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Regina King Talks About Beale Street

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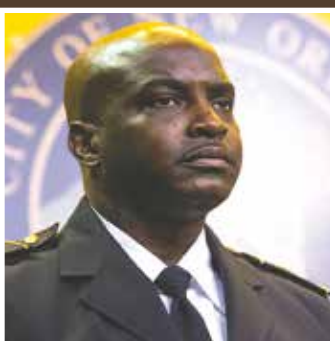
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A Data News Weekly Exclusive

Recalling Dr. King's Legacy in the Age of Trump

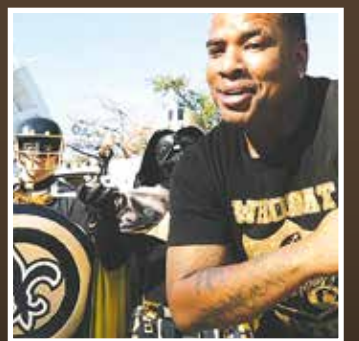
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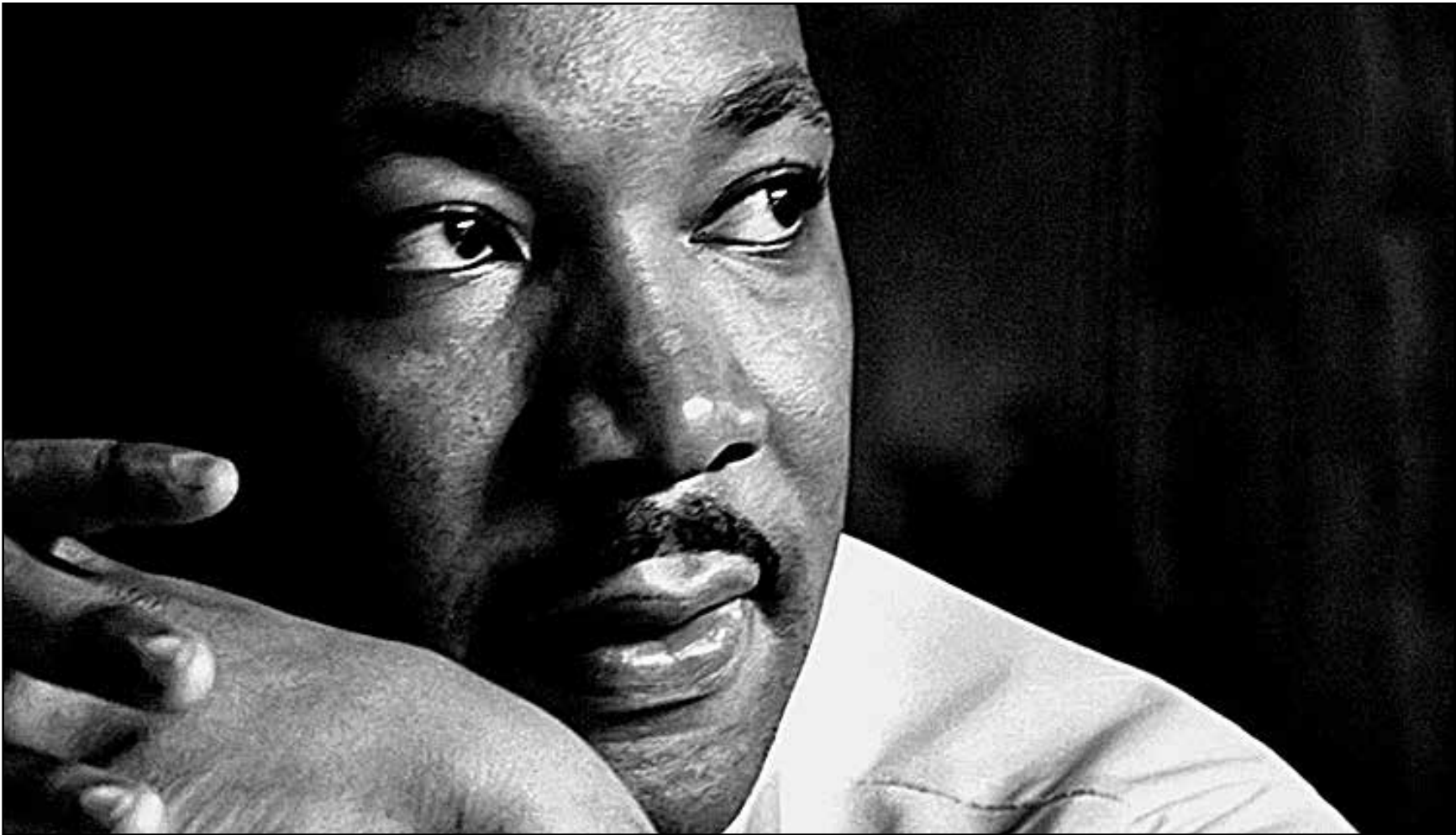
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Recalling Dr. King’s Legacy in the Age of Trump



The hate that is felt in America today is reminiscent of a time when America was divided racially, socially, culturally and economically between Blacks and Whites. Today that nightmare belongs to another class of brown minorities who strive to obtain the American Dream and the dream of Martin Luther King Jr.

By Dr. Sharlene Sinegal-DeCuir
Data News Weekly Contributor

Donald Trump has been president for approximately two years now. Within those two years the White House has endured controversy after controversy. It is almost as though we as Americans are becoming

numb to the outlandish things President Trump is doing with our nation. His promise to “Make America Great Again,” has done nothing of the sort. Instead, most Americans outside of his political base often agree that his policies and tactics are “Making America Hate Again.” The hate that is felt in America today is reminiscent of a time when America was divided

racially, socially, culturally and economically between Blacks and Whites. A time when Blacks were the stepchildren of America and the struggle to claim the American Dream was truly a nightmare. Today that nightmare belongs to another class of brown minorities who strive to obtain the American Dream and the dream of Martin Luther King Jr.

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What is stopping the dream of many Hispanic immigrants are the policies that Trump has adopted since being in office. He has made it increasingly hard for immigrants from certain parts of the world to legally enter into the United States, labeling them “undesirables.” President Trump fails to remember the history of this nation and the fact that the United States was created by undesirables and immigrants.

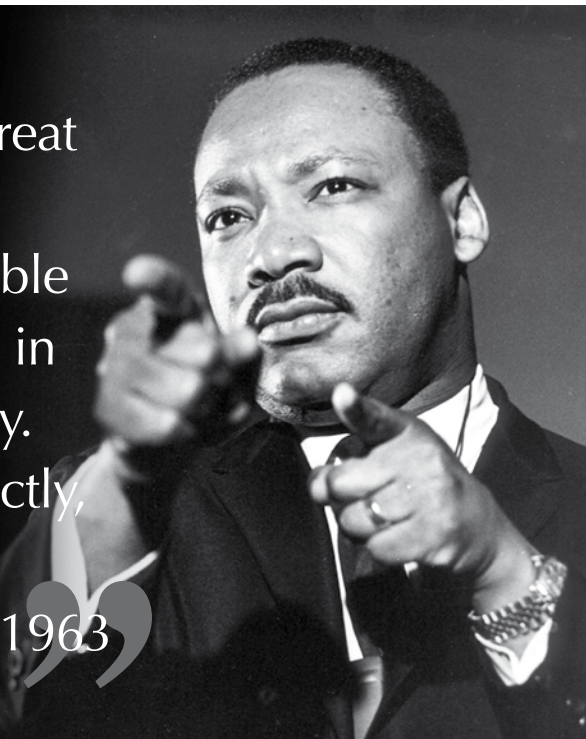
One of Trump’s biggest campaign promises to his political base is his vow to build a wall along the country’s southernmost border. And that promise is now at the center of the longest government shutdown in the history of our nation. We have heard the rhetoric that America is experiencing a humanitarian and national security crisis and that the wall will solve



these issues. But what is the wall really about? Here is what one of my students had to say, “My thoughts about the wall is that it is a physical representation of White Supremacy, to “keep out” people in pursuit of the American Dream. The promise of this wall being built was a part of Trump’s platform to appease the poor White working class, who are so ignorant about so many things... actually believing the coal industry is coming back and that the culprit of their demise is the immigrant.” Tiberni Hall, Xavier University of Louisiana.

President Trump would like Americans to think that all Hispanic immigrants are criminals who mean us harm. His use of scare tactics is dangerous, demining,

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere, we are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.”
— Martin Luther King Jr., 1963



One of Trump’s biggest campaign promises to his political base is his vow to build a wall along the country’s southernmost border. And that promise is now at the center of the longest government shutdown in the history of our nation.

and problematic. Many of the same scare tactics were used to dehumanize African-Americans during the Civil Rights Movement. African-Americans were seen as vagrants, rapist, criminals, and a threat to the “majority” way of life. As a result, many Black people lost their lives

and some families still suffer the legacy of that loss.

Sergio Vasquez, Assistant Program Director for Duchesne House for Volunteers, and resident of New Orleans who arrived in the United States 45 years after crossing the border at the age of 6 says, “that the

current administration’s attack on immigrants as a threat to American values is problematic at best and dehumanizing at worst. We crossed without incident and were reunited with our family on the other side of the San Diego border. None of us are rapists, drug dealers, murder-

ers or reprobates. My brother is now a sergeant in the Los Angeles Police Department, my sister an educational consultant, traveling around the country, and I have served as teacher and campus minister in Catholic schools.” Sergio and his family are examples of what immigrants strive to do in America. Most immigrants are not entering America to destroy it, they are entering America for opportunity. Opportunity to be educated, to live free of harm, and to make something of themselves, to be as Trump claims himself to be, “a self-made man.”

A 2004 graduation speech given by Trump at Wagner College in New York has surfaced on social media platforms, in which Trump tells the graduates, “Never give up, don’t allow it to happen, if there is a concrete wall in front of you, go through it, go over it, go around it, but get to the other side of that wall.” Surely these are words of hope and inspiration for anyone wanting to obtain the American Dream. So, will a wall stop immigrants? Will \$5.7 billion in tax money needed to build the wall help or hinder America, couldn’t we use those funds for a better cause. Here’s a thought, how about we invest that money back into the American economy, perhaps we pay our educators more or here’s a thought... increase minimum wage.

How can we keep Dr. King’s legacy alive today, according to Dr. Raphael Cassimere Jr., who served as the New Orleans NAACP Youth Council President during the Civil Rights Movement, “People of all races who believe in the ideas of the nation must continue to protest, organize, and fight again as we did decades earlier?” Dr. King’s legacy lives as his dream for America is renewed in this current national struggle.

Dr. Sharlene Sinegal-DeCuir is an Associate Professor of History at Xavier University of Louisiana, her areas of concentration are in American and African-American History with emphasis on the Civil Rights Movement.

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Mayor Cantrell Names Shaun Ferguson As New NOPD Superintendent

NEW ORLEANS — Today, Mayor LaToya Cantrell, joined by several public safety leaders, announced her selection for the new superintendent of the New Orleans Police Department: Commander Shaun Ferguson.

“I understand how consequential this decision is, and it’s probably the most important decision I will make as Mayor of the City of New Orleans, particularly at this time,” said Mayor Cantrell.

“Commander Ferguson is my choice to be the next Superintendent of the New Orleans Police Department. Commander Ferguson has the criteria that I’ve been looking for. I call it the three F’s: fair, firm and friendly. (He’s) known by our community with over 21 years of experience. We would not have made the strides we’ve made with the consent decree without Com-



Mayor Cantrell (C) introduces her choice for New Orleans Police Superintendent, Shaun Ferguson (L) also pictured (R) outgoing NOPD Superintendent, Michael Harrison, who retired from NOPD and has accepted a position as Police Superintendent of Baltimore, Maryland.

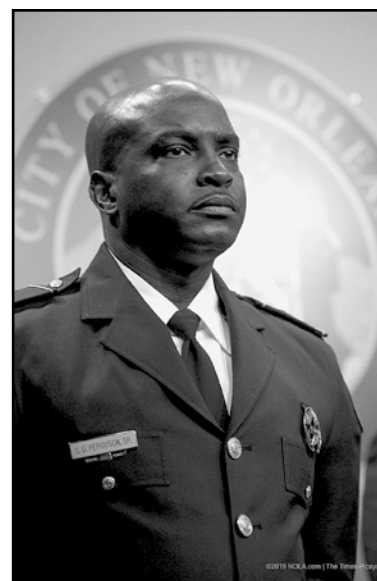
into the 21st Century.”

Ferguson, a 21-year veteran of the force, is currently serving as the Commander of the Educational and Training Division, which oversees the Police Academy. Prior to overseeing the academy and training the next generation of NOPD officers, Ferguson served for about three years as Commander of the department’s 2nd District before moving to the academy in the summer of 2018. Before his assignment in the 2nd District, Ferguson commanded NOPD’s 4th District.

“This is indeed an honor and privilege to be selected as the new Chief of the New Orleans Police Department,” said Commander Ferguson. “I have had many assignments in my 21 years with the NOPD to prepare me for this moment, and I would like to thank Mayor Cantrell for entrusting me with this opportunity. Together, we will work to build upon the successes the brave men and women of this department have been able to achieve as we strive to be the best police department in America.”

The New Orleans native was raised in the Lower Ninth Ward and moved to Algiers during his junior high school years. A graduate of O. Perry Walker High School in 1990, Ferguson joined the New Orleans Police Department in December 1998. During his tenure, he obtained a Bachelor’s Degree in Business Administration from Southern University of New Orleans, where he also received a Master’s Degree in Criminal Justice.

Ferguson will be sworn in Friday, Jan. 18th, in a public ceremony held at Gallier Hall. Details of the ceremony will be provided later this week.



New NOPD Superintendent Shaun Ferguson.

mander Ferguson modernizing the police department and bringing it

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Data News Weekly Newspaper, The People’s Paper, is hiring in our New Orleans Office.

Editor/Reporters

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Black and Gold and the Soul of New Orleans - Part 2

The Story Behind the Song Choppa Style

A Data News Exclusive with JMK the Producer of the Original Version

Edwin Buggage
Editor

New Orleans and Celebrating through Dance

As the Black and Gold continue their march toward the Super Bowl; the Who Dat Nation celebrates as only people in the Big Easy does. Throughout its storied history from Bamboula, Jazz to Second-Line and now Bounce, this city has always been one where dancing has been a prominent part of the culture.

Building on this tradition, this football season Choppa Style a nearly two-decade old song by Choppa has emerged as the unofficial Saints Anthem as players danced to it in the locker room after celebrating a victory. Since then, the video has gone viral and now Who Dat lovers everywhere are dancing to Choppa Style.

Because of this some have attempted to write about the song, its origins and the story behind its music and lyrics. While the attention is great, unfortunately, many have fallen short of getting to the essence of what is behind the music. In addition, pieces are inaccurate or missing.

The True Story Behind Choppa Style

To get to the truth behind the song, its origins and the music and culture of Bounce; Data News Weekly had the unique opportunity to speak to music Producer JMK (Kirk Edwards), who is the producer of the original version of Choppa Style released on local label Take Fo Records in 2001, before being released later on Master P's No Limit Records in 2003.

He is also the producer of Bounce classics "Walk Like Ronald" by Hot Boy Ronald and "Swing Yo Keys" by Kilo. On this night we meet at his studio, where we talk about a range of topics. That include Choppa Style, the Saints, the music business and the spirit of the people of New Orleans.

We begin by discussing the new attention to a song he originally produced 20 years ago becoming an unofficial anthem for the Black and Gold this season in their quest to get back to the Super Bowl. With the smile of a proud papa he says, "I like the attention getting. Even though a lot of people outside of the



As the Black and Gold continue their march toward the Super Bowl; the Who Dat Nation celebrates as only people in the Big Easy does. Throughout its storied history from Bamboula, Jazz to Second-Line and now Bounce, this city has always been one where dancing has been a prominent part of the culture. Choppa in front of Armstrong Park near Congo Square.

city are hearing the Master P version, which is a derivative of what I originally did."

Giving some background on how he met Choppa and how the song came to be he recalls, "I did the track in November of 2000. I was doing a DJ gig at a club and Choppa was performing and I saw something in him that I thought with the right material he could blow up. I liked him as an artist because he had a lot of energy. So, I told him I was going to go into the studio and do a track and come back to the club with the instrumental and the rest was history."

Tru Dat: Two Versions of Song

Those who are true NOLA folks know that there are two versions of the song. Most would say that the original JMK version is more organic and authentic to the Bounce music that gets the people on the dance floor. In New Orleans speak, it goes harder than the other version.

Speaking of the songs and how two versions came to be and how his stamp is on them he says, "In both versions the melody is mine, the bass notes, the trumpets those are all instruments I played, and they covered it."

Continuing he speaks on how the song came to have another version, "They only did that because the group that produced it Full Pack Music who are good friends of mine Fess and Don Juan, they

were signed to Master P on his production label at the time. They were out in Houston at the time they said they would re-do the song. They asked me what keyboard I used, and I told them a Kurzweil 2500 and they had a 2600, so they reproduced the song and made it what it was, but everybody in New Orleans like the original version. I guess maybe because it was the first one to come out and I had two versions of it a radio version and a club version. It really used to go hard in the club."

Possible New Music from Choppa and JMK

Since Choppa Style has been re-launched I asked JMK will there be any new music coming from him and Choppa and have people

State & Local, Continued on page 10.

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Master P Clarifies Comments on Parents of R. Kelly's Alleged Victims

Courtesy of XXL Magazine

Master P caught some flak for his remarks about the parents of the alleged victims who appeared in the Lifetime docuseries *Surviving R. Kelly*. In an Instagram video, the No Limit Records founder implied that the parents didn't do enough to help their children when Kelly allegedly abused them. Now he's stepped forth to clarify his comments.

On Wednesday (Jan. 9), Master P, along with his son Romeo Miller, appeared on the daytime talk show *The Real* and P elaborated on a point he made on Instagram a couple days ago. The rap vet wanted to make it specifically clear that he wasn't blaming the victims' parents, he was only explaining what he would do if he was ever put in that situation.

"I said me as a parent I would have kicked that door down, I'm not blaming [the parents]," he said. "Whatever justice that need to be done to R. Kelly, that



New Orleans' businessman Master P, recently addressed and clarified his comments regarding the explosive docuseries *"Surviving R. Kelly"*. Master P's original comments saw him speculate on how he would've handled things if his children were in the situation like the women in *Surviving R. Kelly* described.

need to get done. We love our beautiful black women that they went through this. We want justice for them."

Master P also blamed social media for twisting his words and not accepting the hard truth.

"Social media has a verse and people have opinions [but] they don't want to

deal with the truth," he said. "I'm putting in God's hands, I'm praying for [those] women whatever justice that needs to be served the system need to do that."

P's original comments saw him speculate as to how he would've handled things if his children were in the situation the women in *Sur-*

viving R. Kelly described.

"Ain't nobody gonna play with my kids," Master P said in the video that started this bit of controversy. "Straight up. You shouldn't have even been on TV, and if you a parent, you shouldn't be on that unless you on CNN from a jail cell. I don't know if R. Kelly did it or not, that ain't any of my business, I ain't judging, but I'm just saying those parents shouldn't have let that go that far. If you got love for your kids, you are going to war behind your kids. You ain't doing no reality show."

Master P is referring to the Clarys' situation in episode 6 of *Surviving R. Kelly*. The parents were outside of R. Kelly's Chicago studio banging on the door and throwing rocks at the window in an attempt to see their daughter, Azriel, who has been living with the singer. We must mentioned that the Clarys haven't seen their daughter in three years and they claimed that R. Kelly is allegedly prohibiting them from seeing her.

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Award-Winning Actress Regina King Opens Up About Sleeper Hit "If Beale Street Could Talk"

By Dr. Sybil C. Mitchell
The New Tri-State Defender

Regina King makes it easy to say "yes" to an assignment editor's request for a reporter to join in on a national conference call and listen to an actress talk about her role in a movie.

I had already sounded the "y" in my "yes" before the sentence conveying the opportunity was complete.

At 7 p.m. Central time last Wednesday, I was in full-listen mode as King – fresh from her Golden-Globe winning evening – talked about her role in "If Beale Street Could Talk" with more than a thousand faith leaders, community activists, sororities and fraternities and African-American news outlets on the line.

She was candid from the jump.

"James Baldwin's book with the same title is a powerful meditation on love," King said. "It talks about what love really is. Baldwin gives literary voice to the blues. This movie is important because we actually see ourselves on the screen. It is important to tell our stories, to keep telling our stories."

One key story King is telling is this: Go the see the movie; help get the word out! Let people know that there is a powerful film out about a "black family in the early '70s" and how they manage to get through the challenges of life in a world of institutions that are systemically and historically racist. It resonates with themes of family, love and justice.

"Beale Street" made its American debut on December 14 in – get this – just four theatres. That's right, four. All four, however, were overrun with sold-out



KiKi Layne and Stephan James in *If Beale Street Could Talk*. Photo: Tatum Mangus / Annapurna Picture/Tatum Mangus/Annapurna Pictures

audiences, lines wrapped around the block, people seeing it for the first time, fans coming to watch for the fifth time.

It's the little movie that could.

"No one in Hollywood can say that there is no audience for movies like this that tells our stories," said King. "We want to see ourselves. We want to see our stories. Our children want to see their stories. My son told me it was the first time he had seen himself on the screen."

Hundreds of Facebook posts, tweets on Twitter and other social media messages lit up cyberspace during the call as people live-streamed King's interview and reported that they had already seen "Beale Street" multiple times.

King portrays Sharon Rivers, Ernestine and Tish's mother and Joseph's wife. The facts of her own journey suggests that King has been preparing for the role all of her life.

"I am a mother, and I have an amazing mother and grandmother who pushed my sister and I to dream big,"



Regina King stars as Sharon in *Barry Jenkins' IF BEALE STREET COULD TALK* (Annapurna Pictures)

she said. "They understood the spirit that was in us at an early age."

Director Barry Jenkins adapted a screenplay from Baldwin's book and then set course for a movie on the big screen. Produced by Plan B Entertainment, the film made its world premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival on September 9, 2018.

King racked up a Golden Globe

award as "The Best Supporting Actress." In her acceptance, she thanked Jenkins for telling the poignant story. She vowed as a producer and director, herself, to make sure all her future projects involve at least 50 percent women.

The tone for the movie was set at the top, King said on the call.

"Barry from the very beginning created a loving and trusting environment. From that day when the cast first met, we fell into our roles. It was like our roles chose us.

"And shooting that scene around Beale Street, when we took breaks, we didn't go back to our rooms. We went upstairs in the brownstone and just talked and shared our stories. You will see real relationship in our performances."

Sharon and Joseph Rivers create a loving, nurturing household, King said.

"You see the love on screen between a black father and his daughter. We see a young man who so gently and tenderly loves this young woman. The take-away is that throughout the years, we are reminded that it has been our love for one another that has gotten us through."

April Reign, the activist who started "#OscarsSoWhite," also praised the film on the 45-minute conference call.

"This movie is fierce, tender and unapologetically black," said Reign. "It is a portrait of every strong mother we have known. Let's encourage everyone to go and see 'Beale Street.'"

"But once you see it, you'll come running back for more. Get lost in the magic that is James Baldwin brought to life by Barry Jenkins."

For those on the conference call, the resolve was this: "Let's build a movement around 'Beale Street.'"

2019 MLK Day celebration events: "Remember, celebrate, Act"

The remaining celebration events are as follows:

Thursday, January 17

New Orleans Public Library Celebration
10:30 a.m. at East New Orleans Regional Library, 5641 Read Blvd.

United Teachers of New Orleans Choral Concert
6:00 p.m. at McDonough 35 Preparatory High School, 4000 Cadillac St.

Saturday, January 19

Rev. Avery C. Alexander Social Action Forum
10:00 a.m. at Dryades YMCA, 2220 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd

Day of Service
10:00 a.m. at Bayou Bienvenue Wetland Triangle Lower 9th Ward Observation Deck, 2667 Caffin Ave. Register here.

National Conference of Artists 21st MLK Exhibitions
12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at McKenna Museum of African American Art, 2300 Carondelet St.

New Orleans MLK Student Art Exhibition
12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Rosa Keller Library Gallery, 4300 S. Broad St.

Stella Jones Gallery
12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at 201 St. Charles Ave.

Ashe Cultural Arts Center Powerhouse
4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at 1712 Oretha C. Haley Blvd.

Monday, January 21

Opening Program
9:00 a.m. at New Orleans Jazz Market.
Speaker: The Honorable Marc H. Morial, President and CEO of the National Urban League

Official March
10:00 a.m. beginning at Oretha Castle Haley Blvd. and ending at A.L. Davis Park

"Remember, Celebrate, Act" MLK Day of Play
beginning after march and lasting until 3:00 p.m. at A.L. Davis Park

Short-Term Rentals Can Help with Affordable Housing Crisis—If We Can Find the Right Mix



Andreanecia Morris
Executive Director,
HousingNOLA

On Thursday, January 10, 2019, the New Orleans City Council unanimously voted to direct the City Planning Commission (CPC) to draft changes that would revise the current short-term rental policies and generate millions to create Affordable Housing. Responding to evidence that the short-term rental explosion has played a role in the

Affordable Housing Crisis that has been festering since Hurricane Katrina, the council continues to move in a direction to revamp the policies created in 2016. Long before Airbnb and other Web-based platforms were available, New Orleanians were renting out their homes during major events. Given that history, the City Council is now proposing a series of changes that would meet the needs of the majority of New Orleanians—most of whom are cost burdened and paying more than they can afford on their housing.

However, there is still much that must be decided in the coming months and the council will have ample opportunity to clarify their final position. Only three things were clearly established last week:

1) property owners with homestead exemptions will continue to be able rent out their home or units on their property; 2) the City Council intends to generate at least \$20 million in new revenue for Affordable Housing annually from an assortment of new fees and 3) the city can and will access untapped millions to create an enforcement system to implement their new short-term rental plan. The issues that are still undefined will be studied by the CPC. We will once again have to debate a proposed cap and matching Affordable Housing requirement in commercial areas and we can expect heated discussions around enforcement guidelines that address the prohibition of collecting fees from unlicensed

STRs to increased data sharing.

Even if short-term rentals were completely eliminated from the New Orleans' housing market, residents would still face a housing affordability crisis. If the City Council stands firm and makes the proposed and necessary changes to properly regulate short-term rentals it will be a needed first step. Alone however, it will not fix these problems for New Orleanians – instead, it will ensure that a bad situation doesn't get worse. It still falls to our leaders to, in addition to finalizing the changes to short-term rental regulations, implement policy solutions designed to create the right housing mix. These solutions include: 1) full implementation of the Smart Housing Mix; 2) creating

policies to ensure rentals meet basic health and safety standards; and 3) facilitating transit-oriented development in areas with strong public transit access.

This is an opportunity to continue to work towards solutions that benefit all New Orleanians, and we must encourage our elected officials to #PutHousingFirst when making these decisions. In the coming months, Mayor Cantrell and City Council will have chance after chance to devote the resources and attention necessary to implement solutions for long-term residents who have seen their housing become less affordable and have been pushed out of their neighborhoods. We have to be vigilant to ensure that they take them.

Remembering Dr. King and “The Other America”



Charlene Crowell
NNPA Newswire Columnist

Once again on the third Monday in January, much of the nation will mark the anniversary of the death of the late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Countless programs and events will no doubt recall several of his famous speeches from the 1963 March on Washington's “I Have A Dream” to his “I've Been to the Mountaintop” delivered in Memphis during the 1968 sanitation workers' strike.

In a life of only 39 years, Dr. King captured global attention in his valiant, nonviolent fight for the values of freedom, justice and equality. Preaching and fighting for long overdue citizenship rights first promised to all in the Declaration of Independence, he championed economic justice – especially for Blacks to have safe, decent, and affordable housing. He also called for full participation in the economy, and an end to financial exploitation.

Now 51 years since his assassination, his words still strike a resonant chord. His words — written as prose but markedly poetic — re-

main as timely as they are timeless.

“There are so many problems facing our nation and our world, that one could just take off anywhere,” Dr. King said in a speech delivered on April 14, 1967 at Stanford University.

Entitled, “The Other America” Dr. King began by recapping the nation's bounty and beauty, noting how “America is overflowing with the milk of prosperity and the honey of opportunity”, and how “millions of young people grow up in the sunlight of opportunity”.

For his audience, those comments almost certainly reflected the lifestyles of the students attending one of the nation's elite educational institutions.

In his inimitable Baptist cadence, Dr. King then went on to speak of the “Other America” that was equally real but far removed from the commonplace privilege associated with Stanford.

“Little children in this other America are forced to grow up with clouds of inferiority forming every day in their little mental skies. As we look at this other America, we see it as an arena of blasted hopes and shattered dreams,” said Dr. King. “It's more difficult today because we are struggling for genuine equality. It's much easier to integrate a lunch counter than it is to guarantee a livable income and a good solid job. It's much easier to guarantee the right to vote than it is to guarantee the right to live in sani-

tary, decent housing conditions.”

In 2019 the two Americas Dr. King wrote about still remain. A na-

the same levels experienced at the time of the 1968 Fair Housing Act's passage.

“Pull Quote “Little children in this other America are forced to grow up with clouds of inferiority forming every day in their little mental skies. As we look at this other America, we see it as an arena of blasted hopes and shattered dreams,” said Dr. King...”

tion once lauded for its enviable and expanding middle class has evolved into a nation of people who are either growing wealthy or growing poor. In this unfortunate process, the nation's envied middle class is vanishing.

Historically, homeownership has been a reliable measure of the nation's middle class. Late last year it stood at 64.4 according to the Census Bureau. Yet when race and ethnicity are added who owns a home today discloses a far different picture. White homeownership was higher than the national average at 73.1 percent.

But Blacks still-suffering from the financial losses from the now decade-old foreclosure crisis had a homeownership rate of 41.7 percent, lower than its pre-housing crisis rate of 47.7 percent. Today's Black homeownership resembles

Housing also remains troubled for renters as well. According to the National Low-Income Housing Coalition, the nation lacks more than 7 million affordable rental homes that affect 43.8 million families. Moreover, 11 million families pay more than half of their income on housing and are considered severely-cost burdened.

As of January 3, over 1,100 HUD contracts with landlords for its Section 8 rental voucher program expired. By February, another 1,000 more contracts are expected to expire. At press time, the stalemated federal government shutdown continued, leaving millions of people uncertain about their lives, or livelihoods or both. While landlords and HUD figure out the paperwork, 1.2 million families relying on this vital rental support program remain at risk.

Also caught in partisan bickering

of a federal government shutdown are men and women – the military and civil servants – whose service to the country is deemed so essential that they must continue to work without knowing when another paycheck will arrive. Another 800,000 furloughed federal workers may be at home; but like others affected by the shutdown, they too still need to pay their rent or mortgage, honor their financial obligations and take care of children as best they can.

Those who are unpaid or underemployed – those who are working but failing to earn a salary comparable to their education and training, student loan repayments can take a financial backseat to housing, utilities, or other daily living needs.

At press deadline, the federal shutdown was approaching the 1995 shutdown record of 21 days.

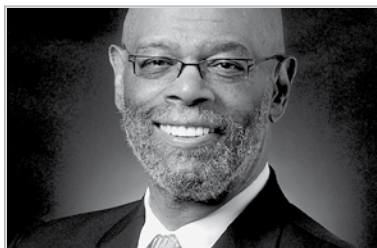
In 1967 Dr. King advised his Stanford University audience, “Somewhere we must come to see that social progress never rolls in on the wheels of inevitability. It comes through the tireless efforts and the persistent work of dedicated individuals.... And so, we must help time, and we must realize that the time is always right to do right.”

This year, may we all honor Dr. King and do our respective efforts to make America live up to its promise of opportunity for all.

Charlene Crowell is the Center for Responsible Lending's Communications Deputy Director. She can be reached at Charlene.crowell@responsiblelending.org.

Spiritually Speaking

Faith Tested is Real or Maybe Not



James A. Washington
NNPA News Wire
Columnist

With the world in such a tumultuous state, you could say that this is when faith can and is tested. For some, tragic world events just might make you question the existence of the God we profess to believe in. I have to often remind myself that most of what happens

to me is a direct result of my doing, the choices I've made, the lack of having God internalized and called upon throughout my decision making process. In not doing so, a lot of the goings on in this world get simplistically reduced to what I call the view from a religious perspective. I mean think about it. Most of today's tension and conflict get interpreted at a very base level in terms of radical religious behavior in the name of one God or another. News media at times tend to minimize, if not ignore, this and explain it in terms of territorial disputes, political power grabs, oil, and in some cases money and greed. But those who die in these conflicts are usually killed by someone of a different faith.

That faith, or lack thereof, sanction so called terrorist attacks, suicide bombers and of course righteous retaliation. The God Christians serve merely has a very different point of view and thereby dictates a different course of action for us. Jesus teaches peace, love and understanding and yes, I do know how trite and contrived that sounds. But the Man was killed for living a life predicated on love for fellow human beings and a definite intolerance of institutionalized persecution and oppression, particularly by the church, His.

We all know the source of His strength in the midst of what He faced. I guess my question to you is what is the source of your faith

in the midst of what the world is facing with you and me in it? That is not a rhetorical question. I find myself in prayer asking God to give me the wisdom to learn from whatever the experience is that I'm going through, good or bad. Likewise I'm also praying for the wisdom to understand what in the world is going on in the world in which we live. The end result is usually the same. I ultimately have to put all things in the Lord's hands. Faith demands that I do. His Divine Will certainly supersedes my secular understanding and that is as it should be. I must admit to you though, that I do, at times, think that man has forced these issues and situations for the same reasons that I find myself

feeling like I'm going through hell on some things; a lack of having the one true God imbedded in the decision making process. When that happens, peace (peace of mind in my case) prevails because the outcome is known. I win based on my faith in and acceptance of Jesus as Lord and all that brings with it. The world could use some rigorous training in this. When it doesn't happen, chaos reigns. Because in the end, I know what the outcome is going to be. God wins which means I win. Those who believe in Him will also be victorious. Simply put you win too. Think about it and you'll know where your faith is. May God bless and keep you always.

100 Black Men Hosts 4th Annual Resource Fair



Growing Healthy, Wealthy and Wise, event to celebrate New Orleans' culture and Mardi Gras traditions to be held on MLK Weekend.

You are cordially invited to join the 100 Black Men of Metro New Orleans for one of the biggest resource fairs in New Orleans promoting education, literacy, economic empowerment

and health and wellness.

The event will take place Saturday, January 19, 2019 from 10:00 am to 3:00 p.m. at Capdau Charter School, located in the Gentilly Neighborhood.

Our 2019 event theme celebrates the rich history of New Orleans Culture and the Mardi Gras Traditions during the weekend we honor Dr. Martin Luther King's Legacy.

Featured workshops from STEM NOLA, The US Army, and Enroll NOLA and much more. For more information and a full schedule of events, visit www.100blackmennola.org.



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State & Local, Continued from page 5.



Saints Players Michael Thomas, Mark Ingram and Alvin Kamara celebrate on sideline doing the Choppa Style.

reached out to them. Slightly swiveling his chair as to face his recording console he says, "I have a couple of tracks in the computer for him, but his direction with financing on a label he was once with Take Fo; he

is in talks with them and also a representative from Master P called me and talked about it. There was also talk about DJ Black and Mild being involved in a collabo between me and him."

leans Bounce on the map.

As one of the pioneering producers of the genre he says of its evolution, "I am humbled and grateful and there are a lot of good producers doing bounce." Distinguishing himself from them he remarks, "I think I am different in some ways because I make nationwide club music. Songs that can go anywhere. To have the New Orleans stamp, but still be different. I think that is one of the reasons 'Choppa Style' stood out."

Bouncing to the Bank and Business Basics

In the music business many often forget the 90 percent part of it that is business. There are so many stories of artist who had hit records and may have made money in the industry who find themselves broke because of poor business moves and financial decisions.

JMK is not one of them; he says of how he structured his deal with "Choppa Style," "Take Fo Records stated if the song secured a na-

Bounce Music Breaking New Ground

In addition to creating music JMK is involved in other business ventures including shooting videos, making films and bringing Bounce Music to new audiences and cementing its social and historical significance. "I just came back doing some work with Legendary Bounce Artist Ricky B for a festival called the Richmond Folk Fest, we are the first rap group to be at that festival and because of that we are going to in the Library of Congress and also in the Guinness Book of World Records for that."

Who Dat, Saints Pride and Being 5-0-4-ever

Just like many, JMK, is a proud New Orleanian and a Saints Fan. He believes as many does and is excited about the possibility of a Super Bowl Victory and what it could do for the city. While also noting the creativity and the spirit of resiliency is what makes the



JMK, the Producer of the Original version of Choppa Style in the studio with Data News Weekly Editor Edwin Buggage.



Just like many, JMK, is a proud New Orleanian and a Saints Fan. Speaking of the new interest in the song he created nearly two decades ago he says, "I am honored to be part of the tradition of making people dance and seeing a song I help create 'Choppa Style' come to mean so much to the people of our City."

New Orleans Music and its Nationwide Impact

Bounce music elements have shown up in many hits by national artist, most notably Beyonce', who have incorporated elements of New Orleans music and dancing throughout her career. Pop artist Miley Cyrus Twerking and Drake, who is signed to Cash Money/Young Money records owned by New Orleans natives Bryan "Birdman" Williams and brother Ronald "Slim" Williams borrowing elements of New Orleans music and dance.

And one who is making a major impact is New Orleans native, Queen Diva Big Freedia, who has a reality show and music is blowing up is putting New Or-

leans Bounce on the map. tional deal, I would get 30 percent of whatever was made off it. They did a joint release with Master P and Universal records, so my publishing checks were coming from Japan, Romania, the UK, because Master P was able to put the song out there worldwide. In the recording industry it is about publishing and keeping money coming in and that is where the longevity is in terms of making money in the music industry. So, I am glad there is a renewed interest in music I made with Choppa to continue to monetize something I created."

city and its people special. "You have to be a survivor to be here and that was before Katrina. And there is a pride that comes with being from New Orleans in all that we do and how we live life. In spite of the problems we sometimes have we find ways to enjoy life. And that is why dancing is such a part of who we are and have been throughout our history. I am honored to be part of that tradition by making people dance to many of the songs I have created and seeing 'Choppa Style' come to mean so much to the people of our City."

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Data News Weekly

Soar Like an Eagle

12 African-American Teens Reach the Pinnacle of Success in The Boy Scouts

By Jeffrey L. Boney
NNPA Newswire Contributor

Here in the United States, the Boy Scouts of America is considered to be one of the most revered institutions for the development of young boys.

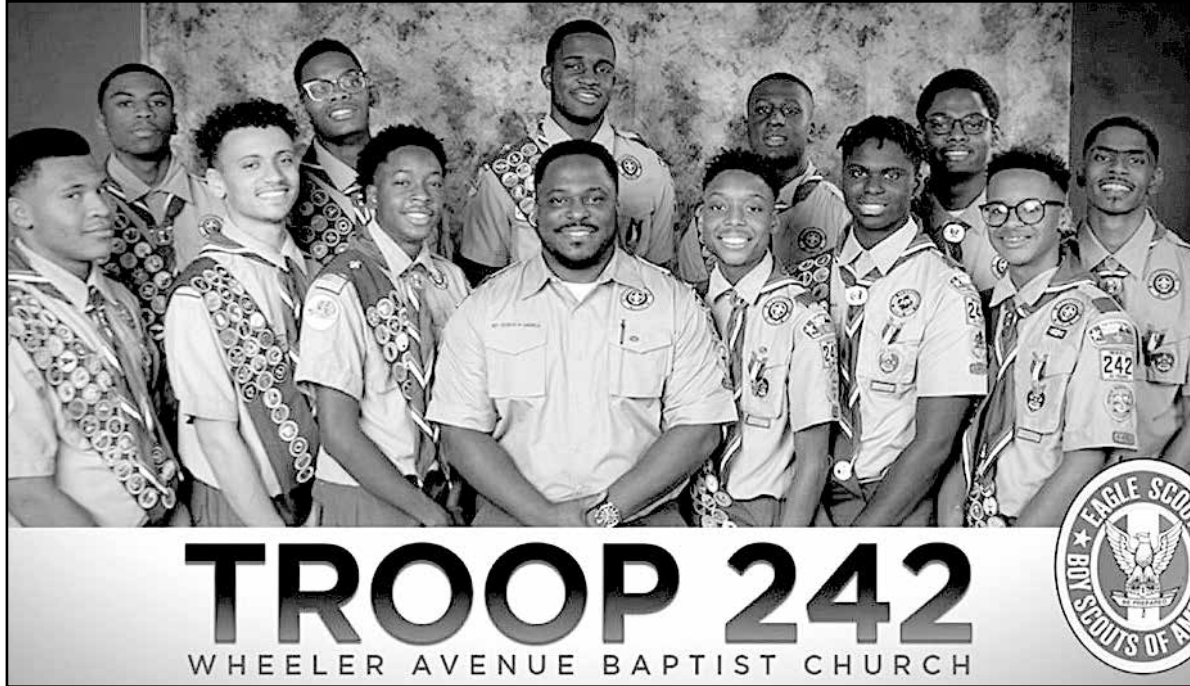
In the Boy Scouts of America, the highest achievement or rank that one can attain is the designation of Eagle Scout and reaching that accomplishment is not an easy task.

The Eagle Scout designation is highly respected because only 4 percent of all Boy Scouts are ever granted this prestigious rank after fulfilling the many years of requirements that must be achieved. On Saturday, January 5th, twelve African-American young men reached the ultimate milestone of being awarded the Eagle Scout distinction.

Shane Bennett, Dameion Crook II, Dylan Gaines, Kyle Gaines, Chandler Green, Daniel Hinton, Marshall Hudson, Marcellus Jordan III, Eron Lord, Eric Sims, Asa Singleton and Benjamin White are all a part of Boy Scout Troop 242, a historic troop located at Wheeler Ave Baptist Church.

Boy Scout Troop 242, led by Scoutmaster Dameion Crook, Sr., presented the 12 African-American Eagle Scouts during the Eagle Court of Honor ceremony that was held at Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church. His son was one of the newest Eagle Scouts, which is the cherry on the top of Scoutmaster Crook's two years leading Boy Scout Troop 242.

"This event marks a tremendous milestone in the history of our troop," said Scoutmaster Crook.



Boy Scout Troop 242, led by Scoutmaster Dameion Crook, Sr., presented the 12 African-American Eagle Scouts during the Eagle Court of Honor ceremony that was held at Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church. His son was one of the newest Eagle Scouts, which is the cherry on the top of Scoutmaster Crook's two years leading Boy Scout Troop 242.

"We have a long tradition of creating Eagle Scouts and to have these 12 young men complete the Boy Scouts of America program is a testament to our legacy and our scouting program."

Twelve Eagles at one time is pretty much unheard of for any troop and definitely for an African-American troop like Troop 242. All 12 of these young men have had their "eye on Eagle" through years of hard work, fulfilling their obligations with more than just the minimum obligations required for the honor to be called an Eagle Scout.

This group of talented young men not only achieved the rank of Eagle Scout, they did so in historic and memorable fashion.

The Boy Scouts requires a mini-

mum of 21 merit badges, but most of these Eagles have more than 30 merit badges. Only through planning and carrying out a community service project, coupled with demonstrated leadership in and out of the Troop, can a scout who lives the scout oath be considered for an Eagle Board of Review that consists of the District and Council representatives from the Boy Scouts. All of these things must be done before the Scout turns 18.

Although the average age for attaining the rank is 17.5 years old, at least five (5) of these new Eagle Scouts fulfilled the commitment before turning 16.

These young men have gone beyond their Troop and have represented scouting locally, regionally, nationally and internationally

in various endeavors such as Order of the Arrow (scouting's Honor Society), National Youth Leadership Training (premier leadership training for Scouts), participating in the Philmont Trek, representing Troop 242 in Switzerland, etc.

Often overlooked by families seeking to engage their sons in meaningful, positive activities, the Boy Scouts have proven to be an old, but tried and true method that has not lost its effectiveness. These twelve young men have taken full advantage of all that the scouting world has to offer.

Troop 242 and the parents of these young men should be extremely proud of their accomplishments and dedication. We look forward to all they will achieve in the future.

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Job Opportunity

Freelance Writers Wanted

Data News Weekly, "The People's Paper," is looking for freelance writers to join our team print and digital team. We want to hear from you if you are a working journalist, or an aspiring journalist who has 2 years or more of newspaper or PR writing experience. We need writers who can cover New Orleans news stories, ranging from local high school sports, community events, City Hall and entertainment. Experience in print is necessary, experience in digital and social media are encouraged.

Compensation is competitive and great story ideas will be appreciated.

If you are interested, please email your resume and 3 writing samples to: terrybjones@bellsouth.net and datanewseditor@bellsouth.net.

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A young woman with dark hair, wearing a black graduation cap with a gold tassel and a blue graduation gown, is smiling and hugging someone. Her eyes are closed, and she has a joyful expression. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be an indoor setting with other people.

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DIDN’T
DO IT
ALONE.”**

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