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June 1 - June 7, 2019 54th Year Volume 5 www.ladatanews.com

A Data News Weekly Exclusive

EATING BLACK IN NEW ORLEANS

A Data News Weekly Series Highlighting Black-Owned Restaurants



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Eating Black in New Orleans

*A Data News Weekly Series Highlighting
Black-Owned Restaurants*



Jessica and Alonzo Knox (Owners of Backatown Coffee)

By Renetta Burrell Perry

The legacy of Black-owned restaurants in New Orleans runs as deep as the muddy waters in the Mississippi River. From staples like the historic and internationally famous Dooky Chase’s to the newer, but none-the-less palatably phenomenal Neyow’s, people

all over the world flock to The Big Easy to not only to ease their cares, but to fill their stomachs. This sentiment was amusingly echoed in President Barack Obama’s 10th-Year Katrina Anniversary speech here in 2015 as he noted the decadence of our cuisine: “As soon as I land in New Orleans, the first thing I do is get hungry,” he said, jokingly adding, “When I was here

with the family a few years ago, I had a shrimp po-boy at Parkway Bakery and Tavern. I still remember it—that’s how good it was.” During Black Restaurant Week (May 19 - May 31) and over the next several weeks as we enter vacation season, bringing thousands of tourists to New Orleans, Data News Weekly will highlight some of

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Erica Dourousseau, Founder, Eat NOLA Noir.



Chef Blake Cressey (Owner of Tasty Treat Restaurant)

what makes New Orleans Cuisine so good— keeping laser focus on Black-owned restaurants.

From U.S. Presidents (both Barack Obama and George W. Bush have had the pleasure of dining at Dooky Chase's and both have publicly raved over the food) to celebrities and Food Network stars, the reputation for good food is undisputed here. But Black-owned restaurants in New Orleans, though lauded for their cuisine, still face the same disparities as many other Black-owned businesses. Data News Weekly caught up with Erica Dourousseau of Eat NOLA Noir (eatnolanoir.com) for a quick Q&A regarding the importance of Black Restaurant Week and she noted that the lack of good food is not the drawback to business success, however the lack of resources and exposure create major issues.

Data News Weekly: Each year during the month of September there's New Orleans Restaurant Week which links restaurants and the public through marketing, events and travel packages. Why was it so important for Eat NOLA Noir to create and bring into fruition Black Restaurant Week?

Erica Dourousseau: "Eat NOLA Noir - Black Restaurant Week is important because we've made so many contributions to the food experience in New Orleans, and we still are. Our impact on the food industry here is tremendous and highlighting those facts can help us understand the history and culture of our food in New Orleans, and also drive business to these smaller restaurants who work really hard to keep the doors open. Often times, it's not about whether or not you



have the best food. If you don't have a prime location, or money for an extensive marketing campaign, your restaurant will simply go unnoticed. Eat NOLA Noir was designed to change that. This movement creates a citywide marketing campaign, pooling all the resources of our minority-owned food and beverage industry businesses together, and build awareness for business owners who may not have the budget to invest into radio, print and media outreach. And, you get to try delicious food that you've never tried before! There are OVER 60+ minority-owned restaurants in our city, and those are just the ones I've found. As we continue to grow and spread the message, our goal is to uncover all the hidden gems in the food industry and give minority restaurants the coverage and recognition they deserve."

DNW: Restaurants are a huge



Food photography courtesy Vyoone's Restaurant, voted one of New Orleans' Best Restaurants, New Orleans Magazine.

tourist attraction to the City. Black restaurants help churn the revenue generating machine, but do they get a fair seat at the table for business incentives, publicity and other things pertinent to their growth and longevity?

ED: "It varies for different establishments. Our city is all about connectivity. Some of the minority-owned restaurants are really just flying below the radar, and some have built a rich history on providing authentic New Orleans food that has created its own reputation. Dooky Chase's is a staple of New Orleans culture. Their work in the community and their commitment to connecting people of all nationalities through food and activism has built their vast platform and they have become a household name. Willie Mae's Scotch House made a national impact with signature recipes that have garnered the attention of food critics across the country, so they've carved their path through hard work, and maintaining traditions throughout generations. Newer restaurants that we've never heard of or are not located in prime locations tend to go unnoticed, unless they are making the investment into building a solid audience. I don't think the lack of publicity and the shortage of tourism revenue to these restaurants are by design. If there's anything we have learned from our past and present, it's that we must do the work and tell our own stories. New Orleans Restaurant Week is a perfect example of harnessing your own strength and creating your own dialogue. Eat NOLA Noir was created to tell our stories, to create our own seat at the table. Responsibility is a huge part of growth and longevity. So, we have to take responsibility for our establishments remaining open and viable. Support from our communities and the entire city is required."

DNW: Until I visited your website, I didn't realize that there were so many Black restaurants in the City of New Orleans, spanning all types of global cuisine. What can the public do to become more aware of and in turn more supportive of our Black restaurants?

ED: "Aren't there so many?! When I first started doing this work, it was shocking to uncover a new minority-owned establishment that I didn't know about. And like many people, if it's not brought to the forefront, then it's easy to miss. I would encourage people of the city to visit our website directory and check out all the minority-owned food and beverage industry related businesses. There's even a quick

Cover Story, Continued on page 8.

In Your Lane

Part 2

Citizens React to a Bike Friendly New Orleans

By Edwin Buggage
Editor

Recently, Data News Weekly produced an article about the growing number of residents riding bikes in the City of New Orleans. We are seeing the number of bike lanes continue to increase in the City. We asked several of our residents what they think of New Orleans and its attempt to become a more bike friendly city.



level of comfort to riders that didn't exist before."



Shayla De La Rose
Licensed Speech Therapist

"While commuting on my Magna 10 Speed during the daytime hours I use one of many nearby bike trails. The Lafitte Greenway is the most convenient for my needs at this time. I frequently enter the trail at N. Claiborne Avenue off of Orleans Avenue for access to the post office in the Central Business District, light grocery shopping at and commuting via bus on RTA and JPT. During festival time in New Orleans I have explored the Mississippi River Trail near the Aquarium and even used the Downtown Ferry for Job Searches on the Westbank. Since Hurricane Gustav and Katrina, biking has allowed me to arrive at scheduled appointments early and accomplish medical goals. I also have less parking meter tickets and save on gas. Lastly, I am able to breathe fresh air and happy to help the City improve overall air quality."



Bart Everson
Media Artist, Xavier University

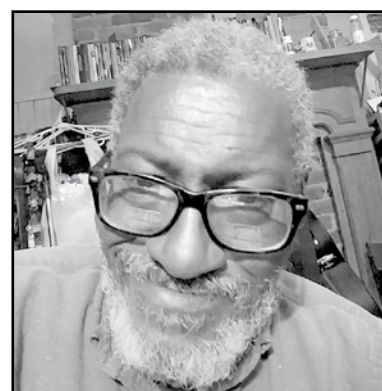
"I don't usually ride my bike on the Broad Street overpass. The last time I rode over that thing with my daughter was prob-

ably three years ago, to get to the Rosa Keller Library in Broadmoor. I remember it well, because it was a brutal sunny day, and the ride was a hot sweaty slog. I found myself more than a little alarmed about riding in such close proximity to all those fast-moving cars. Plus, I strained my back. It was not something I wanted to do again anytime soon. It was a pleasant surprise to make that

same journey just a few days ago. It was still a hot sweaty slog, but now there is bright green paint to designate the bike lane, and there are dividers to separate the cars from the bikes. Granted, those dividers won't likely stop an out-of-control motor vehicle, but they sure help drivers know to stay in their lane."

"When my daughter saw it, she exclaimed, 'This is nice!' I have been a bicycle commuter for two decades in New Orleans. For the last ten years, I've been taking my daughter with me just about every day. We've seen plenty of improvements in that time, but only recently has the work begun to take on the urgency that is needed. I support the work of groups like Bike Easy who advocate for

our safety. This is a great city for riding, or it should be. It can be. It will be. If we demand it."



Eric Paul
Writer and Archivist

"I use my bike all the time as my primary mode of transportation. It took a while for the City to consider and take seriously bike lanes in the metropolitan area. This has added some safety to the streets for bike riders, and while being far from perfect, it gives a certain



ladatanews.com

Hall of Fame Coach Otis Washington Dies

By Lenny Vangilder
Crescent City Sports

Washington guided the Purple Knights to Class AAAA State Titles in 1975, 1978 and 1979. In 11 years as St. Augustine's Head Coach, Washington won 113 games against only 17 losses, captured seven Catholic League Titles and sent more than 120 players into college football.

He was a 2015 Inductee into the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame and also is a member of the Louisiana High School Sports Hall of Fame, the Allstate Sugar Bowl Greater New Orleans Sports Hall of Fame, the New Orleans Prep Hall of Fame and the St. Augustine Hall of Fame.

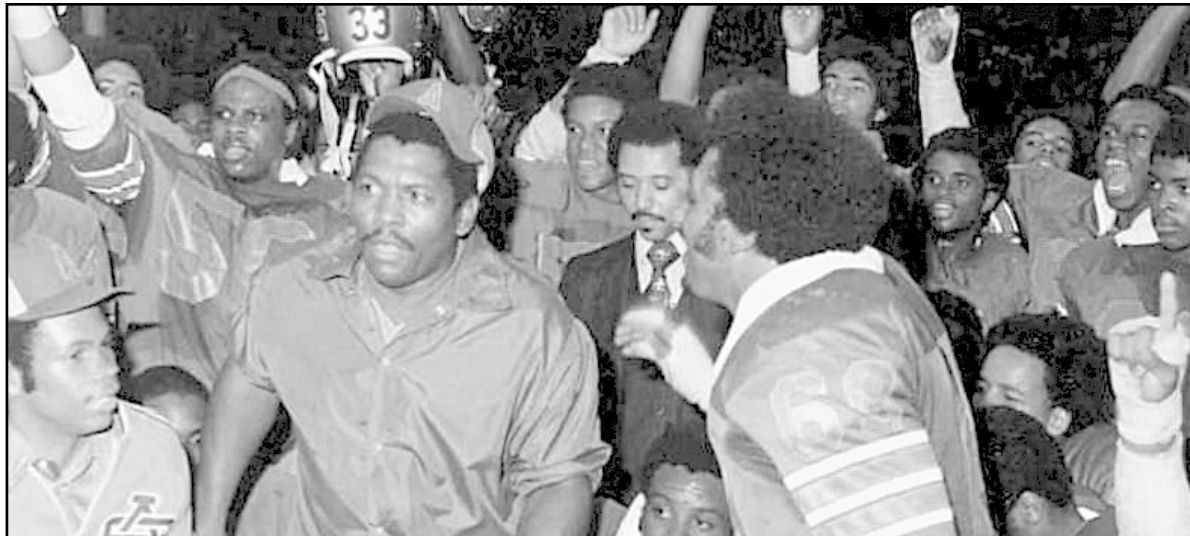
"On behalf of the entire St. Augustine High School Community, we offer our deepest condolences to the family and friends of Otis Washington, whose legend and legacy have touched generations of Purple Knights," St. Augustine President and CEO Dr. Kenneth St. Charles said in a school news release Friday morning. "He was a passionate, innovative leader who helped establish the standard for St. Augustine athletics. Coach Wash shaped St. Augustine football into a program that reflects his dedication to discipline, teamwork, scholarship, and excellence both on and off the field. We celebrate his lifetime of accomplishment and his unwavering commitment to St. Augustine."

A native of Selma, Alabama, Washington came to Louisiana on a football scholarship to Xavier University. He never left.

Washington captained Xavier's final football team in 1959 and earned all-conference honors in football and baseball. When the university dropped athletics, it honored his scholarship and he graduated in 1961.

On a recommendation from former Xavier Baseball Coach John Crowe, Washington landed a teaching and coaching position at St. Augustine, where he stayed for 19 seasons – eight as an assistant coach before becoming head coach prior to the 1969 season.

St. Augustine won three Louisiana Interscholastic Athletic and Literary Organization Championships in a four-year span with Washington as an assistant. Once integration took place, the school



Otis Washington, the Hall of Fame Coach who guided St. Augustine High School to three state championships in a five-year span in the 1970s, died early Friday, the school announced. He was 80.

became a member of the Louisiana High School Athletic Association in 1967.

Four years later, in Washington's third year as a head coach, the Purple Knights played for an LHSAA State Championship, losing to Brother Martin in the AAAA final at Tad Gormley Stadium, 23-0.

A year later, despite having to forfeit eight games because of an ineligible player, Washington was named the State's Class AAAA Coach of the Year.

In 1975, St. Augustine capped a 15-0 season – the only perfect season in school history – with a 35-13 victory at Covington for its First State Championship.

The 1978 championship game against Jesuit is one of, if not the, most significant title games in state history. The Catholic League rivals elected to move the championship game to the Superdome, and 44,000 watched the Purple Knights defeat the Blue Jays 13-7.

Last fall, Washington recalled the Jesuit game on the WLAE series "Talk of Glory."

"I was a little apprehensive going into the game," Washington said in the interview. "Jesuit had a lot of tradition. We knew that if we beat Jesuit, then St. Aug would have arrived."

The large crowd moved Dome spokesperson Bill Curl to contact LHSAA officials about hosting all of its title games on Poydras Street. The LHSAA approved, beginning with the 1981 season, and the Dome has been home to every football title game for 37 of the last 38 years.

In what would be Washington's final game at St. Augustine, the

Purple Knights won a second consecutive title, defeating New Iberia 16-7 at Cajun Field in Lafayette for the 1979 Championship.

Washington's success on the prep level moved him to the college game. He became the first African-American assistant coach at LSU,

where he coached the offensive line on Jerry Stovall's staff in 1980. The next year, Washington became head coach at Southern University, where he stayed for six years.

Washington lived in Baton Rouge after retirement.

Washington's funeral Mass will be celebrated on Saturday, June 1, 2019 at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Baton Rouge. The Reverend Thomas F. Clarke S.J., will preside. Viewing will be Thursday, May 30, 2019 at St. Augustine High School Chapel, 2600 A.P. Tureaud Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70119. 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Interment: Heavenly Gates Baton Rouge, 10633 Veterans Memorial Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA 70807. Repast: Southern University and A&M College, 801 Harding Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA 70807.

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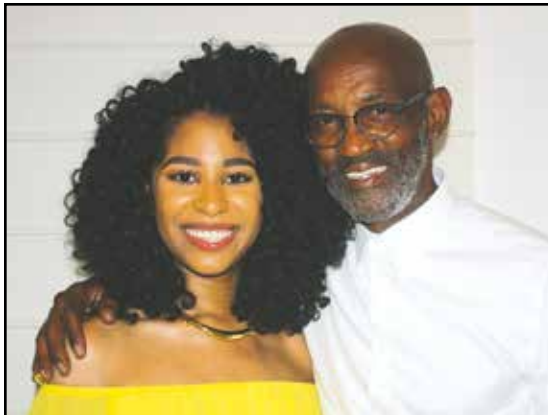
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A Weekend of Culture and Congratulations Indya's Celebration

Photos by Eugene Johnson
Video Unlimited, LLC

The scene was sunny and bright as Miss. Indya Ajai Bruce celebrated receiving her Doctor of Pharmacy degree from The University of Louisiana at Monroe at the home of her proud mother, Mitze Bruce Jones and her husband Carving Jones. The honoree who wore a beautiful and elegant yellow ensemble, entertained guests who included her family members and friends.



Mitze Bruce Jones and her husband Carving Jones both embrace Indya who received her Doctor of Pharmacy Degree earlier this month.

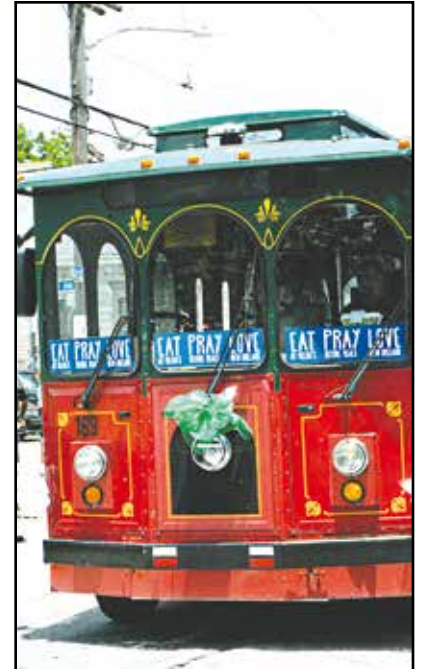


Visit www.ladatanews.com for more photos from these events

The Money Wasters and Dignified Achievable Men (DAM) Social Aid and Pleasure Clubs Second-Line

Data Staff Writers
Photos by Kichea Burt

The Money Wasters & Dignified Achievable Men (DAM) Social Aid and Pleasure Clubs second-lined through the 6th Ward on Sunday, May 26th. The Money Wasters wore money green and white. The Dignified Achievable Men wore Maroon and Pink. Both clubs caused a beautiful spectacle on the streets of New Orleans in a tribute to the City's Rich Cultural Heritage.



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

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Cover Story, Continued from page 3.

form to help us identify restaurants we may not have come across just yet. I would also encourage folks to make the commitment to supporting these restaurants, even if it's lunch once a month, patronizing a food truck for family take-out night, or booking a minority-owned catering company for your next event. There's enough room for everyone."

DNW: This is your second year in existence; how have you grown?

ED: "Our first year was a whirlwind of experiences and fact finding. After developing the idea, we realized that the need of these businesses stretched a lot further than the 10-day time span we carved out for "Black Restaurant Week". We also realized that our campaign had to be different from other cities. Outsiders have come in and tried to rewrite what we do, generating money for themselves by building a quick one-day centered around major events in the city, and walking away with the majority of the sponsorship dollars. As we grew,

we knew we had to focus on individual relationships with the people we want to help and create year-round experiences for the people of New Orleans to keep the movement top of mind. Our growth included adding "Pop-Up Noir", a pop-up series to highlight private chefs, or chefs who may be working in someone else's kitchen, but need some exposure to branch out. We also held our very first "Shake & Stir" Bartender Competition which gave bartenders a platform as well. This year Seven-Three Distilling Co. has partnered with us to keep the momentum going. We have several pop-ups planned this year, including "Eat Shop Network", a partnership with The HBCU Effect (www.thehbcueffect.org), which will take place at Vyoone's Restaurant, a Black female owned restaurant, during Essence Music Festival. Our Second Annual "Shake & Stir" Bartender Competition is coming in June, along with our "Dinner Club Series", which aims to sell out every seat in restaurants we travel to on a monthly basis. I think we've grown quite a bit!"

DNW: Who are some of your ma-

jor sponsors and what is your vision for the future of Eat NOLA Noir and Black Restaurant Week?

ED: "Right now, we ARE our major sponsors! Our restaurants invest in their own campaign. We've stepped up to help ourselves and I think that's amazing. As I mentioned, Seven-Three Distilling Co. is a local distillery that has partnered with us to produce programming and events people will enjoy. We have several major partnerships in the pipeline, so as we continue to grow and expand, we'll be able to share the news with the general public. For the moment, I'm so proud that we have been able to do the work ourselves, despite the absence of major sponsors. We've persevered through counterproductive criticism and doubtful thinking to foster a meaningful campaign that people actually benefit from. It's the grassroots way of doing it in New Orleans, and we're proud!"

For more info on Eat NOLA Noir, Black Restaurant Week and a list of Black-owned restaurants, log onto our website at: www.ladatanews.com



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Prostate Screening is a Must

By Ricki Fairley
The Cincinnati Herald

My friend Alan ended his four-year battle with prostate cancer, and I started my war to engage Black men and make them know the importance of prostate cancer screening. Though Alan and I have been friends for 30 years, when he got cancer, we formed an even more special bond. As a Stage 3A Survivor of Triple Negative Breast Cancer, I know my purpose is to talk about breast health. I am now adding prostate screenings to my stump speech.

At age 55, Alan had a prostate cancer screening test, the PSA. It was normal. Two years later, it had inched up to the top of the normal range. Although, he was getting annual physicals, his Caucasian, very well-regarded internist in their very affluent suburban town told him that PSA testing was not reliable (this is not true!), and he didn't recommend them.

Life went on, a very good life, full of love, laughter, dancing, a blossoming family. Alan led an exceptionally physically fit lifestyle. He had been a disciplined runner since he was in his 30's and engaged in other types of fitness activities such as lifting weights and tennis.

Following his 70th birthday celebration, he had a visit from his brother-in-law who was being treated for prostate cancer. When brought to Alan's attention, he realized that he was having some symptoms (changes in urination). Alan's wife, Yvonne, then insisted he bypass his internist, and they went to a local urologist who told him his PSA was 149.9, shockingly high. Because of the high number, he sought the best care possible and ended up with the Chief of Urology for a major NY hospital. His PSA just 3 weeks later registered at



Alan and his wife and children before beginning his four-year battle with Prostrate Cancer. African American men are recommended to screen for the disease at age 40, as opposed to age 55 as recommended with other races of men.

180. Stage 3B prostate cancer was the diagnosis, which began a path of treatment. He started with Lupron, 10 weeks of radiation, 5 days a week, driving from his home in Ridgewood to Manhattan and then to his office in Morristown, NJ, to work all day as a Chief Investment Officer, a grueling daily regime.

His PSA went down for a short time and then began to increase. Despite intense chemotherapy, immunotherapy, including participation in 2 clinical trials, the aggressive cancer spread throughout his body. Despite the pain and anguish of debilitating cancer, Alan lived his life to the fullest, welcoming a new grandbaby 9 weeks before he passed and signing his favorite song, "My Way" from his hospice bed.

According to the American Cancer Society, Prostate cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in American men, behind lung cancer. African-American men are twice

as likely to develop prostate cancer and twice as likely to die from it.

Research indicates that prostate cancer is not an equal opportunity disease. Black men in the U.S. have substantially higher prostate cancer incidence and mortality rates than the general population. They are also more likely to be diagnosed with an aggressive form of the disease—which is typically treated with surgery and radiation therapy. Yet, black men are less likely than white patients to seek treatment, and when they do, their doctors are more likely to recommend a watch-and-wait approach over surgery or radiation therapy. When diagnosed early, prostate cancer is treatable!

And note that the disparity in health care happens at all socioeconomic levels. Alan had good health insurance and doctors with good reputations.

Was Alan's struggle with prostate necessary? Could this have been prevented had he been screened more frequently? Would there have been a different outcome if he had been going to an African American physician?

We know Alan would have taken different actions if he had been made aware of the high incidence of prostate cancer among Black men and the benefits of PSA screening.

African American men do and should have different screening recommendations where screening begins at age 40, rather than age 55 for a white man without a family history of the disease. Heed this warning. Don't let distrust of the healthcare system or a Caucasian doctor that doesn't make prostate cancer screening a priority stand in your way. Get screened regularly and live your life to the fullest!



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Winning Essay from 6th Grade Student at St Mary's Academy

The Rebirth Of New Orleans

By Rehaan "Jamie" Rouege

If I were mayor, I would focus on issues that are really important to the people of New Orleans. I would begin with homelessness, because everyone deserves a safe and clean place to live. Secondly, I would provide community programs for children and their families, and lastly, social services for families in need of help.

It saddens me to see homeless families of different backgrounds living under the bridge begging for money and food. I want to develop a homeless center for the needy so they can come and get clothes, foods, and supplies. There will be one part of the center I want to provide an educational program for the people who



St. Mary's Academy Essay Contest Winner Rehaan "Jamie" Rouege

cannot read or write. The program will have teachers to help them achieve their goals in life.

All communities should be safe. I will make schools safer by having more police at schools. Before entering, students will have to pass through a metal detector to make sure no one has a weapon inside of their bag. I will provide an after-school program called S, M, D, A = Sports, Music, Dance, Arts.

The City of New Orleans has major trash issues. There are a lot of abandoned homes with overgrown grass and empty lots. Most streets are filled with potholes that are in need of repair. I will have a special team to come and clean up every part of the city and cover the major potholes. I will fix abandoned houses and give them to

the homeless families.

Additionally, child abuse is a major problem in New Orleans. Adults shouldn't hit their children or beat them, because this is against the law. People say that it is the only way to make them stop. Well it isn't. Maybe the child and parent could sit down with a counselor in private and solve the problem and talk about what the mom or dad should do to help the child. So, I will develop a center where the adults could meet with a counselor and talk about the situation of how to treat their children better.

In conclusion, the issues I talked about could be a great start to The Rebirth of New Orleans because, all people in New Orleans deserve a happy, clean and safe community.

National News

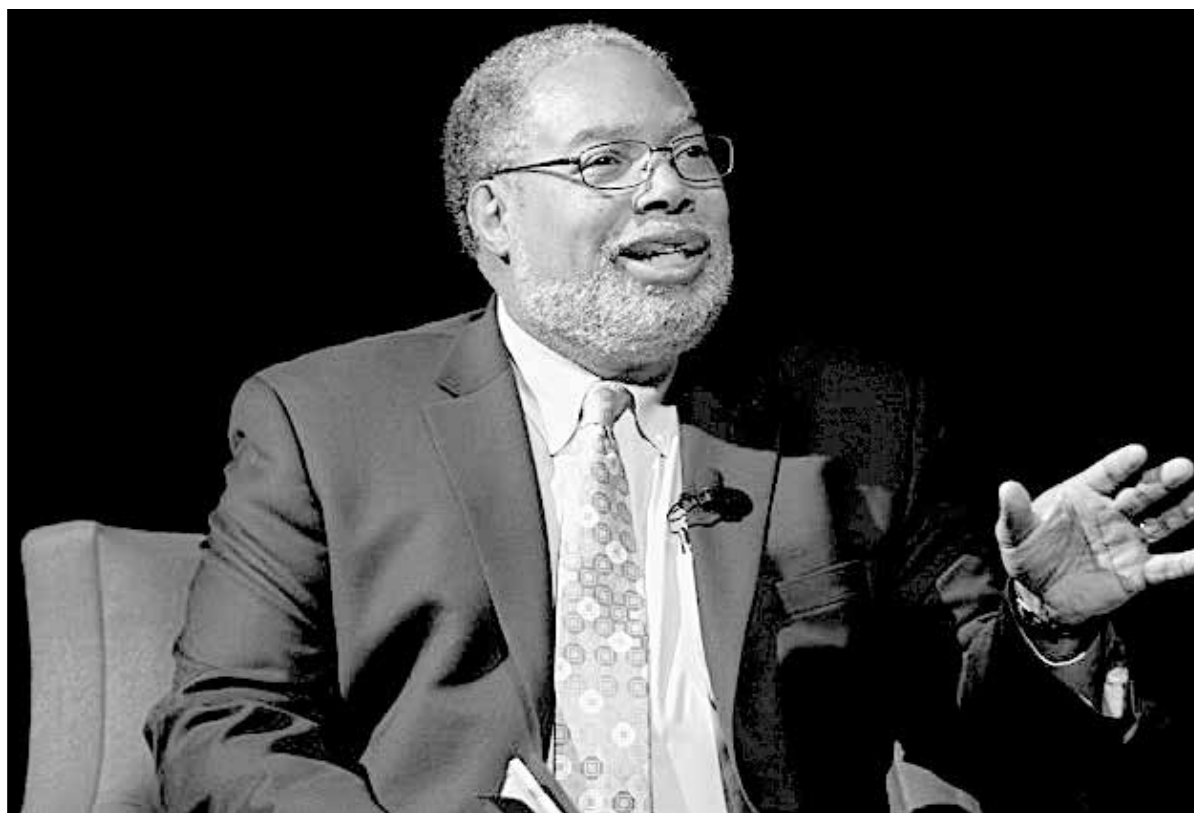
Smithsonian Institution Selects African-American Museum Director Lonnie Bunch as Secretary

By Lauren Victoria Burke
NNPA Newswire Contributor

In a historic selection, the Smithsonian has selected Lonnie Bunch, III as the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution. Bunch will serve as the 14th Secretary. Bunch, 66, is the Founding Director of the National Museum of African-American History and Culture. He will now oversee 19 museums, 21 libraries, the National Zoo, numerous research centers and several education centers as the Secretary of the Smithsonian.

While most people know Bunch as the founding director of the National Museum of African-American History and Culture, it wasn't his first job at the Smithsonian. He was an education specialist at The Air and Space Museum in the late 1970s and worked at the The Museum of American History's office of curatorial affairs from 1989 to 2000. Bunch is also the former director of the Chicago History Museum.

"I will work tirelessly to build upon the traditions of the Smithsonian to help America better understand the changing world it faces in the 21st century," Bunch said at



In a historic selection, the Smithsonian has selected Lonnie Bunch, III as the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution. Bunch will serve as the 14th Secretary. (Photo: LBJ Library / Wikimedia Commons.)

an announcement of his appointment on the morning of May 28th. Bunch's successor is David Skor-

ton. Bunch will begin his new job on June 16.

"The search committee unani-

mously felt that Lonnie was by far the best candidate of the many, many that we saw," said David Ru-

benstein, the chair of the Smithsonian's board.

"Mr. Bunch's four decades of museum experience and his tremendous success in building the National Museum of African-American History and Culture from the ground up make him the right person to lead our nation's extraordinary federally-supported consortium of museums, research centers, and a zoo. The Smithsonian Institution's diverse holdings and rich treasures reflect the greatness of America, and I can think of no one better to serve at its helm," said House Majority Whip Jim Clyburn in a May 28 statement.

"Mr. Bunch has demonstrated his ability to build and steward collections, fundraise to support the preservation of these remarkable artifacts, and to tell the story of our country's artistic and human experiences.

Lauren Victoria Burke is an independent journalist and writer for NNPA as well as a political analyst and strategist as Principal of Win Digital Media LLC. She may be contacted at LBurke007@gmail.com and on twitter at @LVBurke

MC Lyte Making Dreams a Reality for African American Scholars

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire
Correspondent
@StacyBrownMedia

A social media post recognizing African American scholars has gone viral and it's all because of a Hip Hop legend. Joshua Williams posted his status as a co-valetorian at historically Black Dillard University to Instagram, saying that the achievement was thanks to the \$50,000 scholarship he received from the Hip Hop Sisters Network that allowed him to jump-start his college education and gain a foothold into a successful career in journalism.

"College was nothing short of a red-carpet experience for me," Williams said.

"Four years ago, I never imagined an undergraduate experience in which my passion would later turn into a profession that has allowed me to photograph 150-plus celebrities within four years while maintaining a 4.0 GPA," he said.

Since matriculating at Dillard, Williams' work as a freelance photographer has been featured in Billboard Magazine and he's received credentials to cover such major events like the BET Awards and the Essence Music Festival. "Each accomplishment is generally hard to obtain as a freelance photographer – and even more-so as a full-time student," Williams said. "However, once I received the MC Lyte #EducateOURMen Scholarship to Dillard, I knew that I was destined to have a fulfilling college experience that was beyond my wildest dreams and I cannot thank MC Lyte, Lynn Richardson and the Hip Hop Sisters Foundation enough for investing in me and being one of my strongest support systems," he said.



MC Lyte stands with scholarship recipients. Photo courtesy Hip Hop Sisters Network.

Founded by legendary hip hop pioneer MC Lyte and a leadership team, board of directors and advisory board that includes Felicia Shaw, Diseree Clay, Alesha Renee, Jada Pinkett Smith, Kelly Price, Faith Evans and NNPA President and CEO Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr. – the Hip Hop Sisters Network is a non-profit foundation that promotes positive images of women of ethnic diversity, bringing leaders from the world of Hip Hop, the entertainment industry, and the corporate world.

The foundation offers national and international support to women, men and youth around the globe on the topics of cultural issues, financial empowerment, health and wellness, mentorship and educational opportunities.

MC Lyte said her vision includes providing resources to support community based and grass roots organizations that further the advancement of the missions and goals set forth by the organization.

The #EducateOURMen is the signature Initiative of the Hip Hop Sisters Foundation that supports and develops African-American Men.

#EducateOURMen supports African American Men by providing need-based scholarships to obtain undergraduate degrees primarily from HBCUs. It provides access to career and persona mentoring and increased cultural education and social responsibility by giving you examples of how your lives should be lived.

Scholars also have included Justin Matthews of Georgia; Deven Berry of Las Vegas; and John Lawson of Louisiana. "Hip Hop Sisters Foundation has impacted my life tremendously ... not many are afforded the opportunities that I have and I'm forever grateful," said Lawson, a mass communications major with a concentration in public relations.

"It is not only a scholarship, but also a mentoring program and

they're helping me every step of the way to achieve my goals," said Lawson, who minors in Film and was a 2017 Summer Institute for Emerging Managers and Leaders attendee at the University of California-Riverside.

"The first verse of MC Lyte's song 'Dear John,' provokes the thought of not being afraid to take the first step to get where you want to go," said Berry, a computer science major.

"I have to be fearless when I approach a task that I want to complete. Going to college is a big step that I plan to take and it will take a lot of strength for me to move beyond my comfort zone to do bigger and better things with my life," he said.

For more about the scholars and the Hip Hop Sisters Foundation, visit <http://hiphopsisters.org/>

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