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New Orleans

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Celebrations**

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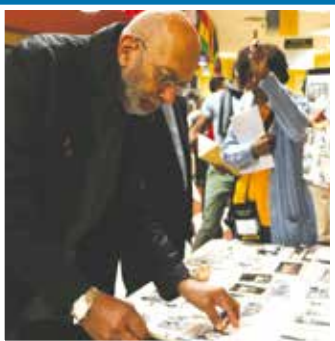
December 22 - December 28, 2018 53rd Year Volume 34 www.ladatanews.com

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The Gift of Organ Donation

More African-Americans Donors Needed to Close Transplant Racial Gap



One gift that could save lives is the act of becoming an organ donor Yet in the Black community, statistics show this is a gift that's high in demand, but rarely given.

By Amyre Brandom
Data News weekly Contributor

It's the time of year when every household fret about what gifts to give but sometimes the greatest gifts are selfless and free. One gift that could save lives is the act of becoming an organ donor. Yet in the Black community, statistics show this is a gift that's high in demand, but rarely given.

African-Americans make up the largest group of minorities in need of an organ transplant. In 2014, African-Americans comprised 12.7 percent of the na-

tional population. The number of organ transplants performed on Black Americans in 2015 was only 17 percent of the number of Black Americans currently waiting for a transplant, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health.

Believing the myths about organ donation is not the only reason why African-Americans choose not to donate, explained Sirdaria Williams, the Community Educator for the Louisiana Organ Procurement Agency. Africa- Americans do not register to become organ donors because they don't understand what it means

to be an organ donor and the process it entails. "I try to be as transparent as possible and answer any questions because I do find that for people that have been hesitant to say yes to donation is because they don't understand the process," Williams said. "I try to go through the process with them in terms of what that looks like." When speaking to the African-American community, those that believe in the myths of organ donation tend to share with LOPA Employees that their hesitation to donate is because they do not want their organs to only go to White Americans.

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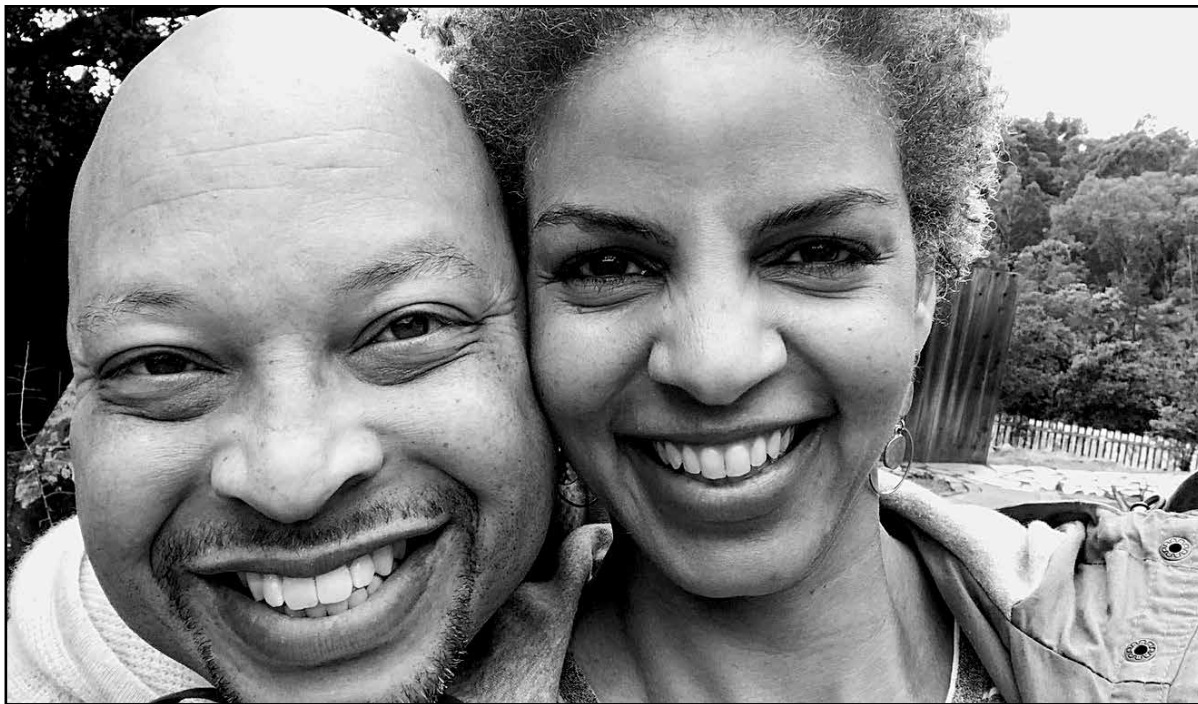
DATA NEWS WEEKLY

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Dr. Vanessa Grubbs was a primary care doctor when she met Robert Phillips. She says seeing how difficult life can be for people with Chronic Kidney Disease was part of what led her to further specialize in Nephrology. Dr. Vanessa Grubbs and Robert Phillips were married in August, 2005. Just a few months earlier, when his kidneys were failing, she gave him one of hers. (Photo Courtesy of Vanessa Grubbs)

"I go through the process of reminding them about United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS): the donation list depends on need [blood type, tissue type, medical urgency, waiting time, expected benefit, geography and other criteria] and taking the time to go through the process of what it takes to qualify to receive an organ," said Williams, who believes that educating African-Americans whenever she can is not just her job but her obligation.

Roderick McGee, a New Orleans native, was on dialysis for five years due to a seizure that sent him into renal failure in 1993. He was put on the transplant list and while waiting continued to ask God for strength. Little did he and his wife know, that he would be off of the waiting list soon. In July 1997, Roderick's brother-in-law died of an aneurism. They performed emergency surgery on his brother to reduce the swelling in his blood vessel, but he was pronounced brain dead two days later. A LOPA Staff Member approached Roderick and his family to ask for consent for organ donation. Still in shock, three hours later the family decided to allow their loved one's organs to be donated. Roderick's wife, Cheryl, approached the doctors to ask if her husband could receive one of her brother's kidneys since he was already on the transplant waiting list.

"What I did, but did not know it at the time, is called direct donation. They ran test and the next day we found out that my brother and husband were a match," said Cheryl McGee-Hills, a former Louisiana Organ Procurement Agency Volunteer and current LOPA Community Educator. Through organ donation, this family continued to grieve the



Bonita Brown (center) showing her donor son, Richardo "Buck" Brown's floragraph for the Donate Life America Tournament of Roses Parade Float. (photo courtesy of LOPA)

life of their loved as they allowed this loss to save someone else's life. "My husband received one of my brother's kidneys and four people in Louisiana, Mississippi, Georgia, and Florida received his other organs," McGee-Hills said.

Benefits of Becoming a Donor

Employees of organ procurement agencies are constantly told new myths from African-Americans about why they do not want to become an organ donor. "The concerns that comes up a lot are about open casket funerals, 'If I sign up to be an organ donor, will they save my life?', or - I just want to take all of my body parts with me," McGee Hills said.

Organ and tissue donation do not impact a family's decision whether to have an open or closed casket

funeral, experts said. Family advocates remind donor families that all incisions from donations are covered by their loved one's clothing. Whether the casket is partially or completely open, no one will know they were a donor unless a family member shares that information.

Once a donor is pronounced legally dead, the wishes of the deceased and their family are considered during the organ recovery process. "A dad and mom loss their son, they had a request that Amazing Grace be played during his tissue recovery while someone is holding his hand. Our family advocate recorded a video of their requests being met and sent it to the family," Williams said. Advocates, technicians, and community educators go out of their way to fulfill requests to ensure that a family never feels like their

decision to say yes is in vain.

Although the incidence of end-stage renal disease (ESRD) in African-Americans is four times greater than in their White counterparts, African-Americans remain less likely than Whites to be referred for, or undergo kidney transplantation, according to



country are all partners that act as an extension of a not-for-profit alliance known as Donate Life America. Within these agencies, the organs and tissues that can be donated are heart, kidneys, lungs, pancreas, liver, intestines, corneas, skin, tendons, bone, nerve and heart valves. "Only 2 percent to 3 percent of people qualify to be a donor. It is a very rare and unique opportunity, but most people do not qualify at their time of death to be a donor," Angel-LeBlanc said.

To sign up to become an organ donor can take place at a local Motor Vehicle Office or online at organdonor.gov. A red heart is placed on an individual's license



Bill Potter & his daughter's recipient. Potter's story went viral when he biked from Florida to Baton Rouge to meet him. (Photo courtesy of LOPA)

the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. African-American's statistically are afraid or distrustful of the medical community as a whole, Public Health Professionals note. Males in the African-American community are known for only going to the doctor when they are in unbearable pain, experts said. They do not make yearly or six-month checkup visits for doctors to monitor their health. In addition, research has shown that African-Americans have a history of being disproportionately diagnosed with high blood pressure and diabetes. It is common for African-Americans to use this as a reason not to become a donor. "African-Americans wait longer because we do not donate. [The odds are better for] African-Americans donating to African-Americans; we have that genetic makeup to make it easier. Almost perfect," McGee-Hills said.

The process and procedures that involve becoming a donor are different in every state. Organ Procurement Agencies across the

when it is renewed even though their name is already placed on a list with other donors.

Medical advances and groundbreaking laws continue to change organ donation, in even the most difficult cases. For instance, before November 2013, the development and publication of research criteria relating to transplantation of HIV Positive Organs into HIV Positive Individuals did not exist, according to the Department of Health and Human Services. Since then, the Hope Act, was recently changed in November 2015 to allow transplanting from HIV-Positive Donors into HIV-Positive Recipients.

According to Donate Life America, medical technology continues to advance more unique forms of transplants can take place than possible before. This means that the number of patients in need of organs will continue to surpass the number of donors. Up to 2,092 people are currently waiting for a life-saving organ transplants in Louisiana. "Why not make life happen if you can?" Williams said.

Bringing History Back

Rare Archived Photo Exhibit is a Trip Down Memory Lane

By La'Shance Perry
Data News Weekly
Contributor

The University Center was filled to capacity with alumni and students eager to participate in homecoming activities. Set up in the middle of all the commotion, Xavier University's library archives team had a rare treat. They displayed photos of unidentified individuals dating almost 30 years back.

This special collection consisted of images from photographers taken over the years, the earliest photograph in the collection dates back to 1921, and the collection has pre-Katrina images up until 2000. The first university photographer was Arthur P. Bedou and is best known for his work as a personal photographer to Booker T. Washington, where he documented campus life at the Tuskegee Institute. The collection currently contains 150 photographs of Bedou's and 400 photographs of his time at Xavier. The archives hold almost 8,000 photos in total.

The university's archive collection was founded in 1987 by Lester Sullivan who was the Senior Archivist at the Amistad Research Center and had come to Xavier's campus in search of sheet music written by a slave and published in New Orleans in the year of 1880. This was first time a slave had anything published in their name, and therefore had ownership of.

In 2017, Xavier University Associate Archivist, Irwin Lachoff, and Head of Collection Resources, Nancy Hampton, founded the Xavier University Archives Photographs Collection Exhibit. During the 2017 homecoming activities, this exhibit displayed photos collected over the years of unidentified people that had attended the university. Alumni that had attended were asked to identify peers from 30 to 40 photos over the course of two days. The projected amount of people they thought would be identified was 10 that year, more than 80 people had been identified.

"It turned out to be a great success," Lachoff said. "Everybody was very excited. Not only were the alumni excited about identifying their classmates, but, talking about



Alumni, family and friends work to identify individuals in the Xavier University Archives Photographs Collection during homecoming activities in November 2018. (Photos by La'Shance Perry)

them and reminiscing."

This year the exhibit continued and was called "Remembering and Reminiscing." The photos on display were of images taken 20 to 30 years ago. After studying these photos, Lachoff determined that the images were taken some time in the 60s or 70s based off the clothing and hairstyles in the photos. The images also depicted images of the football team Xavier University had until 1960.

"The photographs reflect Xavier at a simpler time. There are a lot of photographs of the barn or the gymnasium where a lot of basketball games, convocation, and graduation ceremonies took place. "The yard is larger, I think, years ago at Xavier. [Here] you can see, gatherings of groups like sororities and fraternities," said Nancy Hampton, Head of Collection Resources at Xavier's library.

This year over 100 alumni were identified from the photos displayed. Though alumni loved it, many felt that the exhibit should have more prominence in the events that showcase the institution's history and legacy. "[I believe] the exhibit should definitely be promoted via the channels homecoming events are promoted," said alumna, Risa Hall.

The archives have now started to digitalize their collection and

adding it to its website for the community to see. To date, 2400 photographs have already been added to the university library website, and about 50 percent of the collection has been arranged. In the future, current students will get to tell the story and moments that shape the history of the institution and the community.

"Keep track of what you're taking pictures of and who's in those pictures, and why that day was significant, why you took pictures on that day," Hampton said. "Everything is important. You don't have to wait for a time to pass to get the information about the history of that time. You can start now collecting the information about what you're doing and you're creating history and living through it now," she said.

Senator Troy Carter's "The Great District 7 Toy Giveaway" *Helps Children in Need*



Senator Troy Carter's "The Great District 7 Toy Giveaway" was held at Alice Harte Charter School on Saturday, December 15, 2018. The event aids underserved parents who need assistance with providing their chil-

dren with toys for Christmas and sharing holiday joy with those who very well may have nothing during this time of year. This event is one of Senator Carter's many community projects that are presented to the public free

of charge. The event was also sponsored by InspireNOLA Charter Schools, New Orleans-Baton Rouge Steamship Pilots Association, Concerned Citizens For A Better Algiers, and One Community Foundation.

Recovering Lost Stories

Discovering Family History Project Trains Residents to Uncover, Preserve their Traditions, Legacies.

By Piper Thurman
Data News Weekly
Contributor

The world may remember August 2005 like any other start of a new school year, a new job, or even the start of a new season. But New Orleans will forever remember that particular time of year because the city was hit with one of the most destructive and deadliest hurricanes the world had ever seen. Not only were lives lost but so was the history and heirlooms of families across the metro-area. Most reports cite more than 800,000 homes, the belongings that families owned and may have passed down for generations, were either lost or destroyed. A new collaboration of public and civic groups and individuals came together through the Discovering Family Histories: An Inter-Generational Project to equip ordinary residents with tools to ensure their family legacies withstand future disasters.

"In case New Orleans was to ever see another hurricane, we want to better educate people by showing them exactly how to preserve that family history," said Sister Bonnie Kearney, a member of the Religious of the Sacred Heart, whose society operates Duchesne House for Volunteers in the city.

Duchesne House partnered with the Community Book Center on Bayou Road, and the New Orleans Public Library to hold various Saturday workshops from Oct. 25th through Dec. 1st. The project began with a free screening of the feature film *Coco* on Oct. 25th, followed by an Opening Symposium on Oct. 27th. On Nov. 3rd, the project held a "How to do Ancestry Research" workshop, and on Nov. 10th a "Collecting Family Histories" workshop. The project ended with an "Archiving Family Histories" workshop on Dec. 1st and will hold a "Closing Block Party" on Bayou Road on Saturday, Jan. 12, 2019. These free workshops combined educated families on how to interview one another and handle artifacts passed down from one generation to the next.

"Being that our Catholic order had enslaved people, we started doing research to find out information about the descendants of those people," Kearney said, about what first started the interest to create the workshops.



Local Historian and Ancestry Scholar Freddi Evans leads the Collecting Family Histories workshop on Nov. 10, 2018 at the Sojourner Truth Center on Bayou Road as part of the Discovering Family Histories Project. (Photos by Piper Thurman)

The Sisters of the Religious of the Sacred Heart opened Duchesne House in 2007 to house high school and college students while they volunteered in rebuilding damaged houses from Katrina. During the process of gutting and clearing houses, Kearney noted the vast amount of families that lost photo albums, wedding dresses, and various important things that had been passed down for generations, with no way to get them back.

While performing various volunteer activities around the community at the time, the sisters met Vera-Warren Williams, the Co-Founder and Director of the Community Book Center. The two organizations decided to team up and secured a grant to fund the family history workshops.

Finding the Right Tools for Preserving Histories

Local historian, expert, author, and educator, Freddi Evans, trained local residents on Nov. 10th for the Collecting Family Histories workshop. Evans wanted local residents to know of other ways to get access to their family records. According to Evans, much of Black heritage and legacy goes with the deceased to the graveyard, because instead of asking questions and getting important information while family members are still around, African-Americans often do not ask or document anything at all within their families.

"African-Americans' most valu-

able family treasures are in the cemetery, because we don't dig deep enough while our family members are still here," she said. "The first step is to start conducting these interviews with our families now. Start asking them anything you're interested in and see how much you begin to learn about your lineage," Evans said.

Because she works as a Mitigation Specialist, as well as a Forensic Investigator, Jennifer Vitry was another local expert invited to talk to residents for the Nov. 10th workshop, and not only did she encourage them to ask questions, but she informed them on how to ask those questions, and how to properly examine family history.

"Sometimes I deal with people that aren't ready to talk about their

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Cocktails and Caroling

A Christmas Extravaganza

Data News Weekly Staff Report

On Friday, December 14, 2018, Tanda Armstrong and Lawrence Martin welcomed family and friends to their annual Christmas extravaganza at Stonebridge in Gretna. "Cocktails and Caroling" was the theme of the night. The guests were all dressed shiny and bright singing and dancing all through the night with DJ Mark Joseph spinning the tunes. Jingle bells, Deck the Halls, and We Wish You a Merry Christmas thrilled the neighbors at the sight!



King Zulu 2017 Adonis Expose's 20th Annual Birthday Celebration and Toy Drive

Data Staff Report

King Zulu 2017 Adonis C. Expose' held his 20th Annual Birthday Celebration & Toy Drive on Saturday, December 15, 2018 at the Roy E. Glapion, Jr. Reception Hall. Many guests attended this celebration with an unwrapped toy or bike in hand. The event was a success as over 250 toys and bicycles were collected and will be donated to Zulu's Toys for Tots. Over \$1600 was collected at the door and will be donated to Zulu's Toys for Tots as well.

The Toys for Tots giveaway will take place on Saturday, December 22nd at 8am at the Roy E. Glapion, Jr. Reception Hall, 730 North Broad Street. .



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To Be Equal

Incoming House Majority's Agenda Must Include the Main Street Marshall Plan



Marc Morial
President and CEO
National Urban League

"America is already a great country: our challenge is to make its greatness apply fairly and equitably to all of its people. As the only Member of elected Leadership from a red state and largely rural district, I will work tirelessly to be a voice for the millions of Americans who feel left out and communities that are too often left behind." – Newly-elected House Majority Whip Rep. James Clyburn

The pending Democratic takeover of the U.S. House of Representatives marks a major turning point, perhaps far more significant than most Americans realize. For the

last two years, the current Administration has careened, unchecked, through a series of misguided policy mishaps, from family separations at the border to emboldening white nationalists and neo-Nazis, and mangling the response to Hurricane Maria.

The Administration's signature achievement, a massive tax shift to benefit corporations and the wealthiest Americans, serves only to worsen income inequality and explode the federal deficit.

The clear mission of the incoming Congress is not only to put a halt to the Administration's misguided agenda but to advance an agenda aimed at reducing inequality, expanding opportunity and enforcing civil rights and racial justice.

An encouraging sign that the Democratic majority does intend to advance such an agenda was the unveiling of a legislative package – known as H.B. 1, to emphasize its importance – reforming the nation's political processes.

The bill includes new donor

disclosure requirements for political organizations, public financing for political campaigns, a mandatory Supreme Court ethical code, expansion of access to the polls and a reduction of partisan gerrymandering.

We believe H.B. 1 is a good start. Among the other issues the incoming House majority must address on Day 1 are: increasing the federal minimum wage and indexing it to inflation, strengthening and restoring the Affordable Care Act, a comprehensive and targeted infrastructure bill and protection for "Dreamers" – young immigrants covered by Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA).

The most significant and impactful initiatives the new House majority could adopt, which includes much of the above, can be found in the National Urban League's Main Street Marshall Plan, a comprehensive blueprint addressing lack of opportunity and economic inequality in America's urban communities.

Elements of the Main Street

Marshall Plan were introduced as part of a major legislative proposal introduced by members of the Congressional Black Caucus earlier this year.

The Congressional Black Caucus' Jobs and Justice Act includes Main Street Marshall Plan proposals addressing investment in public schools and infrastructure, a living wage for all Americans, restorative justice for ex-offenders, and tax incentives for hiring young people, veterans, and the unemployed.

It's significant that the incoming Congress is the most racially and culturally diverse in history, including first Native American congresswomen and the first Muslim congresswomen. The practical effect of such diversity is that Congress can more truly represent the interests of all its citizens – not just the wealthy, white men who still make up its largest contingent.

In an open letter to her colleagues, incoming Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi wrote, "It is my hope that as we deliver on our For

The People agenda – lower health costs, higher wages by rebuilding America and restoring integrity in government – we do so in a way that will address economic disparity in this Country. This Freshman Class has also made integrity in government its priority, supporting H.R. 1, in our Better Deal for Our Democracy. As Justice Brandeis said, 'We may have democracy, or we may have wealth concentrated in the hands of a few, but we can't have both.'"

We look forward to working with Rep. Pelosi and her colleagues on both sides of the aisle to restore integrity to government and create economic, educational and social opportunity for all Americans.

Marc H. Morial is President & CEO of the National Urban League, and former Mayor of the City of New Orleans. Connect with the National Urban League Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NationalUrbanLeague> - Twitter: <https://twitter.com/naturbanleague> - Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/naturbanleague> - Website: <https://www.NUL.org>

Will the 2019 Congress Put Housing First?



Andreanecia Morris
Executive Director,
HousingNOLA

New Orleans is facing an unprecedented housing crisis where half of its citizens housing is insecure and can't afford to live in the city. We have developed a strategy to address this crisis and create equitable systems that would ensure that there is always enough affordable housing. The 10-Year Housing-NOLA Strategy and Implementation Plan requires the support and

coordination of the government at every level. In the current political climate, we had little hope that the federal programs that are used to create and preserve affordable housing would be open to making the policy changes and financial investments necessary to align federal resources with the country's housing need.

On Monday, December 10th, Congressman Cedric Richmond introduced the American Housing and Economic Mobility Act, a bill originally introduced in the Senate by United States Senator Elizabeth Warren. The bill would create three million new housing units, improve access to affordable housing through anti-discrimination laws, and invest in families living in historically redlined communities. Independent analysis of the bill pre-

dicts that it will create 1.5 million jobs and bring rents down, on average, by 10 percent.

This bill aligns with Housing-NOLA's five major goals and takes a comprehensive approach to the housing crisis. It would increase affordable housing supply through a \$450 billion investment over a decade into the Housing Trust Fund to build or preserve rental units. The proposed legislation also strengthens the Fair Housing Act to ban discrimination on sexual orientation, marital status, gender identity, and income source. The bill also represents a chance to align local policy priorities with other needs and truly put housing first by incentivizing the implementation of strategies like the Smart Housing Mix. The country's racial wealth gap would be addressed with funds

to provide down payments to first-time home buyers.

Richmond was recently re-elected to the House of Representatives and his district includes most of New Orleans and parts of the River Parishes and Baton Rouge. With Democrats poised to take control of the House of Representatives following November's election, Richmond will join the Democrats' whip team, which is responsible for counting votes and shoring up support for the leadership's preferred legislation. Richmond will become assistant to the whip, a newly created position that's part of the Democratic Compromise to keep the current leadership intact while also opening up opportunities for younger members. This means that the American Housing and

Mobility Act will almost certainly be heard and debated—even if it doesn't become law. "The American Housing and Economic Mobility Act is a comprehensive bill aimed to combat the Affordable Housing Crisis that continues to plague our nation. Having stable, affordable housing is life changing and brings the promise of economic freedom to all. This legislation aims to provide that for millions of American families, namely African-American communities who have been historically and systematically left without stable housing," said Rep. Richmond. We are grateful that Rep. Richmond is working to bring the resources and enact the kind of policy change necessary to truly solve New Orleans crisis and Put Housing First.

Spiritually Speaking

Confidence Plus Discipline Equals Power



James A. Washington
NNPA News Wire
Columnist

I have two words for you today; confidence and discipline. Both of which, when viewed spiritually, exude Godly principles. Put this on the Holy Spirit, but discipline is an amazing thing. When applied to faith, be it natural or supernatural, the result is spiritual confidence. Spiritual confidence and discipline, without ego or arrogance, gives you an attitude of awareness and knowledge and dare I say power? The example I'd

like to use is of those saints in the Upper Room, when the Holy Spirit came upon them on the day of Pentecost and instilled everyone there with well, confidence and discipline. These people ultimately came to demonstrate a level of faith that was used via the power and grace of God to spread the Word of God all over the world. If you look at the before and after of this Pentecostal happening, you'll begin to see my point. Prior to this, the faithful were huddled in secrecy, being faithful to the belief that what Jesus had told them, was indeed true. God would send another. That 'Other' turned out to be the Holy Spirit, who imbued them with more of what they already had. Now their confidence in the truth of Jesus, coupled with their discipline to spread that word, manifested itself in their ability to communicate the gospel

to the world. The world has not been the same since.

The question then becomes, in what is your confidence and discipline based? Where do you get the necessary power to have your gifts fortified? Does your faith give you the strength to acquire the discipline necessary to know what you should be doing in the Lord's name and then do it? I believe the result is the power to know that you can do anything through Christ Jesus, provided you were called to do it. I also believe scripture illustrates to us that without spiritually based discipline, it is practically impossible to stand up to the trials and tribulations of life, but also impossible to withstand the temptations that seek to control our sometimes out of control behavior. The good news here is that wherever the Holy Spirit resides, change will

occur, the right kind of change. Of those anointed in the Upper Room, many were faced with the opportunity to make their lives easier, if they would simply maintain the secrecy of their faith. Spiritually based faith and confidence gave each the power to boldly speak the truth. Remember Peter denied Christ three times without confidence. Some would call that cowardice. After Pentecost, he was buoyed by confidence and discipline. Power is the Word that comes to mind here.

You remember Paul at Ephesus? "When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them and they spoke in tongues and prophesied." Acts 19:6. Here, these twelve men were already baptized but knew nothing of the Holy Spirit. After, we are told, they began to preach the gospel. Can't you see the power gained and their

growing confidence? There is nothing restrictive about this kind of discipline. It is in fact quite liberating. They knew that they knew the same way we know that we know. It's that change thing again. It's called being set apart and not having to apologize or keep it a secret. I believe it lets us stand up as Christians in the face of criticism, adversity and temptation. We may still fall, but we will not fail because our infrastructure has been fortified. Let me be clear. I believe that discipline coupled with confidence invites the Holy Spirit to take up permanent residence in your soul. It's what I'm looking for and what I'm praying for, for me and for you. And look out world when that happens. Like someone once said to me, I'm a different kind of soldier. Believe it or not, so are we.

May God bless and keep you always.

State & Local, Continued from page 5.

family history or their past, so it takes time," said Vitry. "A good interviewer is patient but also adamant, so with your family members or whoever you decide to interview or ask questions, be patient but never just give up on your question," Vitry said.

With the holidays around the corner, participants were asked to talk about who they think they

get their characteristics from and to create a page that represents themselves and their history. The organizers said that they eventually want to spread these kinds of workshop exercises to younger people in the community, because the next generation is the group that will be the gatekeepers of these family stories in New Orleans.

Along with learning how to better preserve history and conduct family interviews, participants

were also able to bond more with their own families, while feeling like they were learning things they didn't know. Mental Health Specialist Jinaki Flint expressed

the trauma she sees in her patients everyday due to identity issues and historical patterns throughout families.

The project aims to have the

workshops repeated with younger participants and that eventually they can host sessions at local colleges, universities, and high schools.

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City Encourages Residents to Recycle Christmas Trees for Coastal Restoration

NEW ORLEANS — Mayor LaToya Cantrell today reminded residents that the City will continue its program of recycling Christmas trees in an effort to promote the restoration of Louisiana's wetlands and to assist in the protection of the Louisiana coastline. Orleans Parish residents, eligible for collection by the City, are encouraged to recycle their Christmas trees by placing them curbside, before 5 a.m., on their regularly scheduled second collection day that occurs between Jan. 10-12, 2019, for properties served by Richard's Disposal and Metro Services. Properties in the French Quarter or DDD, served by Empire Services, should place their trees curbside before 4 a.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 9, 2019.

Only natural, unflocked trees that are free of all stands and trimming (all ornaments, tinsel, lights



and tree stands must be removed by the citizens) can be recycled.

Flocked, artificial trees, trees in bags or trees with trimming that

has not been removed will be collected with garbage and transport-

ed to the landfill. Trees are not to be placed on the neutral grounds, as this delays the collection process.

The City's Department of Sanitation along with its solid waste contractors Metro Services, Richard's Disposal and Empire Services; the City's Office of Resilience and Sustainability; and Leaaf Environmental are working together to collect, sort and bundle the trees, which will be placed in selected coastal zones.

This project is funded by the City's Office of Resilience and Sustainability. In 2018, more than 8,000 Christmas trees were collected in Orleans Parish after the holidays and airlifted by the Louisiana National Guard into the Bayou Sauvage National Wildlife Refuge as part of a program to create new marsh habitat.

Residents seeking more information should call NOLA 3-1-1.

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NAACP Poll Reveals How Black Voters Cast their Ballots

NNPA Newswire Staff Report

With voter fraud and voter suppression the talk of the midterms, the Advancement Project at the NAACP national office joined with the African American Research Collaborative to provide the first comprehensive analysis of how Black voters voted this cycle and why.

Released in November, the poll of mid-term voters, conducted by the African American Research Collaborative – in collaboration with Latino Decisions and Asian American Decisions – examined African American voters across various competitive elections to determine how this electorate engaged in 2018 and how those findings might shape the future of elections.

The key takeaway of this poll is clear: Democrats' 2018 wins across the country were dependent on voters of color, particularly Black voters, as a majority of white voters supported Republicans.

A whopping 90 percent of Black voters supported Democratic House candidates, compared to just 53 percent of all voters; 45 percent of white voters; 73 percent of Latinos; and 72 percent of Asian voters.

The midterms were a referendum on President Trump, NAACP officials said in a news release.

Black voters see the President and the current GOP as divisive, racist, and a step back for the nation.

Approximately 72 percent of Black voters believe the Democrats are doing a good job with regards to the Black constituency; but 21 percent feel the Democrats don't care too much about Blacks.

Only 12 percent of Black voters believe the Republicans are doing a good job with regards to the Black



constituency; and 55 percent feel the GOP doesn't care too much about Blacks.

Eighty-five percent of Black women and 81 percent of Black men have felt disrespected by Donald Trump.

Only 8 percent of Black voters believe Trump has a positive impact on Blacks, and 29 percent believe he has a negative impact.

Eighty-nine percent of Black women, 83 percent of Black men, and 50 percent of white voters believe Trump's statements and policies will cause a major setback for racial progress.

A total of 91 percent of Black women, 86 percent of Black men, and 50 percent of white voters believe Trump and the GOP are using toxic rhetoric to divide the nation.

The NAACP poll revealed that 82 percent of Black women, 76 percent of Black men, and 45 percent of white voters believe Trump and the Republicans are normalizing sexism and sexual harassment against women.

To have similar or greater wins in 2020, Democrats must invest in and engage communities of color

and the issues that matter most to these constituents.

Only 57 percent of Black voters were contacted from a campaign, political party, or community organization about voting in the months prior to Election Day.

Henry Fernandez, Principal, African American Research Collaborative, said, African American voters "are the backbone of the progressive vote in America and were essential to the blue wave that transformed American politics."

"In particular, Black women are a powerful political force with high turnout and unified vote choice that consistently and overwhelmingly supports progressive change," Fernandez said. He continued, "Black voters and other voters of color have reacted strongly against Trump but also against the Republican party as it embraces Trumpism. This was demonstrated in the 2018 midterms, as a majority of white voters supported Republican candidates, but Democrats won across the country as voters of color turned out in record numbers."

Further, the past mid-term elec-

tion cycle has shown the power of communities of color in particular, and their desire to engage when people think they are apathetic, said Judith Browne Dianis, the executive director of the Advancement Project at the NAACP's national office.

"People of color turned out and were engaged. Voters of color are poised to seize our power and Advancement Project's national office and our allies are readying for the next big thing – 2020 – to make sure our vote is protected; to ensure our elections are free, fair and accessible. This polling suggests that people want action, change as it relates to racial profiling, immigrant justice and, really, respect," Dianis said.

"The NAACP engaged in a national campaign targeting Black voters via cutting edge messaging, analysis and outreach utilizing the entire spectrum of traditional canvassing and phone banking to digital and text messaging platforms – this showed in the record number who made it to the polls.

"No longer can the Black vote be ignored or disrespected or taken for granted."

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Compensation is competitive and great story ideas will be appreciated.

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Finally, thank you to the people of New Orleans for your support of the 2018 commemoration.

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