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## A Tribe Called Quest the Movie

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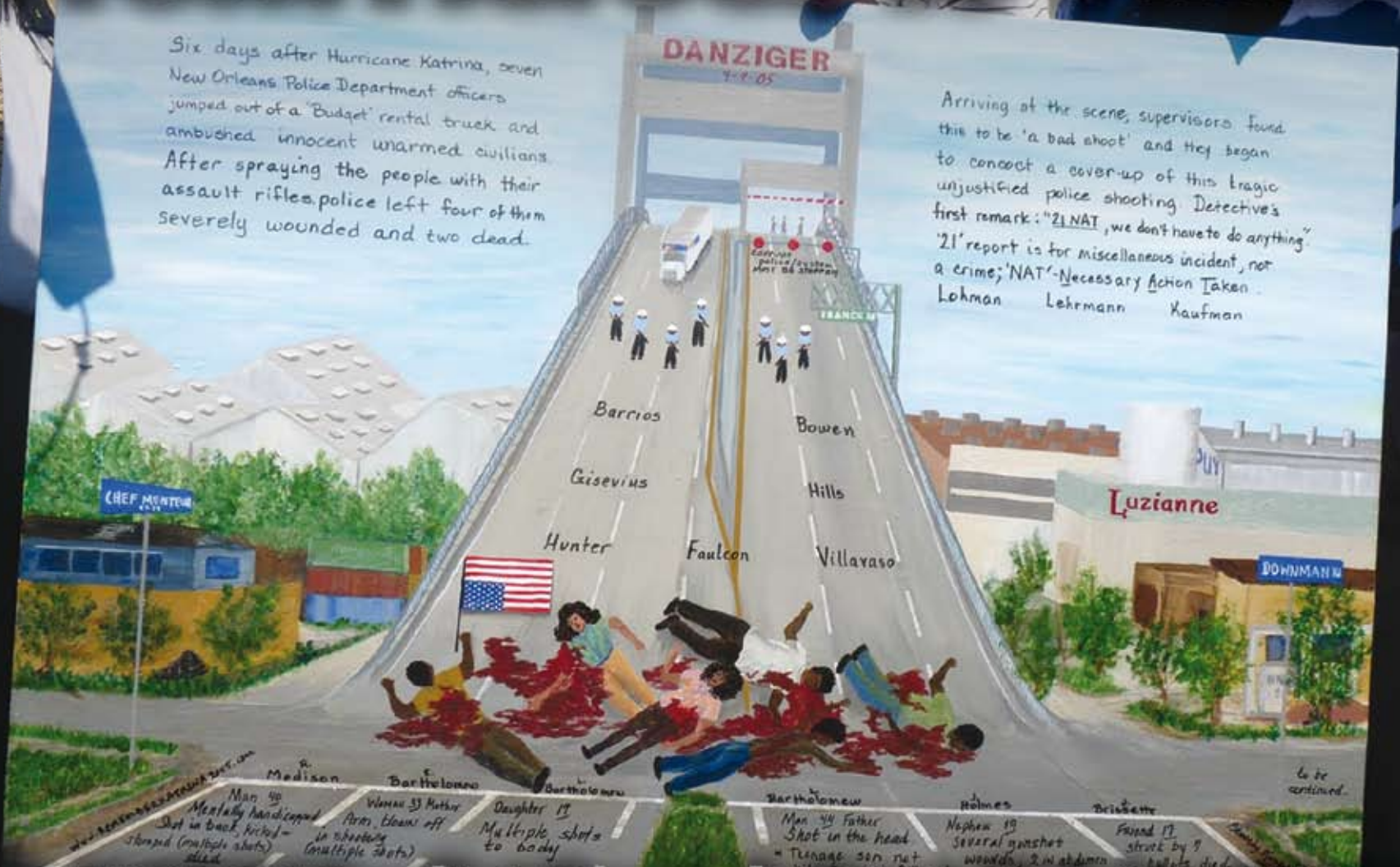
A TRIBE CALLED QUEST

August 13 - August 19, 2011 46th Year Volume 11 [www.ladatanews.com](http://www.ladatanews.com)

# From Heroes to Villains

Six days after Hurricane Katrina, seven New Orleans Police Department officers jumped out of a 'Budget' rental truck and ambushed innocent unarmed civilians. After spraying the people with their assault rifles, police left four of them severely wounded and two dead.

Arriving at the scene, supervisors found this to be 'a bad shoot' and they began to concoct a cover-up of this tragic unjustified police shooting. Detective's first remark: "21 NAT, we don't have to do anything." '21' report is for miscellaneous incident, not a crime; 'NAT' - Necessary Action Taken. Lohman Lehmann Kaufman



## NOPD Verdict Reveals Post-Katrina History

*The Soul of New Orleans*

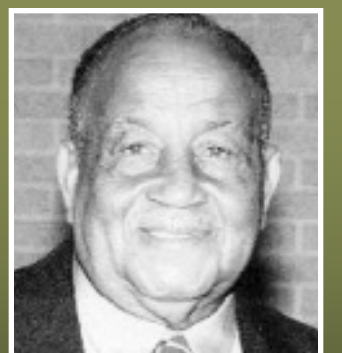
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## Newsmaker Remembering Carlton Roy, Sr.

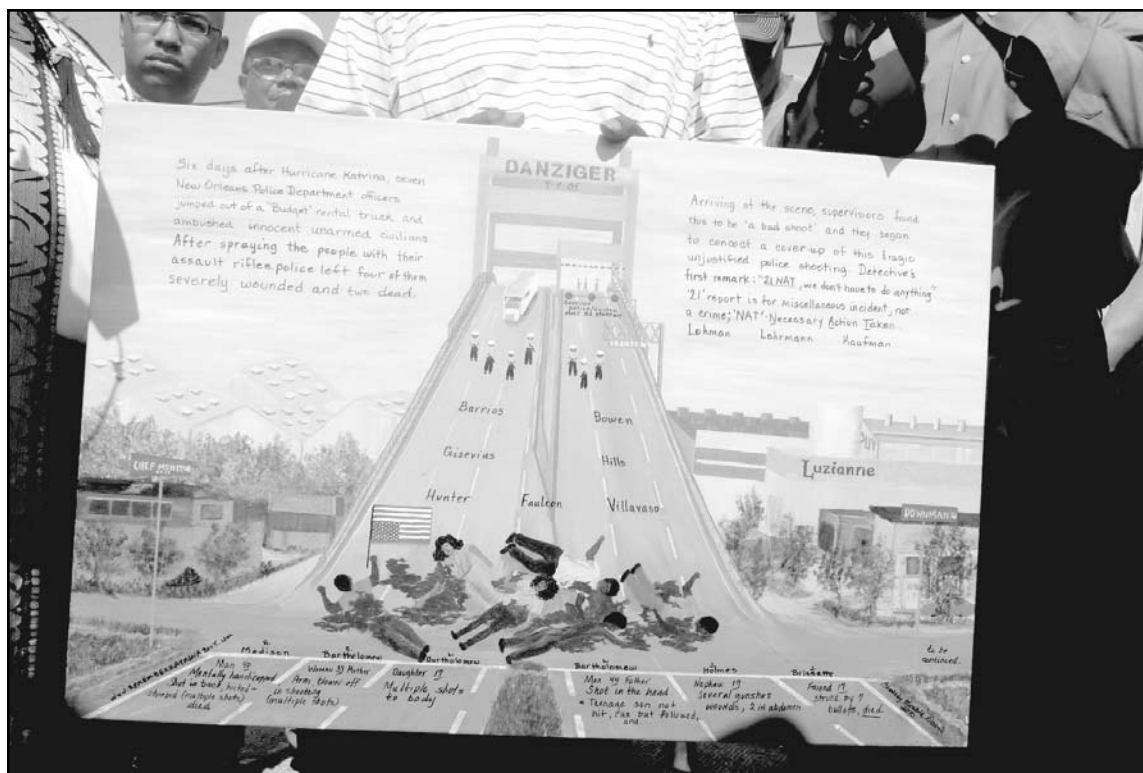


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# From Heroes to Villains

## NOPD Verdict Reveals Post-Katrina History



Photos courtesy of Louisiana Justice Institute

By Jordan Flaherty  
Special Contributor to Data News From ColorLines

In an historic verdict with national implications, five New Orleans police officers were convicted on Friday of Civil Rights violations for killing unarmed African-Americans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and could face life in prison when sentenced later this year. The case, involving a grisly encounter on the Danziger Bridge, was the most high-profile of a number of prosecutions that seek to hold police accountable for violence in the storm's wake.

The officers' conviction on all 25 counts (on two counts, the jury found the men guilty but with partial disagreements on the nature of the crime, which could slightly affect sentencing) comes nearly six years after the city was devastated by floodwaters and government inaction. The verdict

helps rewrite the history of what happened in the chaotic days after the levees broke. And the story of how these convictions happened is important for anyone around the U.S. seeking to combat law enforcement violence.

The results of this trial also have national implications for those seeking federal support in challenges to police abuses in other cities. New Orleans is one of four major cities in which the Department of Justice has stepped in to look at police departments. Any success here has far reaching implications for federal investigations in Denver, Seattle, Newark, and other cities.

The Danziger Bridge case begins with Hurricane Katrina. As images of desperate survivors played on television, people around the world felt sympathy for people waiting for rescue after the storm. But then images of families trapped on rooftops were replaced by stories of armed gangs and criminals roaming the streets. News reports famously described White people as "finding" food while depicting Black people as "looting." Then-Chief

of Police Eddie Compass told Oprah Winfrey that "little babies (are) getting raped" in the Superdome. Then-Gov. Kathleen Blanco announced she had sent in troops with orders to shoot to kill, and the second in charge of the police department reportedly told officers to fire at will on looters.

Evidence suggests that the NOPD acted on these instructions. On Sept. 2, just days after the storm, a Black man named Henry Glover was shot by a police sniper as he walked through a parking lot. When a Good Samaritan tried to help Glover get medical help, he was beaten by officers, who burnt Glover's body and left it behind a levee. The next day, a 45-year-old named Danny Brumfield, Sr., was killed by officers in front of scores of witnesses outside the New Orleans Convention Center when he ran after a police car to demand that they stop and provide aid.

The following morning, two families were crossing New Orleans' Danziger Bridge, which connects Gentilly and New Orleans East, two mostly middle-

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## DATA NEWS WEEKLY

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to-upper-class African-American neighborhoods. Without warning, a Budget Rental truck carrying police officers arrived and cops jumped out. The officers did not identify themselves, and began firing before their vehicle had even stopped.

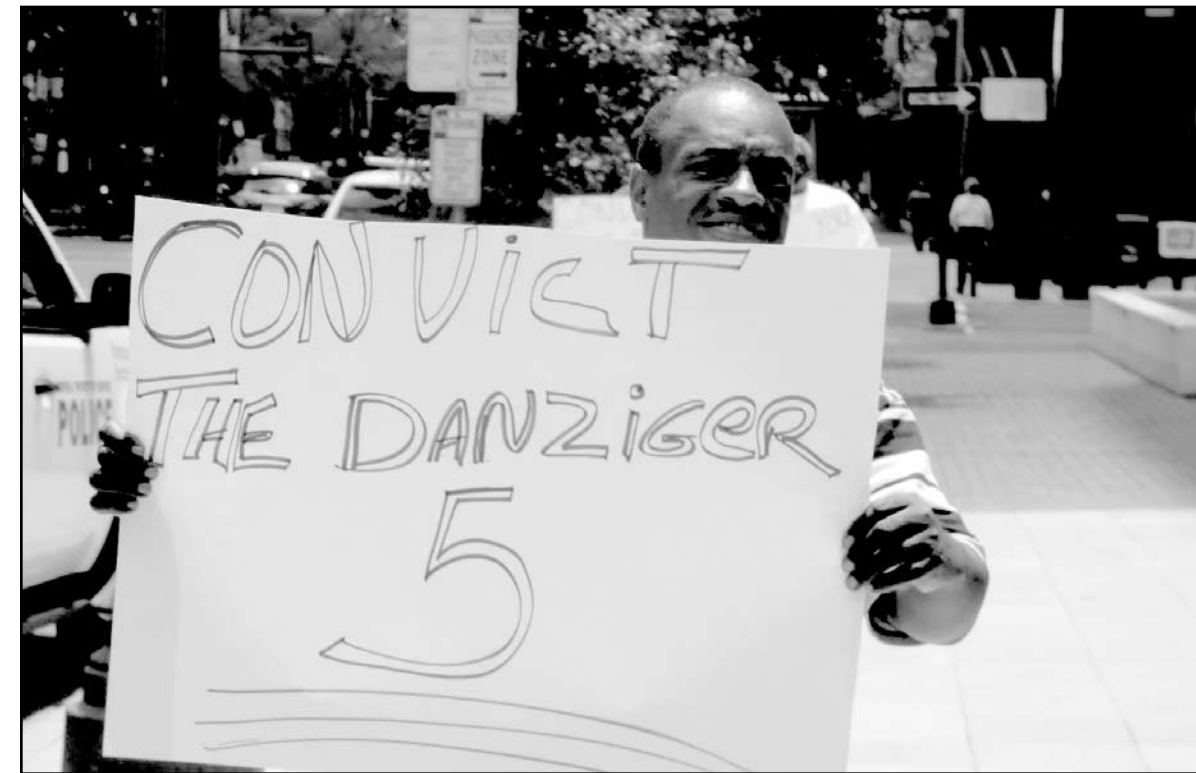
Officers had heard a radio call about shootings in the area, and according to prosecutors, they were seeking revenge. James Brisette, a 17-year-old called studious and nerdy by his friends, was shot nearly a dozen times and died at the scene. Many of the bullets hit him as he lay on the ground bleeding. Four other people were wounded, including Susan Bartholomew, a 38-year-old mother who had her arm shot off of her body, and her 17-year-old daughter Leshia, who was shot while crawling on top of her mother's body, trying to shield her from bullets. Leshia's cousin Jose was shot point-blank in the stomach and nearly died. He needed a colostomy bag for years afterwards.

Further up the bridge, officers chased down Ronald Madison, a mentally challenged man, who was traveling with his brother Lance. Ronald was shot in the back by one officer and then stomped and kicked to death by another. Lance was arrested and charged with firing at officers, and spent weeks behind bars.

At the time, the New Orleans Times-Picayune reported that officers "sent up a cheer" when word came over police radios that suspects had been shot and killed.

A cursory investigation by the NOPD justified the shooting, and it appeared that the matter was closed. In fact, for years every check and balance in the city's criminal justice system failed to find any fault in this or other officer-involved shootings from the days after the storm.

Eddie Jordan, the city's first Black District Attorney, pursued charges against the officers in late 2006. When the cops went to turn themselves in, they were greeted by a crowd of hundreds of officers who cheered for them and called them heroes. Before the case could make it to trial, it was dismissed by a judge with close ties to the defense lawyers,



and soon after that Jordan was forced to resign.

After the dismissal of Jordan's charges, the story of police violence after Katrina remained untold. Jordan believes an indifferent local media bears partial responsibility for the years of cover-up. "They were looking for heroes," he says. "They had a cozy relationship with the police. They got tips from the police; they were in bed with the police. It was an atmosphere of tolerance for atrocities from the police. They abdicated their responsibility to be critical in their reporting. If a few people got killed that was a small price to pay."

Other elected officials, like the city coroner, went along with the police version of events. For example, the coroner's office never flagged Henry Glover's body, found burned in a car, as a potential homicide.

But the Madisons, the Bartholomews, and the Glovers, along with family members of other police violence victims, refused to be silent. They continued to speak out at press conferences, rallies, and directly to reporters. They worked with organizations like Safe Streets Strong Communities, which was founded by criminal justice activists in the days after Katrina, and Commu-

nity United for Change, which was formed in response to police abuses. Monique Harden, a Community Activist and Co-Director of Advocates for Environmental Human Rights, helped to bring testimony about these issues to the United Nations. Another post-Katrina organization, Peoples Hurricane Relief Fund, presented the charges to an international tribunal.

Activists worked to not only raise awareness of specific issues of police violence, but to say that these problems are structural and that any solution must get at the root causes.

"This is about an entire system that was completely broken and in crisis," says former Safe Streets

Co-Director Rosana Cruz. "Everyone's job in the Criminal Justice System depends on there being a lot of crime in the city. The district attorney's office doesn't work on getting the city safer, they work on getting convictions at any cost. As long as that's the case, we're not going to have safety."

Former District Attorney Jordan feels that investigators should pursue charges up to the very top of the department, including Warren Riley, who was promoted to Police Chief shortly after Hurricane Katrina and served in that role until 2010. "Riley, by his own admission, never even read the report on Danziger," Jordan

points out. "It's so outrageous, it's unspeakable. It's one of the worst things that anyone can do. It's hard to understand why he's not on trial as well."

"Fish starts rotting at the head," adds Jordan. "This was all done in the backdrop of police opposition at the very top. It's not surprising that there was a cover-up. You just have to wonder how far that cover-up went."

In 2008, Journalist A.C. Thompson did what New Orleans media had failed to do, and seriously investigated the accusations of police violence. His reporting, published on ProPublica and in The Nation, spelled out the shocking details of Glover's killing and pointed toward police coordination with White vigilantes in widespread violence. It brought national attention to the stories that had been ignored. Activists took advantage of the exposure and lobbied the Congressional Black Caucus and the Justice Department for an investigation.

In early 2009, a newly empowered Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department decided to look into the cases. Federal agents interviewed witnesses who had never been talked to, reconstructed crime scenes, and

Cover Story, Continued on page 4

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# Carlton Joseph Roy Sr.

## An Avid Civil Rights Activist

By Vincent Sylvain

Celebrating the life of Mr. Carlton J. Roy Sr. Born February 27, 1917 in New Iberia, LA to Amanda Broussard Roy & Abraham Roy. Mr. Roy passed away on Saturday, August 6, 2011 5:00pm at Canon Hospice-Elmwood in New Orleans, LA at the age of 94. He was preceded in death by his beloved wife Ida Mae Juluke Roy, and siblings Philip Roy Sr., Alma Roy Boyance, Maeville Roy Harrison, Celine Roy Faulk, Bernice Roy Barnes and Marion Roy Johnson. He leaves to cherish his memories his children Carlton Jr., Errol, Shedrick Sr. and Adreian Roy, 13 grandchildren, 12 great grandchildren, 4 great-great grandchildren and a host of relatives & friends.

Mr. Roy, an avid Civil Rights activist who worked closely alongside civil rights leaders Rev. Avery



Carlton Roy Sr.

Alexander, Oretha Castle-Haley, Rev. A. L. Davis, Dorothy Taylor and Rev. Sampson "Skip" Alexander, was a World War II veteran, a member of the International

Longshoreman's Association Local No. 3000 AFL-CIO, a founding member of The Black Businessman's Association of Louisiana, and a prominent business owner. Over the course of his life he owned a hauling company, a taxi cab fleet, a laundromat, a bar, & 4 Aces Restaurant, all located in the historic Oretha Castle Haley/Martin Luther King Blvd areas of Central City. An endeavor he was exceedingly proud of was following Hurricanes Betsy & Camille when Mr. Roy in his role as owner of his most recent business Roy's Refrigeration & A/C donated his services free of charge during the recovery effort.

Some of his fondest and most highlighted memories included the times when his properties were used as headquarters for historic candidates some of whom

were among the first African-Americans to be elected. Candidates such as Former Governor Edwin Edwards & Former Mayors/Legislators Ernest N. "Dutch" Morial, Marc Morial, Rev. Avery Alexander and Dorothy Taylor.

Mr. Roy often recalled fondly his involvement in events that stood out as monuments of pride such as the time he served as Master of Ceremonies for a local event at which Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King was keynote speaker. Amusingly he shared stories of comrades remarking during Ernest Morial's campaign for legislator "You asked us not to vote for the White man but then you ask us to vote for this one?"...thinking Morial was White as well.

In Mr. Carlton J. Roy Sr. the community found a caring, proud and brave man. His life defines

what it means to be a person of strong character and virtue and he will be dearly missed. Let us all carry his legacy on with our own contributions to the betterment of our communities and prove that a great man's life and hard work has not passed in vain.

### Arrangements

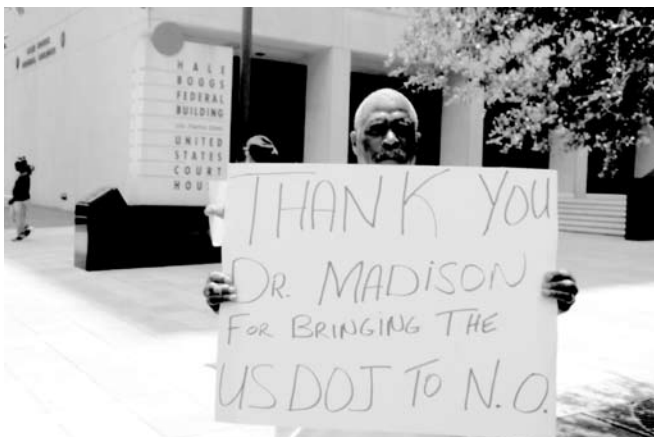
A mass of Christian Burial celebrating his life will be held on Saturday, August 13, 2011 10:30 a.m. At St. Katherine Drexel Church 2015 Louisiana Ave. Visitation and Rosary will begin at 9:30 a.m. Until the hour of service.

Interment and Rite Service at St. Louis Cemetery III with ascending doves symbolizing the commencing of the departing of soul.

### Cover Story, Continued from page 3.

even confiscated NOPD computers. They found evidence that the Danziger officers had radically rewritten their version of what happened on the bridge that day. When FBI agents confronted officers involved in the Danziger case, five officers pleaded guilty and agreed to testify about the conspiracy to cover-up what happened. They revealed that officers had planted evidence, invented witnesses, arrested innocent people, and held secret meetings where they worked to line up their stories.

Before last week's verdict, the Justice Department had already won four previous police violence convictions, including of the officers who shot Glover and burned his body, as well as of two officers who killed Raymond Robair, a pre-Katrina case in which officers beat a man to death and claimed (with the support of the city coroner) he had sustained his injuries from falling down. About half a dozen other investigations are ongoing. The Justice Department is also looking at federal oversight of the NOPD, a process by which they can dictate vast changes from hiring and firing to training and



policy writing.

The Danziger trial has been the most high-profile aspect of the federal intervention in New Orleans, and this verdict will have far-reaching implications for how the effectiveness of federal intervention is perceived. The convictions and guilty pleas in the case reveal a wide-ranging conspiracy that reaches up to sergeants and lieutenants. Marlon Defillo, the second-in-charge of the NOPD, was recently forced to retire because of his role in helping cover-up the Glover killing.

Most importantly, the verdict has helped shift the narrative of what happened in those days after Katrina.

scribed the cops as "proactive," saying, "They go out and get things done. They go out and get the bad guys." Police attorneys in the Glover and Danziger trials also sought to use the so-called "Katrina defense," arguing that the exceptional circumstances following the storm justified extra-legal actions on the part of officers. With these convictions, the juries have definitively refuted this excuse.

In her closing arguments, Bobbi Bernstein, Deputy Chief of the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division, fought back against the claim that the officers were heroes, saying the family members of those killed deserved the title

The defense team for the Danziger officers was steadfast in describing their clients as heroes.

Attorney Paul Fleming described

more. Noting that the official cover-up had "perverted" the system, she said, "The real heroes are the victims who stayed with an imperfect justice system that initially betrayed them."

Officers went out with a mission to deliver "their own kind of post-apocalyptic justice," she added. "The law is what it is because this is not a police state."

In comments immediately after the verdict, family members of those killed on the bridge expressed gratitude for those who had helped them reach this point, but stressed that their pain continued.

Speaking outside the courthouse after the verdict, Sherrel Johnson, the mother of James Brisette, said that the officers, "took the twinkle out of my eye, the song out of my voice, and blew out my candle," when they killed her son.

Jacqueline Madison Brown, the sister of Ronald Madison, told assembled press, "Ronald Madison brought great love to our family. Shooting him down was like shooting an innocent child." Commenting on officers who had testified for the prosecution in

exchange for lesser charges, she added, "We regret that they did not have the courage and strength to come forward sooner."

Kenneth Bowen, Robert Gisevius, Anthony Villavaso, and Faulcon, the officers involved in the shooting, could receive life sentences. Sergeant Arthur Kaufman, who was not on the bridge, but was convicted of leading the conspiracy, could receive a maximum of 120 years. Sentencing is scheduled for December, but will likely be delayed.

Jordan Flaherty is a Journalist and Staffer with the Louisiana Justice Institute. His award-winning reporting from the Gulf Coast has been featured in a range of outlets including the New York Times, Al Jazeera, and Argentina's Clarin Newspaper. He is the author of FLOODLINES: Community and Resistance from Katrina to the Jena Six. He can be reached at [neworleans@leftturn.org](mailto:neworleans@leftturn.org), and more information about Floodlines can be found at [floodlines.org](http://floodlines.org). For speaking engagements, see [communityandresistance.wordpress.com](http://communityandresistance.wordpress.com).

## NOLA CARES Mentoring Movement recruit local mentors for New Orleans effort

**John McDonough High School and L. B. Landry High School to serve as starting points**



National CARES Mentoring Movement Founder, Susan L. Taylor

Members of NOLA CARES Mentoring Movement has announced the beginning of its efforts to recruit local mentors will to spend time addressing troubled Black youths in New Orleans. The NOLA CARES Mentoring Movement in New Orleans, Louisiana is an affiliate "Circle" of the National Cares Mentoring Movement (NCMM). National CARES Mentoring Movement, founded by Susan L. Taylor is dedicated to recruiting and connecting mentors with local youth-serving and mentoring organizations to help guide struggling Black children to academic and social success, and to closing the huge gap between the relatively few Black mentors and millions of our vulnerable children.

NOLA CARES will initially begin this fall school year by partnering with PEN OR PENCIL, an initiative founded in 2005 by the National Alliance of Faith and Justice (NAFJ). PEN OR PENCIL involves an intergenerational, interactive, and relationship support process which encourages bonding, trust, resilience in the face of life trials like generations who persevered before them. PEN is short for penitentiary and PENCIL represents education.

Through a Memorandum of Understanding with Project Village, the youth serving component of the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc.'s Prison Ministry and Criminal Justice Commission headquartered in Baton Rouge, NAFJ and the New Orleans CARES Circle will serve a predominance of youth who are victims of and engaged in high risk and violent behaviors, to include emotional and learning disabilities. The partnership will offer initial priority to students who are enrolled in middle and high schools in the Recovery School District of Louisiana in New Orleans under development through the Safe Schools Healthy Students Initiative. Expansion of the regional collaborative will give priority to middle and high schools in the

system located in East Baton Rouge and others to be identified. Project Village currently gives priority to youth who have one or both parents in prison. New Orleans' initial efforts will focus with troubled youths attending John McDonough High School and L. B. Landry High School in New Orleans.

The New Orleans' "Circle", led by Bishop Tommy Triplett of United Fellowship Full Gospel Baptist Church and The New Orleans's Agenda Vincent Sylvain is comprised of community members who work together to provide the driving force behind NCMM's mission-to create a highly visible and effective national mentoring campaign targeting the Black community. The specific goals of the NOLA CARES Mentoring Movement are (1) to bring guidance to the lives of youngsters by pairing them with organizations that offer mentoring services and programs, and (2) to significantly increase the pool of caring Black mentors.

The NOLA CARES Mentoring Movement is a call to action to every able and caring Black adult to help end the crisis in our community by mentoring our young people who are at risk and by recruiting other caring adults to mentor. NCMM does not offer mentoring services; instead, we encourage local leaders to raise awareness of the need and benefits of mentoring, as well as recruit mentors for organizations that provide mentoring and other youth-support services.

NOLA CARES will target the needs of Black youngsters, who are greatly over-represented on long waiting lists for mentors. Unfortunately, Black adult mentors are grossly underrepresented as volunteers for the youngsters in the Black community.

The NOLA CARES Circle is dedicated to recruiting and connecting mentors with local youth-serving organizations to help guide our struggling children to academic and social success. Research proves that mentoring is a low-cost, high-results solu-

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Nola Cares, Continued on page 9



# Shoot Ya Best Shot!

## Beats, Rhymes and Life The Story of A Tribe Called Quest Hits the Big Screen

By Edwin Buggage

Beats, Rhymes and Life is a human story set to a hip-hop beat. A Tribe Called Quest was one of the forerunners of modern hip-hop with their blend of smooth sophisticated raps fused over jazz inflected grooves that defined the golden age of hip-hop from 1988-1994. The film centers on the group's rise, fall

and its struggle to reunite after professional and personal differences that tear the group apart.

The film features group members Q-Tip, Phife, Jarobi, and Ali Shaheed Muhammad talking about their evolution as four young men from New York and how their love for hip-hop became their pass to travel the globe giving the world the gift of this new music that de-

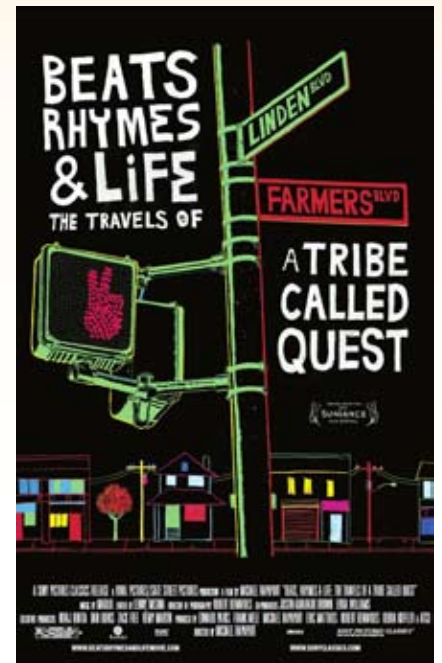
fined a generation. Beats, Rhymes and Life also features many of ATCQ contemporaries as talking heads including the Beastie Boys, Common, and the Jungle Brothers in addition to those influenced by them including super Producer Pharrell Williams

and a host of others.

Beats, Rhymes and Life is a great introduction to this legendary crew, and for those who are true hip-hop heads it brings one back to a time when beats, rhymes and lyrics mattered in a way they don't today. For the uninitiated it is a great introduction to a group that set the template for many of today's great in the world of hip-hop such as Kanye West and Mos Def, who appear in the film performing

onstage with Q-Tip.

It was interesting in watching how hip-hop has grown to become a worldwide phenomenon, in the film seeing A Tribe Called Quest travel the globe spreading the message, style and swag-ger of urban Black people to the world. In its infancy people said it wasn't music and was just a trend, today the music landscape is dominated by hip-hop. Everywhere in the world people have embraced hip-hop. Now we have a documentary about a group of hip-hop icons that is a true testament of the continued relevance of hip-hop. And that Beats and Rhymes have become part of our way of life.



## Birthday Bashes In New Orleans!

Elliott Gray's Birthday Party and Lawrence Martin's Birthday After-Party at Sweet Lorraine's were the place to be, and Data Was There!







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# Mayor Landrieu Announces Lafitte Corridor Community Planning Meetings

## Citizen Input Sought In Series of Meetings This Month

Mayor Mitch Landrieu announced a series of community planning meetings that will begin this month to gain feedback about the development of the Lafitte Corridor. The Corridor is a 3.1-mile open space pathway that will extend from Armstrong Park near the French Quarter to Canal Boulevard near City Park and connect nine historic districts and neighborhoods from Treme to Lakeview.

The meetings will solicit citizen input on the project which includes developing a master plan for the development of the Lafitte

Greenway, Greenway Park and the Lafitte Corridor.

"This project will improve the quality of life for our citizens and help move our City to becoming more environmentally sustainable," said Mayor Landrieu. "We encourage citizen input as we move forward in the development of this project."

Since taking office, the Landrieu Administration has made significant progress on this project. As one of the Mayor's "100 Committed Projects," the City acquired a 16.5 acre parcel last year along the Lafitte Corridor in Mid-City which is formerly the site of the Louisiana Institute of Film Technology (LIFT) Studio. The LIFT property is the largest contiguous

piece of property which will allow for active recreational facilities. The \$3.8 million purchase of the property was funded from a Community Development Block Grant. In April, the City issued a notice to proceed to Design Workshop, who will be responsible for developing a revitalization plan for the Lafitte Corridor, a master plan for the Greenway Park, and the plan, design and construction management for the Lafitte Greenway.

The Lafitte Greenway will offer a continuous public open space for non-motorized transportation and recreation, joining together key segments of the City's emerging pedestrian and bikeway network. The Greenway will also serve as a link between new and existing

parks, playgrounds, recreational facilities and community centers, encouraging active living and promoting public health. Anticipated completion for Lafitte Greenway is expected during Spring 2014.

The following is a schedule of the community outreach meetings:

Public Kickoff – August 15 from 6-8 p.m.

Sojourner Truth Neighborhood Center, 2200 Lafitte Street and Grace Episcopal Church, 3700 Canal Street

Topical Discussions – August 15-19 from 4:30-5:30 p.m.

Sojourner Truth Neighborhood Center, 2200 Lafitte Street

Lafitte Corridor Open Studio – August 15-19 from 10 a.m.-

5:30 p.m. & August 16-18 from 5:30-7 p.m.

Sojourner Truth Neighborhood Center, 2200 Lafitte Street

Lafitte Corridor Business Presentations – August 15-19 from 12:30-1:30 p.m.

Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, 938 Lafayette Street, Suite 300

Lafitte Corridor General Community Meeting – August 20 from 9:30 a.m.-Noon

Delgado Community College, Student Life Center, Lac Pontchartrain Room, 615 Park Avenue

For more information about the meetings, call 504.592.1800 or go to [www.nola.gov/lafittегreenway](http://www.nola.gov/lafittегreenway) for more information.

## Future MLB Urban Youth Academy To Be Built In New Orleans

### Major League Baseball and City of New Orleans Break Ground on \$5.3 Million Project to Build Facility at Wesley Barrow Stadium to Provide Free Baseball and Softball Instruction

### New Orleans Site is Fifth U.S. Academy Announced by Major League Baseball

Major League Baseball and the City of New Orleans today officially announced a \$5.3 million project to build a future MLB Urban Youth Academy at Wesley Barrow Stadium in Pontchartrain Park in New Orleans. The New Orleans MLB Urban Youth Academy will operate in partnership with the New Orleans Recreation Development Commission, providing free, year-round baseball and softball instruction and additional educational programming for more than 1,500 underserved youth through-

out southern Louisiana.

Major League Baseball and the City of New Orleans conducted a ceremonial groundbreaking for the project at Wesley Barrow Stadium with a group that included Texas Rangers Manager and New Orleans native Ron Washington, MLB Executive Vice President of Baseball Development Jimmie Lee Solomon, New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu, former MLB Outfielder and current broadcaster for the New Orleans Zephyrs Ron Swoboda, New Orleans City Council Members Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson, Arnie Fielkow, and Cynthia Hedge-Morrell, and other local and state representatives in attendance.

"New Orleans is a wonderful city with a strong, vibrant community, and we are very pleased to bring an MLB Urban Youth Academy here to make a positive impact on young men and women," said Jimmie Lee Solomon, Executive Vice President, Baseball Development, Major League Baseball. "They will be able to develop their

baseball and softball skills year-round, while having the unique opportunity to participate in a diverse education program in a new, state-of-the-art facility. I would like to thank Mayor Landrieu and the City of New Orleans for making such a significant commitment to their community through baseball and softball."

"I have said time and again that the best tool in improving our economy and reducing crime is by investing in meaningful activities for our youth," said Mayor Mitch Landrieu. "There is no better partner than Major League Baseball to bring high quality programming to the kids of New Orleans. This \$5.3 million renovation of Wesley Barrow Stadium— one of our 100 Committed Projects— along with the baseball and softball instruction Major League Baseball will provide our youth will help anchor our redevelopment efforts in Pontchartrain Park."

The New Orleans MLB Urban Youth Academy will feature three fields (baseball, softball, tee

ball), complete with scoreboards, seating, dugouts and lights. The complex will feature four batting cages, an indoor facility, pitching mounds and other professional-caliber training facilities.

"This groundbreaking is the start of something truly wonderful for our community," said District D Councilmember Cynthia Hedge-Morrell, whose district encompasses the historic Pontchartrain Park neighborhood. "The Urban Youth Academy at Wesley Barrow Stadium will have a lasting impact on the youth for years to come. On behalf of the residents, I thank Major League Baseball for their support and dedication to Gentilly and the surrounding areas."

"Today's groundbreaking is more than a ceremonial turning over of dirt at Wesley Barrow stadium. As we approach the sixth anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, this milestone signifies New Orleans' continued redevelopment, especially in those areas hardest hit. I can think of no more appro-

priate place to spend FEMA recovery dollars than the redevelopment of a recreation facility for the city's greatest asset, our youth," said City Council Vice-President Arnie Fielkow, a longtime advocate of the project. "I would like to thank Major League Baseball for being such a great partner in our revitalization process. Through the creation of the New Orleans Urban Youth Academy, MLB will help elevate our city's youth recreation program to the highest standards in the country."

"This is an exciting event, and it symbolizes much more than a groundbreaking," said City Council President Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson. "This is history being rewritten. The MLB Urban Youth Academy is reminiscent of our original NORD program for baseball, which was led by the great Dr. Louis "Dutch" Legett. A native New Orleanian, Dr. Legett was a Major League Baseball player who volunteered his time and passion to bring baseball to the City's

MLB, Continued on next page.



# Democrats Need a Hot Chocolate Party



**George C. Curry**  
NNPA

To his credit, Boehner was smart enough to regroup and give the Tea Party what it wanted. To their discredit, President Obama and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid agreed to give the Tea Party zealots nearly everything they asked for. In the end, that still wasn't enough to satisfy them.

How did Democrats lose their way?

President Obama, the titular head of the party, has usually adopted sensible public policy stances on such issues as the public option in health care and letting the Bush tax cuts for the wealthy expire. In the face of withering Republican opposition, however, Obama has usually capitulated.

For example, Candidate Obama campaigned for universal health care. At the time, the U.S. was the only industrialized country in the world that did not provide universal health care. Many progressives wanted a single-payer plan similar to the one in Canada. With such a powerful health care lobby in Washington, there was little chance of achieving that goal. So they agreed to go along with the public option, a government health insurance agency that competes with private insurance companies.

Thanks to a president eager to strike a deal with the Party of No, the public option was removed as an option before the legislation was passed and signed into law. This was the beginning of the end.

Last December, Republicans pretended to oppose extending long-term unemployment benefits, a major goal of Democrats. But the quid pro quo was that Republicans would go along with the extension if

Obama would agree to a 2-year extension of all Bush tax cuts. That was another time I wanted President Obama to call the GOP bluff, but apparently fighting is not in his DNA.

With high unemployment in his native Ohio, Boehner could not afford to look into the eyes of jobless voters back home and tell them unemployment benefits should not be extended. But a deal was struck giving Obama the unemployment extension and allowing Boehner and his GOP comrades to protect the super-rich.

If the Hot Chocolate Party were in place, it could have insisted that the Bush tax cuts expire, something that would have cut the federal deficit by half. It also could have curtailed the practice U.S. companies hiding most of their assets overseas to keep from paying corporate taxes and ending the public subsidizing vacation homes, private jets and boats for the upper class.

As bad as past deals were, this deficit showdown was perhaps the worst example of Democrats being impotent.

An angry Barack Obama acknowledged how bad the deal was after Boehner walked out of their deficit reduction talks and refused to return his telephone calls.

Listen again to why Obama was angry: "Essentially, what we had offered Speaker Boehner was over a trillion dollars in cuts to discretionary spending, both domestic and defense," Obama said in a July 22 news conference. "We then offered an additional \$650 billion in cuts to entitlement programs – Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security."

Here's the part that proved that the President was willing to give up too much: "We were offering a deal that called for as much discretionary savings as the Gang of Six [a panel Democratic and Republican lawmakers]. We were calling for taxes that were less than what the Gang of Six had proposed."

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid was equally pathetic in trying to advance his deficit proposal. He said his bill did not require any new taxes, something he hoped would satisfy Republicans. It didn't.

Enough of these wimpy Democrats. When challenged by Republicans, they roll over early and often. Democrats roll over so easily that they should be renamed the Roth IRA Party.

To let Democrats tell it, they roll over because they want what's best for the country and avoiding default, for example, was achieved only because they were willing to give Tea Party fanatics what they wanted. Compromise is now a one-way street. It's time to take another road.

Let's put the Hot Chocolate Party in the driver's seat to say no to the Party of No. If they again threaten to drive the country in a ditch, to borrow a quote from President Obama, provide them with the directions. I suspect that once they realize Democrats won't keep giving in to their empty threats, we will find out that they are not as crazy as they appear.

George E. Curry, former Editor-in-Chief of *Emerge Magazine* and the NNPA News Service, is a keynote speaker, moderator, and media coach. He can be reached through his Web site, [www.georgecurry.com](http://www.georgecurry.com). You can also follow him at [www.twitter.com/currygeorge](http://www.twitter.com/currygeorge).

## MLB, Continued from previous page.

youth back in the 1940's. Now, our youth will once again have quality baseball and softball outreach programming from this partnership between the City and MLB."

The New Orleans MLB Urban Youth Academy will be modeled after the first MLB Urban Youth Academy in Compton, California. Opening its doors in 2006, the Urban Youth Academy in Compton has given talented young players in underserved areas the chance to play organized baseball, with some 115 student-athletes selected in the MLB First-Year Player Draft since its inception. In total, 60 student-athletes have signed professional contracts and more than 200 Academy student-athletes have gone on

to participate in collegiate baseball and softball programs.

As part of the Major League Baseball Urban Youth Initiative, MLB Urban Youth Academies provide free, year-round baseball and softball instruction, as well as education programs to young people in urban communities. Major League Baseball currently operates Urban Youth Academies in Compton, California; Houston, Texas; and Gurabo, Puerto Rico. Additionally, two other Academies have been announced for Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and Hialeah, Florida. For more information, go to [mlb.com/urbanyouthacademy](http://mlb.com/urbanyouthacademy).

## Nola Cares, Continued from page 5.

tion to a deepening crisis. It has the power to transform the lives of even the most challenged children-and we plan to utilize that power in New Orleans.

"We are losing our future, one child at a time, which is why the CARES Mentoring Movement is crucial. These are the chilling facts . . .

### National statistics:

- In some cities, only 18% of Black boys graduate from high school.
- 57% of Black fourth graders are functionally illiterate.
- 2.4 million Black children have a parent in prison.
- HIV/AIDS is the leading cause of death of young Black women.

- Homicide is the leading cause of death of young Black men.
- Every day more than 1,000 Black teenagers are arrested.
- Behind all the harsh numbers are youngsters who are the real-world consequences of broken educational systems, broken homes, and broken communities. By working together, we can void these dire statistics."

NOLA CARES Mentoring Movement encourage interested individuals to visit the National Cares Mentoring Movement online at [www.caresmentoring.org](http://www.caresmentoring.org) to learn more about their efforts as well as how one can join the local Movement.



# The Man Behind the King Monument

## Harry E. Johnson, Sr.

By Brandon I. Brooks  
NNPA Special Contributor

Special to the NNPA from the Los Angeles Sentinel

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. played a significant role in moving America, and indeed the world, towards the equality of all men, and in memorializing the man and his work, Harry Johnson has played an equally significant role in producing the King monument in Washington, D.C.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. had a dream for America and we are living it today. No greater demonstration of this "Dream" is that today we have a Black President in the White House. We still have a long way to go as far as social justice in this country but make no mistake America walks with a certain level of consciousness that was influenced by Dr. King's prophetic words and sacrificial life.

On Sunday, August 28, 2011 at 11 a.m., there will be a historic unveiling of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Memorial in Washington D.C. at the National Mall.

The MLK unveiling will mark the 48th Anniversary of the March on Washington where Dr. King gave his famous "I Have a Dream" speech. The event will be televised nationally on networks such as CNN, TV One and B.E.T., and other major networks will cut, in and out, throughout the day.

Harry E. Johnson, Sr., President and CEO of the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Memorial Project Foundation, Inc. has led this historic mission since 2002, and he will lead the unveiling, of what is arguably, the most famous and talked about memorial America and the world has ever seen.

"Here we are 48 years after the March on Washington, Dr. King's magnificent words and others, we now dedicate for the first time in our history a memorial to a man of peace, a non-president, and a person of color," said Johnson.

The President of the United States and the U.S. Congress charged the MLK Foundation with the challenge of erecting a memorial on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. to honor the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Under Johnson's leadership, the MLK Memorial Foundation has raised \$112 million of the \$120 million needed to complete the memorial.

Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity played a pivotal role in the idea and origin of Dr. King's legacy being honored through a Washington memorial. From 2001 to 2004, Johnson served as National President of Alpha Phi Alpha, Incorporated, the fraternity to which Dr. King belonged. While serving in this position, Johnson oversaw more than 700

chapters located throughout the United States and abroad.

"Alpha Phi Alpha got involved because of five visionaries, Harold Navy, Al Bailey, George Sealy, Oscar Little and Eddie Madison, who sat around a table and thought that people of color were not visiting the mall in great numbers and how do you get them to understand our great history?" said Johnson. "They obviously said, 'hey, well what if there were some memorials or statues of people of color then people of color would come'. And they came up and said for whom should this memorial be, and who would do one? And they threw all the names, and that they came up with, and ended up with Dr. King's name."

Johnson is a career lawyer and also a Partner at the Law Office of Glenn and Johnson. He served as City Attorney for Kendelton, Texas, from 1996 - 1999, and taught at Texas Southern University in the Thurgood Marshall School of Law and School of Public Affairs.

Johnson is a small business owner who has dedicated his life and time to community groups, and issues such as voter registration, blood donations, HIV/AIDS, Boy Scouts of America and Big Brothers. He received his Doctor of Jurisprudence from Texas Southern University where he was a member of the Thurgood Marshall Student Bar Association. He completed Post Baccalaureate work in Public Administration at St. Louis University and received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Xavier University in Louisiana.

The MLK Memorial Foundation anticipates 4,000,000 will visit, learn and pay tribute to Dr. King and others in the struggle for a better America annually. This is supposed to be the most-visited memorial in the near future for people to come and visit.

The President of the United States will also be in attendance. "We know that the Secretary of Interior (Ken Salazar) will be there", said Johnson. "Several past icons of the Civil Rights Movement will be there. We also know that Aretha Franklin will be on program, BeBe Winans, Stevie Wonder, Jamie Foxx, Maya Angelou, Herbie Hancock, Mary Mary, Naturally 7, and a few others. We are expecting 250,000 people."

"One of the things we want people worldwide, and especially young children in this country, is for them to see that with this memorial on the mall, for the first time in our history, the mall will be diversified," said Johnson.

"Never before has there been a memorial to a person of color of this magnitude. There may be a statue of Mary McCleod

Bethune Cookman somewhere, but there is certainly not anything of this magnitude. And to say that Dr. King is situated between the Lincoln and the Jefferson memorials, and to their left is the Washington memorial. It's a great piece of real estate to be associated with."

It's important to note that for a memorial of this magnitude to be built and completed, in just 25 years of conception, is remarkable, and illustrates the dynamic job done by the MLK Memorial Foundation and its leader, Harry E. Johnson, Sr.

Franklin D. Roosevelt's Memorial took 45 years from concept to completion and they had a staff of 44 and a budget of \$170 million. With a staff of only 11 people, Johnson is proud to say that the MLK Memorial is one of the only memorials to raise funds from private resources.

Many people speculate about what Dr. King might say about the memorial if he were alive today, so the Sentinel asked Johnson to weigh in on the debate, considering he understands King's legacy, as well as any other person in the world.

"Well from what I've been told, Dr. King would want to know what is all the fuss about. But in my honest opinion, we don't build memorials to men, we build them from ideals of which they have," said Johnson. "That being said, we built this memorial because of the ideals Dr. King stood for."

Just as the Lincoln or the Jefferson Memorial was not built to men, but were built to celebrate the ideals of the men they honor. The ideals of democracy, or Lincoln's ideals of having this as one country, as opposed to north versus south, is what these memorials celebrate. Dr. King had the same ideals. That this country was not Black versus White, not rich versus poor, but this is one country, which is the United States of America. Ultimately, he died because he felt this world should be a world of peace, and he was willing to risk, and give his life for this unprecedented faith. That we should not have senseless wars, people should not be starving, people deserved to be clothed, so he died for a much greater cause. And that's why we built this memorial for Dr. King."

"What visitors will encounter when they

walk into the memorial site from Independence Avenue is, they will walk into a plaza area that's very open and inviting," said Johnson. "And then they will walk towards what is called the "Mountain of Despair," a huge bolder of granite that looks like a mountain that has been cut in two."

As you walk through the "Mountain of Despair," you go from the huge open plaza to a narrower 12-foot wide opening between the two mountains. This will not only signify the struggle going through the Civil Rights movement, but it will also signify the "Stone of Hope" that was carved out of the "Mountain of Despair." And so from his speech it says, 'Out of a Mountain of Despair, hew a Stone of Hope.' So once on the other side of the "Mountain of Despair," there is a 700-foot wall of quotations from Dr. King's speeches on that wall. But you still haven't seen Dr. King until you walked out towards the water looking at Jefferson, and there on another 30 foot stone, it looks like it was carved directly out of the mountain, there is Dr. King sculpted on the other side, looking at Jefferson."

Johnson talked in depth with the Sentinel about his experience through the rigorous process and how he managed to deal with the memorial project on a day-to-day basis.

"With God on your side, you can make the impossible possible, number 1," shared Johnson. "Number 2, God is not going to put more on you than what you can bear. So even though you have some sleepless nights, some restless nights and some headaches, you know that God is going to see you through it, if you are doing the right thing. So me personally, I thank those that prayed for me, and the foundation and kept a hedge of protection around us so we could get to the end goal. And so now I am proud to say that I have had a part in this because as I always like to say, you don't ever know where God is going to place, put, or send you. I am thankful He placed, put and sent me here."

For more information on the MLK Memorial Foundation, and to experience a virtual tour, please visit [www.mlkmemorial.org](http://www.mlkmemorial.org). For more information on the actual dedication ceremony, please visit [www.dedicatethedream.org](http://www.dedicatethedream.org).

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## Congresswoman Waters Highlights 46th Anniversary of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 Condemns Republicans' Nationwide Voter Suppression Efforts

Congresswoman Maxine Waters (D-Calif.) announced that August 6th marked the 46th Anniversary of the day that the Voting Rights Act was enacted. President Lyndon Johnson signed this historic legislation into law on August 6, 1965.

"I am very pleased to commemorate the anniversary of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. This landmark legislation was, and remains, critical to protecting the democratic participation of African-Americans in the United States. While African-Americans have made many strides and are now represented across all levels and branches of government, we still need the VRA to ensure protections against any local or federal laws that may adversely impact minority voting rights."

In 1965, Congress enacted the Voting Rights Act (VRA) to ensure that African-Americans in the South would have equal access to vote. The VRA is widely considered the most important and successful piece of Civil Rights legislation ever enacted. Congress designed the Act to enforce the Fifteenth Amendment and to eliminate racial restrictions of the right to vote. The exclusion of African-Americans from the franchise, together with the doctrine of "separate but equal," provided the legal foundations for the overt and often brutal regime of racial oppression known as "Jim Crow." The Act was developed in direct response to the failure of previous federal legislation and explicitly addressed both the direct and indirect obstacles to minority voting.

"The right to vote is a fundamental right and is critical to our democracy. In a post Citizens United political system where powerful corporations and special interests are able to expend exorbitant amounts of money to influence elections, the right to vote remains the great equalizer. Every vote counts, and for those counted among our most vulnerable populations and communities it is sometimes the only way they are able to hold their leaders accountable or elect rep-



Congresswoman Maxine Waters (D-CA)

resentatives who advocate their interests."

At the height of Jim Crow, southern state legislators, who had been resentful of the limited protections that were extended to African-Americans shortly after Reconstruction, began to repeal state civil rights protections. In their concerted efforts to circumvent explicit voting protections that were afforded to African-Americans under the 14th and 15th Amendments, southern lawmakers implemented nearly a dozen policies intended to prevent Blacks from voting. These measures included poll taxes, literacy tests, intimidation, and gerrymandering – redrawing election lines to make it impossible for Blacks to be elected to office.

"Today, as we continue to see the emergence of new state voter suppression laws, the VRA remains relevant. With only 15 months left before the next presidential election, Republican-led legislatures are rewriting voting laws to require photo identification at the polls, reduce the number of early voting days, and enhance voting restrictions against ex-felons and out-of-state students. These 'smoke and

mirror' policies are 21st Century poll taxes that are similar to the restrictive eligibility requirements that were passed during segregation. The new voter ID laws and other restrictions have the potential to disenfranchise millions of eligible voters. Minorities, poor people, seniors, and students are among those that will be impacted the most."

Governor Scott Walker of Wisconsin and Governor Rick Perry of Texas both signed laws this year that would require each voter to show an official, valid photo ID to cast a ballot. In Florida, Gov. Rick Scott signed a bill to tighten restrictions on third-party voter registration organizations and shorten the number of early voting days. Gov. Scott also helped to pass a ban on felon voting rights, forcing non-violent offenders to wait five years after completing their sentences to apply to have their rights restored. The Florida Legislature also passed new laws that makes it tougher for 'get-out-the-vote' groups to register new voters and reduces the number of early voting days from 14 to 8.

"As we reflect on the history and series of events that led to the passage of the Voting Rights Act, we must remain vigilant and on guard against potential policies that may undermine minority participation and diminish African-Americans' political representation.

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“I HAVE A DREAM THAT ONE DAY  
ON THE RED HILLS OF GEORGIA,  
SONS OF FORMER SLAVES AND  
THE SONS OF FORMER SLAVE OWNERS  
WILL BE ABLE TO SIT DOWN TOGETHER  
AT THE TABLE OF BROTHERHOOD.”

— MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.  
AUGUST 28, 1963, WASHINGTON, D.C.

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...So that I was a drum major for justice.  
...So that I was a drum major for peace.  
...I was a drum major for righteousness.  
...And all of the other small things will not matter.”  
Martin Luther King, Jr.

On the anniversary of the “I Have a Dream” speech, history will once again be made on the National Mall. The Washington, D.C. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial will be unveiled as the first and only tribute to a man of peace and to a person of color. This August 28<sup>th</sup>, why just read about history when you can be a part of it? Come to Washington, D.C. and celebrate what will forever stand as a testament to his timeless ideals and legacy of peace.

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CHEVROLET IS HONORED TO CELEBRATE THE LEGACY OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

