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New Orleans Bids Farewell to Leah Chase



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A Data News Weekly Exclusive

# LEAH CHASE

A Recipe for an Amazing Life

With Reflections From Sybil H. Morial and Edgar "Dooky" Chase, IV



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# Leah Chase

## A Recipe for an Amazing Life

*With Reflections From Sybil H. Morial and Edgar "Dooky" Chase, IV*



Data News Weekly cherishes the life and legacy of Chef Leah Chase.

**By Edwin Buggage**  
Editor-in-Chief

She came a long way from segregated Madisonville, Louisiana to become a World-Renowned Chef and Cultural Icon in the City of New Orleans. Upon hearing of her death, well-wishers

from around the globe are paying their respect to Leah Chase, "The Queen of Creole Cuisine," who recently passed away at the age of 96. Leah Chase, whose life personified dignity, courage, strength and her philosophy of "Pray, Work Hard and Do for Others" created a divine recipe for what it means to live a great life.

**Sybil Morial Remembers Her Good Friend Leah Chase**

Data News Weekly had the opportunity to speak with her close friend Sybil H. Morial, wife of Ernest "Dutch" Morial, the City's first Black Mayor and mother of Marc H. Morial, who also served as Mayor of New Orleans. Morial, an amazing woman in

Cover Story, Continued on page 3.

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Cover Story, Continued from page 2.



The world-renowned Queen of Creole Cuisine, Chef Leah Chase celebrates her 95th birthday at the Hyatt Regency New Orleans surrounded by family and friends. (photo courtesy of The Advocate)

her own right has made her mark as an educator and a community advocate. Speaking of her good friend, she generously heaps praise upon her saying, “She is well deserving of it all. Leah was a gracious and wonderful woman who took time with people from all walks of life. She was truly an exceptional and loving woman.”

With a tone that bespeaks of the adoration she had for Mrs. Chase, Morial recalls how long she’s known her and how their friendship evolved. “I have known her since I was a little girl. We got to be friends when my husband was courting me. His law office was down the street in the Claver Building about three blocks away. He would call me and ask how about meeting me and I’d meet him for lunch at Dooky’s. It was small, what is now the Gold Room. There was a window looking into the kitchen and Leah Chase would see us and raise her hand in support as she watched us come in. So that was the beginning of my getting close to her.”

Morial further recalls, “Then we both belonged to a couple of organizations together. We worked on fundraising for organizations together. She was just so generous in the New Orleans Community and because we were doing things together, we became friends. She was a dear friend and I will miss her so much.”

### Leah Chase and the Making of History

Leah Chase and her husband, the late Edgar “Dooky” Chase, II were on the front lines of social change in New Orleans — where their restaurant became the place

where plans were made to fight against and strategize for equality for Blacks during the age of separate but equal.

Recounting Chase’s historical significance throughout those turbulent and uncertain times in U.S. history, Morial reflects, “Leah Chase and her husband had a great impact on the Civil Rights Movement. They welcomed the team of attorneys. A couple of them who were White would come down for lunch.” She continues, speaking of the groundbreaking *Brown v. Board of Education* Case, “Let me say this: the *Brown* Decision came out in 1954 and it was the law of the land, but each southern state had to have their segregation laws repealed or gotten rid of in some way. Thurgood Marshall and his team of lawyers would come down and meet with A.P. Tureaud. My husband and a couple of other lawyers to strategize on how to do this.”

Speaking of those monumental, now historic meetings, Morial continues: “They would work all morning and then go down to Dooky’s for lunch. Now there were White people in that group, so she escorted them up to the private room because they needed to be alone, also because they needed to be safe because it was against the law for White people and Black people to eat together.” Speaking of Chase’s courage, Morial also remembered the capacity she had to bring together people from all walks of society to effect change. “She said, ‘come on; I welcome you’ and whatever the consequences, she was ready to take them. So, she made a great impact on those attorneys and also, she fed the Freedom Riders and was open to all groups

that were fighting in the Civil Rights Movement.”

### A Lover and Patron of the Arts

Leah Chase’s love and deep appreciation for the arts was proudly stated in the décor of her restaurant and was evident as she dedicated her celebrity and finances to many charitable events in support of it. “She collected the art of Black artists and they are hanging on the walls of the restaurant, so there are many people who were not even aware that there were that many artists who had achieved fame. When you step inside the dining room at Dooky Chase, you are standing in a museum. People who would never put their foot in a museum have this opportunity to sit in the restaurant and not only get great Creole food, but you can observe the art and know we have many Black noted artists.”

### Leah Chase - a Warm Heart that Loved All People

The public and private Leah Chase were one-in-the same according to Morial. She says the loving; warm spirit of giving was just who she was all the time. “Leah was so public; she never had a different response from people who were close to her than the people in the public. She was gracious and open. She would come out from the kitchen every single day and greet the people who were there dining in her restaurant. If you talked, anyone who knew her a little bit or who knew her well they would say the same thing. She was the same with everyone. Just gracious, loving and interested in other people.”

## Edgar “Dooky” Chase, IV – Lessons my Grandmother taught me: Pray, Work and Do for Others

By Edwin Buggage  
Editor-in-Chief

### The Building Blocks of Greatness

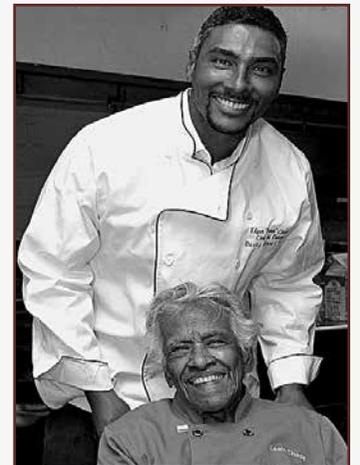
The Chase family is one that is close-knit with a commitment to serving others. It is in this spirit that the Legacy of Leah Chase lives on through those lives she’s touched. Data News Weekly had the opportunity to speak with Edgar “Dooky” Chase, IV, the grandson of Leah Chase, who is also the Owner and Chef of Dooky’s Place located inside the Louis Armstrong Airport. Speaking of the importance of his grandmother and her amazing life and how she shaped them to pursue greatness he says, “The life and legacy of Leah Chase in terms of our family, she was the matriarch, the foundation and building block for all we do.” Continuing he says, “She taught every generation through the four walls of the restaurant not only about the industry, but about life introducing us to food, culture, art but most importantly about respecting people, about being inclusive.”

### To Whom Much Who Is Given Much Is Required

Many who mention Mrs. Chase notes that’s what guided her life was a set of values and practices handed down from her father. “My grandmother’s motto she lived by was “pray, work and do for others.” That’s what was preached to her from her father and she passed it down to her children and they passed it down to us the grandkids and the great grandkids and that was a seed planted into us and what we will continue to live by.” While knowing of her impact on their lives; the family was surprised to hear stories of all the incredible things she did for others. “We were able to witness some, but we had no idea of the magnitude of the lives she touched and was loved by so many people.”

### Building Bridges and Bringing a Community Together

Speaking with pride of his grandmother and her contribution to the lives of so many he says, “That is how she lived her life. The outpouring of support we’ve been getting is unbelievable and that is through the media, community and around the world. It’s



Chef Edgar “Dooky” Chase, IV with his grandmother, iconic Chef Leah Chase.

really been uplifting to my family, it’s been inspirational not only to see her impact on so many people but it has been a driving force to sink into us that passion she had to do that we have to; to continue that legacy to pray work and do for others the same way she did.”

Leah Chase was true to the Spirit of New Orleans and being the bridge that brought people together.

“It was the love of people, that’s what she had. The love of community and that’s where her appreciation for art, food and music came — the things that bring the community together. Just the love of people and making them feel good that made her happy.”

### Feeding the Soul with Love and Compassion

As he speaks of the life of his grandmother, there is emotion coming out as he composes himself speaking about her life and journey, “When we read these stories of how many lives she’s touched it sometimes brings us to tears thinking how she’s impacted our lives but WOW, look at all the people she’s helped and in many ways, made the world a better place spreading so much love and positivity.”

In a moment where his voice lights up thinking of the Life of Leah Chase he remarks, “I am fortunate and blessed to have had her as a grandparent, but even if she wasn’t, we were fortunate to have her in our presence being a truly phenomenal woman throughout her life. She will be missed and I hope the community and all the people who have been showing us love and support keep her in their spirit and that’s what she would want us to do — and pray, work and do for others.”

# Congressman Cedric Richmond Named Joe Biden's New Co-Chairman

## Data Staff Writers

Congressman Cedric Richmond, who has long been a vocal supporter of Former Vice President Joe Biden, has been named to a major leadership role in the Biden Presidential Campaign. With his extensive political contacts in significant primary states, including South Carolina, Richmond in an interview with The New York Times last week said his biggest strength is “offering political advice and using my political instincts to come up with strategy, and not just strategy in the African-American community. I think the real strength is in the South and other parts of the country.”

In addition to running on a platform focused on job creation, crime reduction and education, Richmond says the campaign will focus on



Congressman Cedric Richmond will serve as Co-Chairman to Presidential Candidate and former Vice President, Joe Biden.

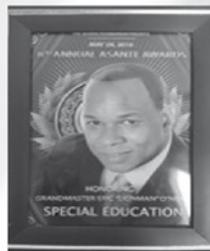
litmus test for progressives,’ but everything they’re talking about the vice president, they are issues he’s already been on. It was ’86 he introduced a climate change bill. He led our efforts in the Paris Accord. So, he has a body of work on that issue before it became popular,” he said.

When asked about his decision to endorse Joe Biden instead of Senator Kamala Harris or Senator Cory Booker, he says they are both friends of his and are both really effective Senators, adding that his endorsement of Biden is by no means a reflection of their effectiveness. He says of Biden, “I’ve been recruiting the vice president to run almost immediately since (Hillary) Clinton lost. One, because I thought his body of work was that of a person I’d want to see as president. Two, because I thought he was the best person to take on President Trump and beat him. And then three, from Day 1, restore our credibility around the world, and start to unify a very divided — a very, very divided — country.”

more specific issues like climate. “It’s amazing to me to watch everyone now say that they are, quote-unquote ‘progressive’ and ‘this is the



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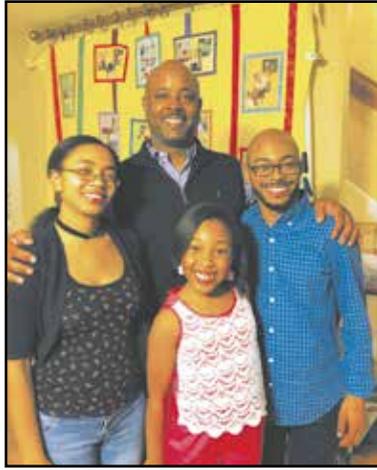
# What Fatherhood Means to Me

**Edwin Buggage**  
Editor-In-Chief

What does it mean to be a father? The question is often pondered by many dads who are striving to be the best father they can be in an ever-changing society which presents a plethora of challenges and demands. Data News Weekly caught up with some local dads to get their opinion on taking what's often considered the hardest job in the world.

**Ricardo Grayer:**

"The best part about being a father is that God loves me enough to entrust me to intro-



Ricardo Grayer with his children Cydney Grayer, 23; Kennedy Grayer, 10 and Julien Grayer, 28.



Jaden Banks, 18; Connor Banks, 5 and their father Nicoy Banks.



Brejean Baker, 12 and her father Jean Baker.

duce them to Him. I have to guide my young people towards

being honorable, kind, socially and self-conscience and Godly

people. My children are the best thing that have ever hap-

pened to me. They saved my life and give me purpose every single day of my life."

**Nicoy Banks:**

"What gives me the most joy about being a dad is hearing them call out to and for DAD, greeting me 'HEY DAD; WHAT'S UP DAD,' introducing me, looking at me, referring to me: 'THAT'S MY DAD!' The joy of it all is BEING their dad and father!"

**Jean Baker:**

"I enjoy watching my daughter smile and watching her growing into a young lady. She's the joy and love of my life."



## AUDUBON NATURE INSTITUTE EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

**EILEEN LUMAR-JOHNSON**  
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS

In her role as Director of Community Relations for Audubon Nature Institute, Eileen works with community and social services organizations throughout the region to ensure that every member of our community has access to the magic of an Audubon visit. Eileen's community involvement doesn't end there — Eileen is also pastor of a multicultural ministry in the Irish Channel and leader of a support group for families who have members with exceptionalities, such as autism spectrum disorders.

*Celebrating the Wonders of Nature*

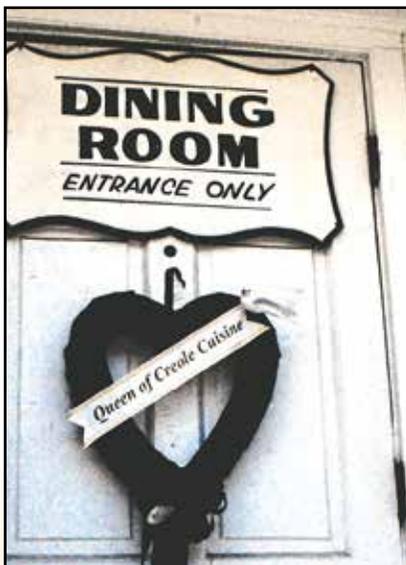
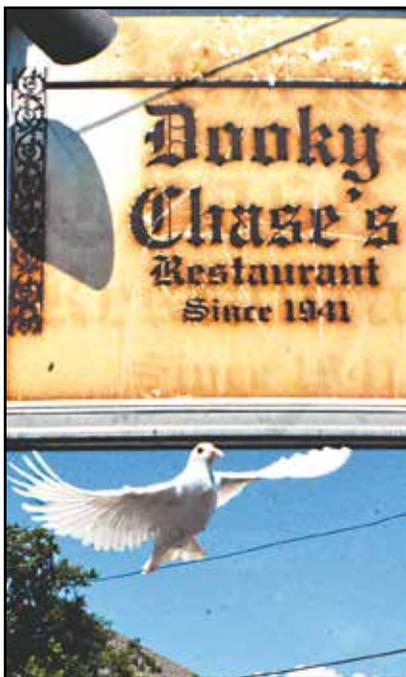
Be a part of the Audubon Team: [AudubonNatureInstitute.org/Careers](http://AudubonNatureInstitute.org/Careers)



# Bidding Farewell to the Queen of Creole Cuisine

By Renetta Burrell-Perry  
Photos by Kichea Burt

Iconic and internationally acclaimed Chef Leah Chase was laid to rest last Monday, June 10th following a beautiful service celebrating her life and legacy at St. Peter Claver Catholic Church. World renowned trumpeter/composer Terrence Blanchard played a final serenade, a jazz rendition of "Just a Closer Walk with Thee" at the close of the service. He and Trombone Shorty played as Leah's casket left the church. Following the service, a second-line proceeded enroute past her restaurant, Dooky Chase's. Hundreds packed the streets to pay homage to New Orleans royalty - the Queen of Creole Cuisine.



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# Leah Chase

## *“We Changed the Course of the World over a Bowl of Gumbo”*



**Marc Morial**  
President and CEO  
National Urban League

New Orleans’ Queen of Creole Cuisine, Leah Chase, a part of New Orleans has died. It was at her table where the Freedom Riders gathered to break bread after their dangerous journey into the segregated south. It was there where the NAACP planned strategy. She hosted musicians, artists, actors and Presidents. In typical fashion, she scolded President Obama for adding hot sauce to her already-perfectly-seasoned gumbo.

My earliest memories of Mrs. Chase were Friday night outings with my grandparents to her landmark restaurant, Dooky Chase. In the days of Jim Crow, most of the upscale restaurants refused to serve Black patrons, so Dooky Chase quickly became a cultural, social and political center for Black life in New Orleans. When the Na-



Marc H. Morial and Chef Leah Chase in the dining room of her iconic Dooky Chase’s Restaurant.

a meal at Dooky Chase and a visit to the kitchen to catch up with its tireless proprietress. The woman whose portrait is enshrined in the National Portrait Gallery, and whose life inspired a beloved Disney character was born in Madisonville, Louisiana, across Lake Ponchartrain from New Orleans. One of 11 children, she was 6 years old when the Great Depression struck, and she recalled wearing clothes made from grain sacks and subsisting on food from their own garden.

She arrived in New Orleans to attend Catholic high school, and went on to work at a French Quarter restaurant for \$1 a day. Just after World War II ended, she married Jazz Musician Edgar “Dooky” Chase, whose parents owned a po’boy stand in

“I was taught that your job was to make this earth better. I hope my children will carry on. I hope I’ve taught them enough to keep trying to grow, keep trying to make people understand how to enjoy life. Look at all the beautiful things around you, look at the progress. You gotta enjoy that, you gotta appreciate that, and I do.” – Leah Chase

With the passing this week of

tional Urban League held our conference in New Orleans in 2012, I was proud to hold our Board of

Trustees meeting there.

No visit home to New Orleans has ever been complete without

**Commentary, Continued on page 11.**

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# “Forever First Lady” Michelle Obama will Headline 25th ESSENCE Fest

## Data Staff Writers

ESSENCE Communications, the number one media, technology and commerce company dedicated to Black women, today announced that former First Lady Michelle Obama will headline its 25th Anniversary ESSENCE Festival of Culture in New Orleans, LA, taking place July 4-7, 2019. On the heels of the historic success of her book “Becoming”, the appearance will mark Mrs. Obama’s first engagement at the Festival and will include a sit-down interview on July 6th at the Louisiana Superdome. Mrs. Obama also appeared on the December 2018 cover of ESSENCE Magazine and will contribute the monthly closing article – A Word – to the July/August issue.

The 2019 ESSENCE Festival® presented by Coca-Cola, the world’s largest cultural, entertainment and empowerment experience, is a one-of-a-kind epicenter and celebration of global Black Culture and continues to reach new heights with a focus on economic inclusion, cultural ownership and community development. The Festival now attracts more than 500,000 attendees each weekend and surpasses every national music, entertainment, and cultural festival based on average daily attendance.

“We are indescribably thrilled and honored to have ‘Forever

First Lady’ Michelle Obama as a part of our 25th Anniversary ESSENCE Festival, which will mark our most exciting and extensive programming to date,” said Michelle Ebanks, CEO of Essence Communications. “As inspiring and aspirational as it is relatable, Mrs. Obama’s story – told on her own terms – is a remarkable example and celebration of everyday Black women who accomplish extraordinary things, who confront

challenges with courage and truth, and who remind us that all things are possible when we support one another. Over 25 years, the Festival has done just that – becoming a cultural home for millions of Black women to honor, celebrate and engage each other in service and sisterhood, laughter and love, and empowerment and community.”

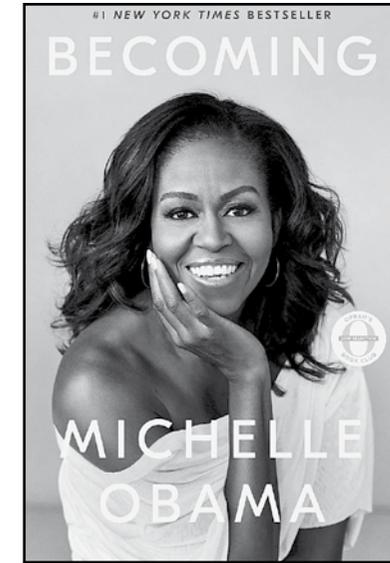
The 25th Anniversary ESSENCE Festival will have its largest footprint ever, spanning more than 10 venues across New Orleans and encompassing several new and enhanced curated experiences. These include the Global Black



On the heels of the massive success of her autobiographical book “Becoming,” Michelle Obama will be a headliner at the 25th ESSENCE Festival in July.

Economic Forum; Fashion House; Wellness House; ESSENCE Black Excellence Awards; ESSENCE Food & Wine Festival; ESSENCE Music Festival; Beauty Carnival; ESSENCE After Dark; ESSENCE Film & TV Festival; Power Stage; E-Suite; ESSENCE Marketplace; and ESSENCE Day of Service/Girls United.

In addition to Mrs. Obama’s ap-



pearance, an epic ‘homecoming’ musical line-up of more than 80 performers is slated at the Louisiana Superdome – including Mary J. Blige, Nas, Missy Elliott, H.E.R., Big Freedia, Davido, Frankie Beverly, Jermaine Dupri, MC Lyte, Pharrell Williams, Ronnie, Bobby, Ricky & Mike (RBRM), Sheila E., Teddy Riley, Teyana Taylor, Timpaland, and –more– EMBARGOED UNTIL 6:00AM ET, THURSDAY, MAY 16, 2019 Michelle Obama Headlines 2019 ESSENCE Festival

– cont. p. 2 more. A 25th Anniversary Celebration of 1994’s most culturally impactful and transformative albums that redefined pop culture will also be curated and performed by the original artists. These include Mary J. Blige’s My Life, Nas’ Illmatic, Brandy’s Brandy, Method Man’s Tical, Scarface’s Diary, Big Daddy Kane’s Daddy’s Home, Da Brat’s Funkdafied, Slick Rick’s Behind Bars and Brownstone’s from the Bottom Up.

Weekend and single-night ticket packages for the evening Music Festival Concert Series are on sale now. For the first time ever, ESSENCE is introducing the 2019 Weekend VIP Power Pass, which provides access to a premium experience at all of the Festival’s ticketed events throughout the weekend, including the evening Music Festival, Fashion House, Beauty Carnival, ESSENCE Day in the Park, Wellness House and Power Stage, among other experiences to be announced.

For information about ticket sales, accommodations and the latest news about the ESSENCE Festival® visit [Essence.com/festival](http://Essence.com/festival).

## Warren Easton Charter High School Students Earn Dual Degrees from Delgado



EastonDelgado1(l-r): Trellis Powell, Ronald Cowart, Joshua Tassin-Green, Darryl Davis, Farrell Thompson, Devante Banks, Kenden Junius, Corey Wilson, Donovan Walker, and Andre Alexander.

## Data Staff Writers Photos by the Brylski Group

Fifteen Warren Easton Charter High School students graduated from Delgado Community College

at its Commencement on May 21st. The students earned a Certificate of Technical Studies: Residential Electrician while completing their high school diploma at Warren Easton.



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# NNPA Observes Black Music Month, National Homeownership and Juneteenth

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Newswire  
Correspondent,  
@StacyBrownMedia

In June, the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) joins with millions of other Americans in celebration of Black Music Month and National Homeownership Month.

As the trade association representing more than 200 African American-owned newspapers and media companies around the nation, the NNPA also observes Juneteenth, the oldest known celebration commemorating the ending of slavery in the United States.

Among the many cities planning Juneteenth celebrations this year include Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Ocean City, New Jersey; Lexington Park, Maryland; Washington, D.C.; Minneapolis, Minnesota; Los Angeles, California; Detroit, Michigan; Chicago, Illinois; and Atlanta, Georgia.

According to the history of Juneteenth, on June 19th, 1865 and more than two years after President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation which became official on Jan. 1, 1863, Union soldiers led by Major General Gordon Granger landed at Galveston, Texas, with news that the war had ended and slaves were now free.

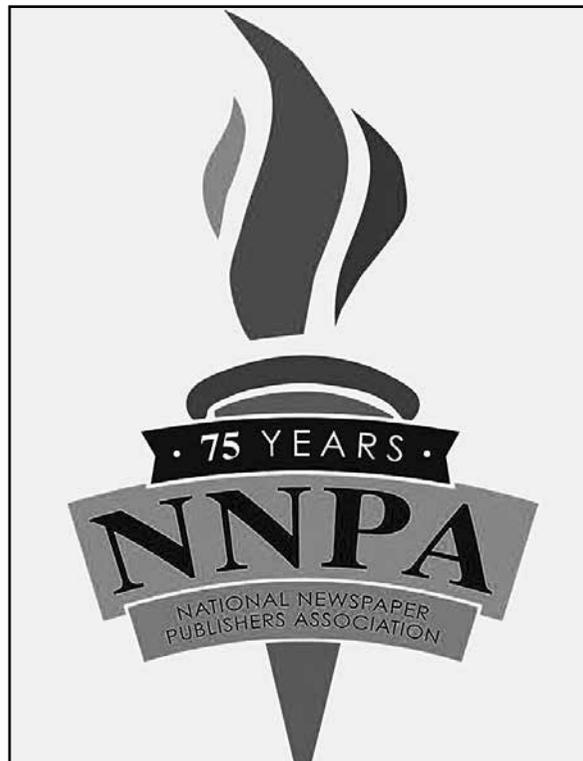
The president's proclamation freeing slaves had little effect because of the small number of Union troops available to enforce the Executive Order.

However, after the surrender of General Robert E. Lee in April 1865 and the arrival of Granger, the forces were finally strong enough to influence and overcome the resistance.

With many also commemorating National Homeownership Month, the NNPA has long supported fair lending and housing practices as the organization has said it realizes that homeownership is one of the best ways of creating intergenerational wealth.

Companies like Wells Fargo have developed initiatives to help African Americans achieve the American Dream. In 2017, the banking giant announced a \$60 billion lending commitment to create at least 250,000 African American homeowners by 2027.

In 2018, the Black homeownership rate stood at 42.2 percent – only tenths of a percentage point higher than the same rate reported by the U.S. Census Bureau a half century ago when the Fair Housing Act was signed into law.



That troubling fact served as the impetus behind the National Association of Real Estate Brokers (NAREB) program to increase Black homeownership by two million over the next five years.

“Black homeownership is the first, and most essential step to build economic strength within our communities,” NAREB President Jeffrey Hicks said in a news release.

“We’ve lost more ground than we’ve gained over the past 50

years,” Hicks said.

“Whether through unmeasurable losses of equity during the country’s last economic melt-down, consistently high unemployment rates, unfavorable federal and state policies restricting affordable homeownership, or systemic mortgage lending barriers, Black homeownership – and therefore our wealth-building potential as a people—remain diminished,” he said.

Throughout the month of June, events are held to embrace the achievements, prominent timeliness and impactful moments of Black music.

Founded in 1979 by Kenny Gamble, Ed Wright and Dyana Williams, National Black Music Month recognizes the achievements, prominent timeliness and impactful moments of Black Music.

It’s a chance to remember those musicians lost along the way and to encourage a pathway for young musicians to follow their dreams.

According to the National Museum of African American Music, on June 7th, 1979 Gamble, Wright, and Williams successfully lobbied Pres-

ident Jimmy Carter into hosting a reception to formally recognize the cultural and financial contributions of Black Music throughout history.

Since that fateful year, Black Music Month has grown from an intimate commemoration to national reach with an abundance of events held annually across the country.

As years went on many musicians, fans and influential individuals joined in celebratory observance during the month of June.

In 2016, via proclamation, President Barack Obama further defined June as African American Music Appreciation Month.

Obama declared that the start of summer would be a celebration for “the rich heritage” of African American music and how these instrumental musicians, “have enriched African American music and captured the diversity of our Nation.”

“The music of our Nation has always spoken to the condition of our people and reflected the diversity of our Union,” Obama said.

“African American musicians, composers, singers, and songwriters have made enormous contributions to our culture by capturing the hardships and aspirations of a community and reminding us of our shared values,” he said.

For more information about the NNPA and its initiatives, visit [www.nnpa.org](http://www.nnpa.org).

## New Orleans Set to Participate in Upcoming WorldPride with Authentic Mardi Gras Float

### Data Staff Writers

New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation (NOTMC) and partners are set to participate in WorldPride in New York City, June 22nd - June 30, 2019. The event is expected to attract 3 million LG-BTQ tourists, friends, family and supporters to the Big Apple, marking the first time the event will be hosted in the United States in its nearly 20-year history. To capture this unique opportunity, NOTMC and local tourism leaders will showcase New Orleans as a top tourism destination and build on the city’s designation as the world’s second “Most Welcoming City” for LG-



BTQ travelers (GayCities 2017 and 2018).

New Orleans will contribute the Signature Natchez Mardi Gras Float to be included in the World-

Pride March on Saturday, June 30th. Kern Studios will decorate the float with pride colors, flags and other elements representative of the city’s unique LGBTQ

Culture. Tourism leaders and partners will be fully immersed in the parade as both riders and walkers alongside the float, which is set to be the largest in the entire parade. New Orleans Native and Actor Bryan Batt is set to ride on the New Orleans float.

“New Orleans strives to be a welcoming and inclusive destination for all travelers, not just for large events and attractions, but every day. WorldPride will allow us to showcase our great city on a national scale in a meaningful and authentic way,” said Mark Romig, President and CEO of the New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation.

Additionally, New Orleans will host an activation during the WorldPride Festival and WorldPride Tastemakers Brunch, which will include a Hansen’s Sno-ball Stand, Mardi Gras Flower backdrop, Krewe Sunglasses and a Mardi Gras 2020 Trip Giveaway.

“We are honored to be part of this historic moment for our community and are eager to share with the world that New Orleans is an inclusive and welcoming city for everyone,” said Dustin Woehrmann CEO and Creative Director of Community.

For more information, please visit [NewOrleans.com](http://NewOrleans.com).

# U.S. Attempt to Erase Harriet Tubman

By A. Scott Bolden  
NNPA Newswire Contributor



A visual of how the proposed Tubman twenty dollar bill may look circulated around the internet receiving mixed reviews.

With uniquely American hypocrisy, the Trump Treasury Department has pushed back the 2016 plan to put escaped slave and Underground Railroad heroine Harriet Tubman on the \$20 bill. Tubman would be the first African-American woman featured on U.S. currency.

The \$20 currently features a former president, Andrew Jackson, who not only owned slaves, but ordered the death march of thousands of Native Americans. Euphemistically called "Indian Removal," the Trail of Tears made way for white settlers to claim millions of acres of southern land.

The attempted erasure of Tubman represents yet another move in the Trump playbook to disconnect racial reality from white fantasy.

In the fantasy of white supremacy, traitors like Jefferson Davis and other Confederates are memorialized for being freedom fighters—the freedom of whites to own black human beings and work them to death—while a woman who risked her life time and again to free enslaved people is simply dismissed. Ignored. Erased.

In the fantasy of white supremacy, white people are always justified in killing unarmed black men, women and children, either with their own guns or by aiming the unquestioned power of the police. No act is too repugnant, even those resulting in the sexual abuse or death of immigrant children in American custody, if it can be framed as a defense of white superiority.

In the fantasy of white supremacy, the FBI spent millions in time

and treasure to plant false evidence of Communist influence on Martin Luther King—while in reality, Russians today are using the racial tension in American to incite violence and paralyze our society, while they work towards global dominance.

By erasing Tubman, the Trump forces again deploy their most effective weapon in the quest to maintain power—the unholy alliance of racism and misogyny.

Because in America, it seems, freedom is for whites only, and more specifically, for white men.

To be sure, Trump has ordered his own digital Trail of Tears, as he rolls back civil rights protections for people of color, for women, for immigrants fleeing starvation or oppressive regimes, for LGBTQ people, for the poor and the voiceless.

And currently, the cognitive dissonance in America has reached a new, critical level of psychosis. As a nation we exalt independence,

freedom and equality—we boast of our shining city on the hill. Yet our shining city was built on genocide of the native peoples, enslavement of Africans and exploitation of immigrants.

Without a doubt, every people and every culture on Earth have had to deal with unpleasant facts of its history—America is not special in that regard. Where most of white America goes off the rails is in completely denying and minimizing the facts of racial oppression. This erasure makes racial reconciliation—and true equality—impossible to achieve.

In 2019, Harriet Tubman should be a respected and lauded icon for people of every race and ethnicity. Did she not personify American ideals, at the risk of her own life? As a black woman in antebellum times, she was vulnerable to capture, prison, assault or lynching, but did she falter? Did she not refuse to kneel

to any man or any king? Did she not fight for freedom against overwhelming odds?

Are these not the qualities we hold dear in our American heroes?

Instead, Tubman is erased.

Instead, our current administration embraces the slave owner, the mass murderer, the white supremacist—and calls him a hero.

For a psychiatric patient—in this case, white America—the reality of racism, misogyny and oppression is incompatible with their self-identity as lovers of freedom and defenders of equality. But instead of taking the painful but therapeutic steps to achieve reconciliation and closure, the patient has opted instead to self-medicate, and maintain the delusion of white supremacy at all costs.

Jackson, a president who authored one of the cruelest and most brutal acts in American history, is a Trump hero, which is perfectly logical—they share a deep, entitled belief in the superiority of white men, and a world order in which Manifest Destiny is not a just doctrine but a divine right.

Jackson should never be forgotten. He should be remembered always as an example of what kind of horrors our leaders can inflict when their values and morals are wildly askew.

Trump will be remembered in the same light—if enough of us survive to tell the story.

And despite their best efforts, the legacy of Harriet Tubman can never be erased. She embodies the spirit of everything our nation claims to stand for, and each one of us—every race, every gender—should be proud to call her our fellow American.

Commentary, Continued from page 8.

Treme'. Over the years she would transform the business into one of the most significant and celebrated restaurants in the entire country.

A generation of children were introduced to Leah Chase in the character of Tiana, Disney's first African-American princess, in 2009's *The Princess and the Frog*. When he first visited Dooky Chase, the film's Co-Director John Musker,

he was surprised to see a photo of General George Patton on the wall among Mrs. Chase's famed collection of African-American Art.

"She goes, 'That was a man that I admired,'" Musker recalled. "It was just a great thing to see this warm and nurturing thing, but she has this flinty side, too, where she can be both. That's what we tried to get with Tiana, that she's very warm and vulnerable but she has a passion, spine and a backbone and

she's really trying to get something done and doesn't give in easily to things."

Mrs. Chase always said, "In my dining room, we changed the

course of America over a bowl of gumbo and some fried chicken." It was an honor beyond words to count her among my friends, and to carry forth her legacy.

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