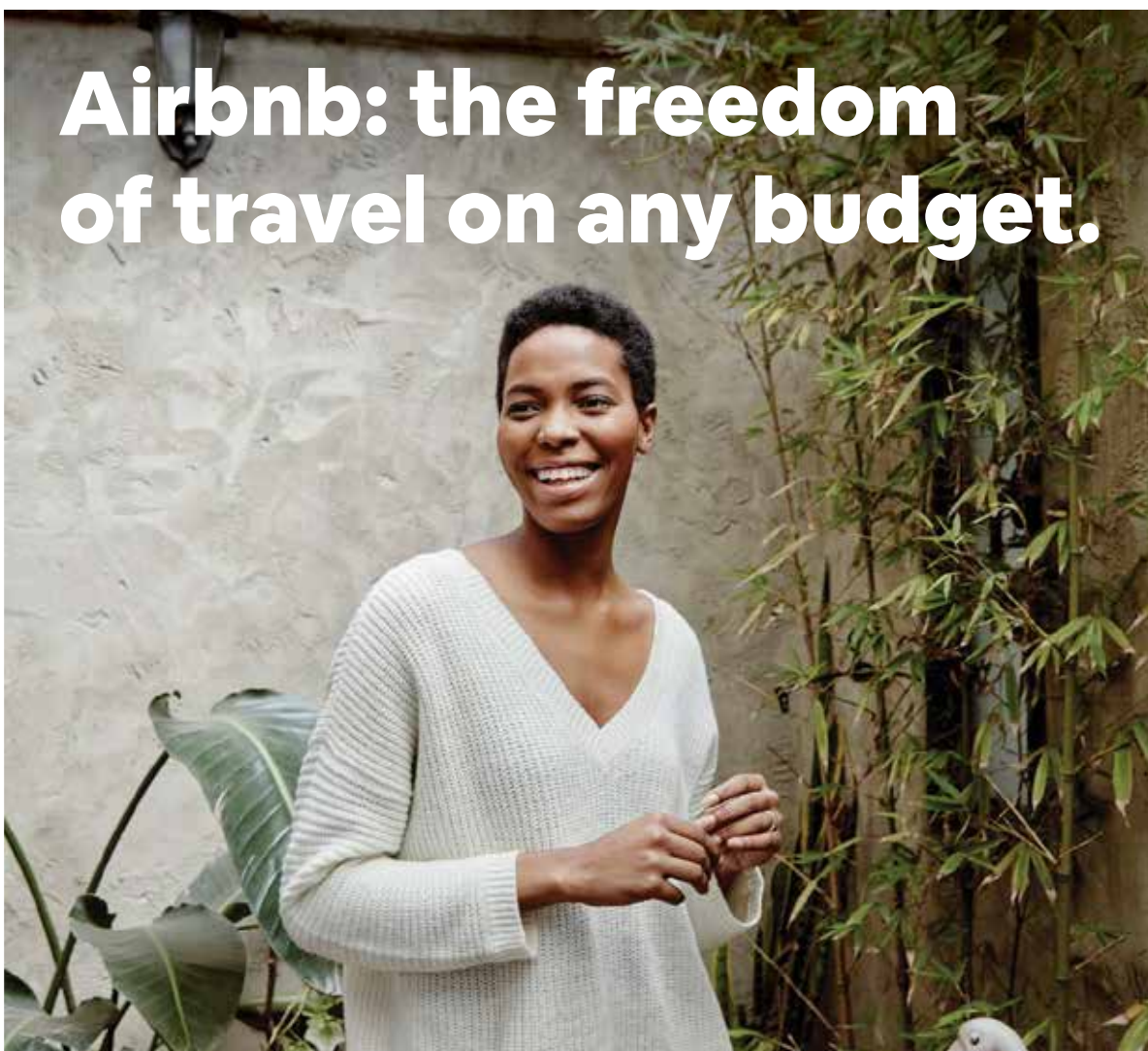
# 45th Bayou Classic Highlights

Photos by Terry Jones  
Data News Weekly Contributor

It was an exhilarating day at the Superdome on Saturday evening as the Southern & Grambling alumni and fans came out in full support of their teams for the Annual Bayou Classic Game. There was perfect weather and a great game. Data was there!!! Oh, and Southern won!



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# The Network Turns 25!

Photos by Terry Jones  
Data News Weekly Contributor

It was standing room only as former Honorees, public servants, business people and well wishers assembled in the French Quarter Room of The Ritz Carlton to celebrate and acknowledge the good and hard work of The Network Coalition. "Each year for the last 25 years we have been quietly bringing people together who often times paths may never cross in life. This is the real deal about communication and truth", explained WT Winfield, General Chairman of The Network.. " Our single goal has always been to create dialogue. When people actually talk to each other they are always amazed at how they are drawn to their commonality rather than their differences" he added. This is always a special evening.



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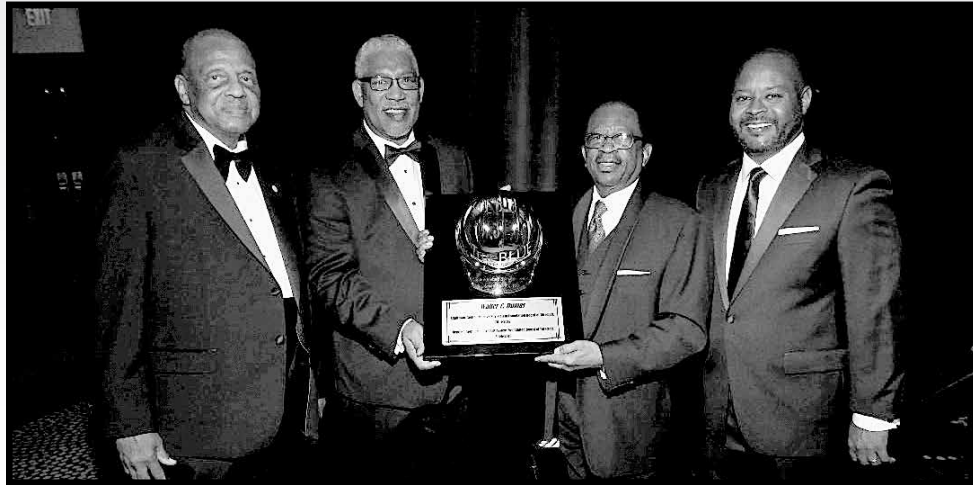
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# SU True Blue Gala Highlights

Photos by Glenn Summers  
Data News Weekly  
Contributor

The internationally-acclaimed OJays had the SUSF Members, donors & guests on their feet from start to finish with an enchanting trip down 'Memory Lane'. It was an excellent evening for this VIP crowd to strut their stuff. One of the noteworthy attendees in the crowd was the newly-elected Chairman of the SU Board of Supervisors, Atty. Demoine Rutledge of Baton Rouge. The highlight of the evening was the presentation of the Horatio Thompson Award to Walter C. Dumas of Baton Rouge. Exit comments showed the guests had a great time.



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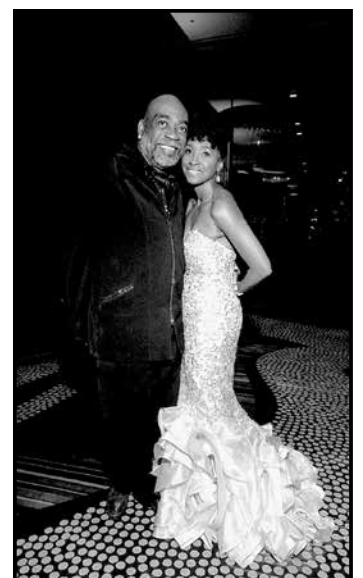
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# The Great White Hope

By Vincent L. Hall  
NNPA Newswire Columnist

James Earl Jones portrayed world heavyweight boxing champ Jack Johnson, whose power and persona took White America by surprise in the early 1900's. Johnson presented a double threat to the status quo; he violated laws that forbade him White female companionship, and literally, no one could whip his Black ass.

The "Great White Hope" made its film debut in 1970, following its success on Broadway. Here's how a film critic described the plot: "A Black champion boxer and his White female companion struggle to survive while the White boxing establishment looks for ways to knock him down."

The "establishment" marshaled a search party to promote what was to have been the "Fight of the Century." In 1910, former undefeated heavyweight champion James J. Jeffries was lured out of retirement. "I feel obligated to the sporting public at least to make an effort to reclaim the heavyweight championship for the White race and demonstrate that a White man is king of them all" said Jeffries.

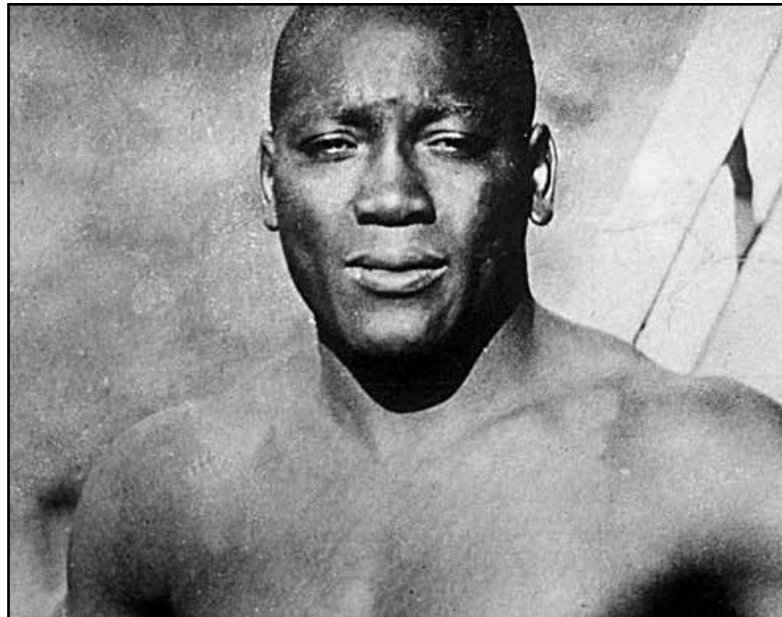
Jeffries may have been the Great White Hope a century ago, but his replacement, Donald Trump has amassed a far better record. After he knocked out 17 wannabees in the Republican Presidential primary, he scored a TKO over the first woman to seriously approach the ring.

Hillary Rodham Clinton fought her way up to the championship bout. She won more than enough votes to be elected, but as is characteristic in the fight business, she lost on a technicality. The founding fathers created the electoral system to favor rich White males.

This newest champ is a bit pudgy and a tad old to be in the ring, but he is as crafty as they come. He uses all the dirty tricks of boxing to his advantage and he concocts political poisons that lay bare every weakness of his opponents.

Donald "Agent Orange" Trump hits his foes below the belt, even when the referee is watching. He has a mean head fake. You can think you caught him in any of the hundreds of lies he spews weekly and he will manufacture a new tragedy to make you forgot the most recent misdeed.

Agent Orange is no stranger



World heavyweight boxing champ Jack Johnson (pictured), was a double threat to the status quo; he violated laws that forbade him White female companionship, and literally, no one could beat him.

to hanging onto the ropes, rabbit punching, head-butting or any other sudden or seditious movements.

He uses his elbows to throw blows and his thumbs to violate the rules pugilists pledge to obey.

Donald Trump is the dirtiest fighter ever known to the game. He's a heavyweight who specializes in arranging bouts in the bantamweight, flyweight and middleweight

categories. Agent Orange even hits girls. Jack Johnson had a thing for White women, but Donald Trump respects no woman.

The darker they get, the worse they get treated. He delivers low blows to the boxing cups of the guys and grabs the girls by their G-strings. Trump is an expert in the UFC and WWE methods and brings those foreign rules into the

four corners and turnbuckles of the boxing ring.

When it comes to prefight hype, he makes Muhammad Ali look like an amateur.

Agent Orange picks an opponent, makes them public enemy number one and then spreads lies that make his fans run to his rallies, foaming at the mouth.

Trump is always a sore winner because victimization is the game he excels in. One day though, Donald "Agent Orange" Trump, like all fighters, is going to hit the canvass. The crowds will turn on him, and the debt he owes to Queen Karma will have to be settled. Be leery, because that day is coming soon. Trump can't be content winning, so who knows how unhinged he'll be when fatigue and frustration take him to the mat.

Jack Johnson finally lost to the only unbeatable force in the United States of America; racism. Oddly, racism will turn on Trump and consume him as well. It was "Mighty White" of Donald to pardon Jack Johnson the question is who will pardon this Great White Hope.

Vincent L. Hall is an author, activist and award-winning journalist.

# The Moral Burden of Thanksgiving



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

**The Union would hold. The people would be free.**

"No human counsel hath devised nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things," the proclamation read. "They are gracious gifts of the Most High God, who, while dealing with us in anger for our sins, hath nevertheless remembered mercy. It has seemed to me fit and proper that they should be solemnly, reverently and gratefully acknowledged as with one heart and one voice by the whole American People."

Thanksgiving has always been about more than football and turkey. It is about justice and the creation of a more perfect union. It has always been political.

Poverty and hunger are enemies of the union. They are homegrown terrorists, traitors to the America we can and must become. They have no place in a nation as rich, powerful and fundamentally good as ours.

In the bloody summer of 1863, the Union Army defeated General Robert E. Lee's Confederate forces at Gettysburg, a three-day battle that changed the course of the Civil War and the long journey from slavery to freedom.

Three months later, in a profound gesture of gratitude, President Abraham Lincoln officially proclaimed the fourth Thursday of November to be a national holiday, a national day of thanksgiving.

“ In the true spirit of Thanksgiving, this is a time not to focus on one big meal on one big day. This is a time to commit and work even harder to end poverty and hunger in this land of plenty. ”

In the true spirit of Thanksgiving, this is a time not to focus on one big meal on one big day. This is a time to commit and work even harder to end poverty and hunger in this land of plenty.

We have much work to do. There are nine neighborhoods in Chicago – endangered communities – where poverty is at almost 20 percent and unemployment hovers around 40 percent.

**That is a sin.**

There are an estimated 13.1 million children – 1 in 6 – in the U.S. living in households where there is not enough to eat. Experts say that children who suffer from hunger in the first years of their education often lag behind their peers in school, a beginning that can haunt them for the rest of their lives.

The moral burden of Thanksgiving is not to eat turkey but to feed justice.



# Local Entrepreneurs Pop-Up at the Propeller Incubator

By Jared Braud  
Data News Weekly  
Contributor

For many generations, food has always brought people together. And on Nov. 15th, Propeller, a social innovator non-profit, hosted its Pop Fundraiser to support its mission of reducing inequities by preparing and launching entrepreneurs in the city.

"Propeller...values businesses other than its own and wants to continue to birth new entrepreneurs in the future," said Catherine Gans, the marketing and communications manager for Propeller.

Created in 2009, Propeller, located on Washington Avenue, set out to invest in and grow entrepreneurship as a way of tackling social economic disparities, Gans said. Since 2011, Propeller has graduated over 200 entrepreneurs from its programs, and has generated over \$150 million in donations to finance its work of supporting entrepreneurship in the City. Propeller uses funds to support its programs like its startup accelerator, its growth accelerator and other services ranging from technology to legal services that small businesses require to launch and sustain themselves. The goal is to help minority, women and veteran-owned businesses to compete and thrive in the city.

Through its Propeller Pop



Chefs David Hargrove and Byron Bradley pop-up and so do Propeller's guests that try food from all different backgrounds. (Photo by Jared Braud)

event supported by JP Morgan Chase & Co., at its Incubator, the non-profit showcased its graduates who served up samplings from their pop-up restaurants. Since its inception, Propeller estimates it has created over 460 jobs for New Orleanians.

Graduates at the event have been trained through Propeller's accelerator program, of which one feature recommends places for

pop-up restaurants, to attract customers. A pop-up restaurant is an emerging food business that uses a temporary space to promote signature dishes as well as their brand. David Hargrove, a veteran of the United States Marine Corps, was one of the new entrepreneurs who participated in the Pop event. Hargrove served lamb yassa, a West African dish from Senegal. The places he pops-up

at are the Restaurant R'evolution, Urban South Brewery, and on Sunday Nov. 18th, he popped up at the Music Box on North Rampart Street. He picked up cooking as a part-time job to pay for his wedding, he said. And although he went to the Culinary Institute of America in New York City and cooked in Brooklyn for a year, he turned to the non-profit to help him launch his business in the city.

"There should be more of these events because it showcases people cooking with passion and puts a smile on people's faces," Hargrove said.

Not only did this event promote the pop-up chefs, but also entrepreneurs such as construction workers like Glenn Moore who was one of the graduates of Propeller's programs. He knows that Propeller is a non-profit organization, but he believes that its impact makes it akin to a million-dollar corporation, he said.

"Propeller tried to make sure that everyone feels included and wants to help its students' companies get to the next level," Moore said.

Byron Bradley, a colleague of Hargrove, served in the Navy. Bradley served coconut prawn brouats at the Pop fundraiser. The New Orleans native said he has popped up locally in places such as Lilette, a French restaurant on Magazine Street.

He has been cooking professionally since 2013 and after his time in the service, he chose to pick up cooking because he has a strong passion for it. Cooking is one of the core values that runs in his family, he said.

"I think that the event is great for entrepreneurs to get more exposure and access to space," Bradley said.

## Mayor Cantrell Launches 'Song Stories'

### Cultural Series Showcasing New Orleans Musicians

On Tuesday, Nov. 20th, Mayor LaToya Cantrell presented the inaugural performance of "Song Stories" as part of the Mayor's Cultural Series to offer performances by and interviews with some of New Orleans's top talents.



New Orleans Vocalist Anais St. John



Javier Gutierrez and The Vivaz Trio

Guitarist and vocalist Javier Gutierrez lead his Vivaz Trio performing their popular blend of flamenco-influenced Acous-

tic Music and Latin Jazz and New Orleans Rhythms. Anais St. John, whose cabaret shows have included tributes to Donna

Summer, Tina Turner and Lulu White, also performed. Both entertainers mixed performances with interviews hosted by New Orleans radio and television personality Nikki Reyes.

The performances were held inside Gallier Hall's Ty Tracy Theater, which recently underwent a \$587,000 renovation.

The next segment in the series will occur during the Annual Luna Fete Series, also at Gallier Hall, in December.

The Mayor's Cultural Series is produced by the Office of Cultural Economy. For more information on the Mayor's Cultural Series, visit [www.nola.gov](http://www.nola.gov).



# Pelosi Announces Push for Staff Diversity for New U.S House

By Lauren Victoria Burke  
NNPA Newswire Contributor

With the largest Congressional Black Caucus in history along with a historic number of women entering the U.S. House in 2019, House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) has announced plans for a new emphasis on staff diversity in the U.S. House.

The effort will call attention to the ongoing diversity problem on Capitol Hill. Very few senior staff positions on the Senate side are held by Blacks or Latinos. On the House side of Capitol Hill most staff top positions are employed by member of the CBC.

"We know that the diversity in our ranks is a strength and a reflection of the American people," Pelosi wrote to colleagues last week. She is expected to run for Speaker and lead Democrats once again when the new Congress convenes in January.

A new House Diversity Initiative would create a permanent office in the House with sufficient staff to help recruit and retain diverse employees according to staff. Much of the pressure over the last few years regarding the diversity issue on Capitol Hill has come as a result of study and effort by the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies headed by Spencer Overton.

The Joint Center applauded Pelosi's letter to her Democratic House colleagues emphasizing the importance of staff diversity. The letter featured several Joint Center recommendations.



House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi's letter encouraged members of Congress to hire diverse staff. She also announced her hope that the Democratic Caucus would formally adopt the Rooney Rule, which requires interviewing at least one person of color for every top staff position.

"Leader Pelosi deserves credit for laying down an early marker on the need to take action to increase top staff diversity in Congress," said Joint Center President Spencer Overton. "This is a good start, and we look forward to continuing to work with Leader Pelosi to diversify

congressional top staff."

Pelosi's letter encouraged members of Congress to hire diverse staff. She also announced her hope that the Democratic Caucus would formally adopt the Rooney Rule, which requires interviewing at least one person of color for every

top staff position. The top positions, or "senior staff" positions in each congressional office are: chief of staff, legislative director, communications director.

"The incoming majority of the U.S. House of Representatives will be the most diverse in our nation's history," said Don Bell, Director of the Black Talent Initiative at the Joint Center. "Leader Pelosi's letter is a good beginning toward the work ahead to ensure that the senior and mid-level staff of the U.S. House reflect the diversity of America."

The Joint Center published a report in September 2018 that found that although people of color account for 38 percent of the U.S. population, they account for only 13.7 percent of the top staffers of the U.S. House of Representatives (161 out of 1174 top staffers).

Nine new members of the Black Caucus will likely include Lucy McBath (GA-06), Ayanna Pressley (MA-07), Lauren Underwood (IL-14), Steven Horsford (NV-04), Antonio Delgado (NY-19), Joe Neguse (CO-02), Colin Allred (TX-32), Ilhan Omar (MN-08) and Jahanna Hayes (CT-02).

There will also likely be five new African-American full committee Chairmen and Chairwomen when the new Congress convenes in January.

Lauren Victoria Burke is an independent journalist and writer for NNPA as well as a political analyst and communications strategist. She may be contacted at [LBurke007@gmail.com](mailto:LBurke007@gmail.com) and on twitter at @LVBurke

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